1980

The significance of Martin Buber's I-thou philosophy for communication theory

Will S. Keim
University of the Pacific

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MARTIN BUBER'S I-THOU PHILOSOPHY FOR COMMUNICATION THEORY

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

University of the Pacific

In Partial Fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts

in the Department of Communication Arts

by

Will S. Keim

March 1980

This thesis, written and submitted by

Will Seward Keim III

is approved for recommendation to the Committee on Graduate Studies, University of the Pacific.

Department Chairman or Dean:

Thesis Committee:

Chairman

Dated April 23, 1980

Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

Martin Buber: A Brief Biography

Martin Buber was born in Vienna in 1878. Moore (1974) observes that due to the separation of Buber's parents, young Buber lived in Austria with his paternal grandparents until the age of fourteen. He studied philosophy and the history of art at Vienna and Leipzig, eventually receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Berlin in 1904 (p. xviii).

In 1916 Martin Buber founded Der Jude, a periodical which became the principal voice of German-speaking Jewry. From 1923 to 1933 Buber taught Jewish philosophy of religion and the history of religions at the University of Frankfurt. Moore states, "From 1933 to 1938 Buber was outstanding in his efforts in behalf of German Jews in their resistance to Nazi anti-Semintism" (p. XIX). With the subsequent rise of Hitler and the Nazis, Buber was forced to leave Europe for Palestine. He was appointed professor of social philosophy at the Hebrew University where he served until 1951.

Hodes (1971) reports that immediately following World War II, Martin Buber cooperated with Albert Schweitzer on appeals against the spread of nuclear weapons. Buber was twice nominated for Nobel Prizes: by Hermann Hesse in 1949 for literature, and by Secretary-General of the United Nations Dag Hammarskjold for peace in 1959 (pp. 136-152).

Martin Buber died in Jerusalem at the age of eighty-seven. In Israel, the United States Embassy forwarded to Mrs. Golda Meir, then the Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs, the following message from Secretary of State Dean Rusk:

> The death of Martin Buber is a great loss to the American people and to all humanity. Martin Buber was a searcher of the mystery of existence and a lover of mankind. His spirit will always remain wherever men actively seek an understanding with their neighbors. I wish to express to you and to the people of Israel my sincere sympathy. (Hodes, 1971, p. 224)

Martin Buber's Understanding of Human Personhood

In 1843, Ludwig Feuerbach proposed an understanding of human personhood that would greatly influence the thinking of Martin Buber. Buber (1965) recognized the importance of Feuerbach's proposal in the development of his own philosophy (p. 148). Feuerbach proposed:

> The individual man for himself does not have man's being in himself, either as a moral being or a thinking being. Man's being is contained only in community in the unity of man with man--a unity which rests, however, only on the reality of the difference between I and Thou. (p. 147-148)

Ludwig Feuerbach's understanding identified the ontologically interpersonal nature of human personhood. Heim (193) designates this as the "Copernican revolution in modern thought" (p. 148). Feuerbach conceptualized a person not as a single, solitary individual, but as a person-in-relation with other persons. According to Stewart (1975, p. 21), Feuerbach established the idea of personhood as an interpersonal phenomenon.

In the fifty-six years since Martin Buber wrote I and Thou, the significance of his dialogic philosophy has been recognized internationally. Hora (1962) states:

> Martin Buber's contribution to psychotherapy is as significant as his contributions to philosophy, religion, education, and other fields. His subtle and penetrating differentiation between monologic and dialogic existence reaches the very core of the human predicament and illumines the central issue of psychotherapy as well as religion and mental health. (p. 77).

Maurice Friedman is one of Martin Buber's principal translators. As Friedman (1960) states, "The influence of Buber's thought has steadily spread throughout the last fifty years until today Buber is recognized as occupying a position in the foremost ranks of contemporary philosophers, theologians, and scholars" (p. V).

More recently, communication scholar Johannesen (1971) observes, "His (Buber's) writings have served as a stimulus for the views of others on dialogue." Commenting on the practicality of Buber's thought, Diamond (1960) states:

> The outlook expressed in Martin Buber's I and Thou can affect all phases of intellectual life, because it is a way of apprehending and deepening every form of experience. It is a philosophy, indeed it is called 'the philosophy of dialogue,' but it directs itself toward what Buber terms real questions rather than toward philosophical problems. (p. 15)

Martin Buber's philosophy of dialogue has drawn the attention of scholars from several different disciplines.

Communication scholars and researchers have recently begun to exhibit interest in Buber's philosophy and its possible importance to communication theory (see Johannesen, 1971; Jourard, 1964; Clark, 1973; Poulakos, 1974; Stewart, 1975; and Stewart and D'Angelo, 1975). Despite this current interest, there has been no exhaustive study to determine the relevance of Buber's philosophy of dialogue for communication theory. The communication scholar and researcher is confronted with isolated instances of interest in Buber that all agree on one point; that is, certain concepts of the philosophy of dialogue have significance for communication theory.

Statement of the Problem

In a review of literature, it is clear that the significance of Martin Buber's philosophy of dialogue, or I-Thou philosophy, has been recognized by scholars in related disciplines. It also appears that no in-depth study has been done to discover the significance of Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy for communication theory. In order to determine this significance, the author proposes to:

1. Examine the efforts of communication scholars as they have attempted to establish the significance of Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy for communication theory.
2. Present an analysis of Martin Buber's concept of relation.

3. Present an analysis of Martin Buber's concept of dialogue.
4. Propose a definition of interpersonal communication based upon Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy of dialogical relation.

Communication scholars are greatly hindered in their research of the I-Thou philosophy by the limited scholarship that has been done on Buber's writings. To this point in time, research continues without an in-depth guide to the relationship of this philosophy to communication theory.

Importance of the Study

The study is important for several reasons. First, further studies of Buber's philosophy are needed to provide additional resources for research in communication.

Secondly, there is current interest in the relevance of Martin Buber's thought by scholars of communication and related disciplines. Jourard (1964) states that he has "come gradually to see therapy as a relationship that can be described in Buber's terminology---namely, an honest relationship gradually developing into one of I and Thou" (p. 67). Clark (1973) addresses the relationship between Martin Buber's dialogical thought and the discipline of rhetoric. Johannesen (1971) states, "Among contemporary existentialist philosophers, Martin Buber is the primary one who places the concept of dialogue at the heart of his view of human communication and existence." Poulakos (1974) isolated the components of dialogue based on Buber's understanding of the self, the other, and the between. Stewart and D'Angelo (1975) identify the basic assumption of their book Together as, "The quality of our interpersonal relationships determines who we are becoming as persons" (p. 23). According to Stewart and D'Angelo, their assumption parallels Buber's concept of human existence. These statements clearly indicate the current interest of communication scholars in the I-Thou philosophy of Martin Buber. A more thorough treatment of communication studies reflecting Buber's influence will be presented in Chapter 2.

Third, while characteristics and components have been isolated and discussed, the lack of a unifying conceptual framework has resulted in limited interest and usage of Buber's thought by communication theorists and instructors. Consequently, the potential impact of Buber's philosophy of dialogue for communication theory and instruction remains unactualized.

Definition of Central Terms

I-Thou and I-It

These terms represent the two contrasting primary "word pairs," or attitudes, in the dialogic philosophy of Martin Buber. I-Thou and I-It are relational attitudes; as Friedman in his introduction to Between Man and Man relates, "the two ways in which he (man) approaches existence" (p. XIII-XIV). Friedman continues, "The difference between these two relationships is not the nature of the object to which one relates, as if often thought" (p. XIV). Rather, it is the attitude that the person takes into the relation with either person or thing.

Friedman (1965) observes that an I-Thou relationship is characterized by openness, directness, mutuality, and presence (p. XIV). Mutuality in the I-Thou relationship involves a coming together of will and grace. A person must will himself or herself, or make himself or herself available, to the other person in order to make the I-Thou relationship possible. At the same time, the element of grace is involved; the other person must will himself or herself available also. Grace is involved because neither person can make the relationship happen alone. The I-Thou relationship is comprised of a purposeful willing and a graceful giving by both persons. I-Thou relation only occurs where two people come together honestly, directly, without reservation and are present to each other physically, psychologically, and actively.

I-It relationships, in contrast, are basic subject to object relationships. These relationships are ones in which a person relates to persons or things as objects. Friedman explains that the I-It oriented person, "knows and uses other persons or things without allowing them to exist for oneself in the uniqueness" (p. XIV). The I-It encounter does not necessitate mutuality; it is a using, objectifying relationship.

Friedman states, "I-Thou and I-It stand in fruitful and necessary alternation with each other" (XIV). On one hand, the I-It relationship provides order, structure, and organization that man needs to live in a rapidly changing, complex world. However, these relationships are self-centered and indirect in nature. The person becomes important only as he or she becomes useful to the subject. In contrast, persons and things have intrinsic importance in the I-Thou relationship. Persons and things have a meaning in and of themselves that is quite independent of the meaning or value the subject puts upon them. The person or thing takes on a different meaning for the subject as a result of the I-Thou relationship.

The fluctuation between I-Thou and I-It relationships is appropriate and necessary. Friedman notes, "So long as this alternation continues, man's existence is authentic" (p. XIV-XV). It is the normal state of affairs, argues Buber, that man should live in the world of I-It relationships. However, man can only reach full potential in the realm of I-Thou relationships. Friedman concludes, "When the It swells up and blocks the return to the Thou, then man's existence becomes unhealthy, his personal and social life unauthentic" (XV). The I-Thou and I-It are the two primary attitudes of Buber's dialogic philosophy. They are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

Organization of Remainder of Study

The study consists of five major chapters: Chapter 1 is introductory in nature; Chapter 2 is a review of literature; Chapter 3 examines the significance of Martin Buber's concept of relation for communication theory; Chapter 4 examines the significance of Martin Buber's concept of dialogue for communication theory; and Chapter 5 serves as a summary and an evaluation of the significance of Buber's I-Thou philosophy of dialogical relation for communication scholars, researchers, and theory.

Basic Assumptions of the Study

1. That Martin Buber's philosophy of dialogue deserves examination and consideration as a possible basic philosophic approach to communication theory and instruction.
2. That careful consideration of Martin Buber's philosophy of dialogue will add to the current body of knowledge and theory presently available to the communication scholar.
3. That Martin Buber's contribution to communication theory is not only philosophical, but practical and functional as well.

References

Buber, M. Between Man and Man. New York: Macmillan, 1965.

Clark, A. Philosophers on Rhetoric. In D. G. Douglas (Ed.), Skokie, Illinois: National Textbook Company, 1973.

Diamond, M. L. Martin Buber: Jewish Existentialist. New York: Oxford University Press, 1960.

Friedman, M. Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue. New York: Harper and Row, 1960.

Friedman, M. Introduction. In M. Buber Between Man and Man. New York: Macmillan, 1965.

Heim, K. Ontologie und Theologie. Zeitschrift fur Theologie und Kirche, Meue Folge XI, 1930. In M. Buber Between Man and Man. New York: Macmillan, 1965.

Hodes, A. Martin Buber. New York: The Viking Press, 1971.

Hora, T. Psychotherapy, Existence, and Religion. In H. M. Ruitenbeck (Ed.), Psychoanalysis and Existential Philosophy. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, and Co., Ltd., 1962.

Johannesen, R. L. The Emerging Concept of Communication as Dialogue. The Quarterly Journal of Speech, 1971, LVII, No. 4.

Jourard, S. M. The Transparent Self. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1964.

Moore, D. J. Martin Buber: Prophet of Religious Secularism. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1974.

Poulakos, J. The Components of Dialogue. Western Speech, 1974, XXXVIII, No. 3.

Stewart, J. Foundations of Dialogic Communication. Unpublished Manuscript, 1975.

Stewart, J. & D'Angelo, G. Together. Reading, Ma.: Addison Wesley Publishing Company, 1975.

Chapter 2

A Review of the Related Literature

The literature focused upon Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy was investigated for the following purposes: First, to gain understanding of the philosophical foundations of Buber's I-Thou concept; second, to attain insight into previous applications of his thought by scholars in communication and related disciplines; and third, to identify the recurrent themes which are relevant to communication theory and instruction. In order to address the purposes stated above, Chapter 2 has been divided into the following three sections: (1) Foundations of the I-Thou philosophy; (2) Dialogue; The Third Revolution in Communication; and (3) Communication Research and Dialogue. The review of literature includes studies of Buber's writings; chapters including his thought in books on human dialogue, interpersonal perception and communication; articles which have appeared in communication journals; and unpublished manuscripts concerned with dialogic communication.

Foundations of the I-Thou Philosophy

In this section, the studies which focus on the philosophical foundations of Martin Buber's I-Thou concept are examined. Several of these studies establish a historical perspective of the I-Thou concept. A second group of studies identify selected contemporary thinkers and their perspective of the emerging I-Thou concept.

Historical perspective. In the introduction of their book, The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication, Matson and Montagu (1972) wrote:

> As the roster of contributors to the present volume attests, the deepest wellspring from which the dialogical philosophy draws inspiration is the body of writings of a number of contemporary thinkers often classified together as 'religious existentialists': specifically, Martin Buber, Gabriel Marcel, Paul Tillich, and (by a liberal extension of the adjective "religious") Karl Jaspers. (p. 6)

Matson and Montagu propose that the symbolic paradigm of the dialogic interpersonal encounter, formulated independently by both Marcel and Buber, is the relation of I and Thou (p. 16). The I and Thou, or I-Thou, concept is not new; rather there has been a resurgence of interest in the possibilities of I-Thou dialogic relation. Matson and Montagu stated:

> To be sure, neither in content nor in phraseology is this idea entirely original with the present-day philosophers of existence; its intellectual antecedents may be traced at least to the great nineteenth-century advocate of human understanding, Wilhelm Dilthey--and in its deepest intuition the concept is as old as the human family and the social community. (p. 6)

According to Matson and Montagu, it was Dilthey that spoke of "The rediscovery of the I in the Thou" (p. 7). To Wilhelm Dilthey, and later to the contemporary existentialists mentioned above, the I-Thou dialogic concept was both a theory of communication and a theory of knowledge. Matson and Montagu concluded, "It (I-Thou) has to do with the manner in which we gain understanding of the world--in particular the world of other selves. But it has equally to do with the manner in which we gain self-understanding; and it may be that this is the crucial point of the theory" (p. 7).

In Martin Buber's Between Man and Man, Ludwig Feuerbach spoke of the I and Thou relation. He said:

> The individual man for himself does not have man's being in himself, either as a moral being, or a thinking being. Man's being is contained only in community in the unity of man with man--a unity which rests, however, only on the reality of the difference between I and Thou. (pp. 147-148)

Commenting on the significance of Feuerbach's insight, Laing, Phillipson, and Lee stated, "Over a hundred years ago Feuerbach effected a pivotal step in philosophy... He discovered that philosophy had been exclusively oriented around 'I'... no one had realized that the 'you' is as primary as the 'I'" (p. 3).

Feuerbach's concept of the ontologically interpersonal nature of the human being has been called "the Copernican revolution in modern thought" (p. 148). Human beings existed in Feuerbach's concept as persons-in-relation; personhood was seen as interpersonal phenomena (p. 21).

Further development of the I-Thou relational concept is found in the writing of Georg Simmel. Maurice Friedman (1960) wrote, "Simmel, too, is concerned with relation--the relation between man and God, between man and man, and between man and nature" (p. 48). Friedman proposes that, according to Simmel, believing in a man means "to have a relation of trust to the whole man, a relation which takes precedence over any proof concerning his particular qualities" (p. 48). Friedman concludes that Simmel's belief in a trusting relation between persons is quite similar to Buber's own I-Thou relational concept (p. 48).

In the first part of this section, the I-Thou concept has been briefly traced from its inception in the philosophy of Wilhelm Dilthey, through the revolutionary clarification by Ludwig Feuerbach, to the notion of the trusting relation between persons in the writing of Georg Simmel. The second part of the section will contain a contemporary perspective of the I-Thou concept through a review of the writings of selected contemporary thinkers.

<u>Contemporary perspective</u>. Mead (1934), in <u>Mind, Self, and Society</u>, established the category of "the generalized other" (p. 154). Mead stated:

> The organized community or social group which gives to the individual his unity of self may be called 'the generalized other.' The attitude of the generalized other is the attitude of the whole community...any thing--any object or set of objects, whether animate or inanimate, human or animal, or merely physical--toward which he acts, or to which he responds, socially, is an element in what for him is the generalized other; by taking the attitudes of which toward himself he becomes conscious of himself as an object or individual, and thus develops a self or personality. (p. 154).

Man develops self or personality, according to Mead, by responding to his fellow man, nature, and even inanimate objects. According to Matson and Montagu, the significance of the generalized other for the self in the philosophy of Mead is similar to Dilthey's understanding of "the rediscovery of the I in the Thou" (p. 7). Personal growth occurs in the relation of self and generalized other; in the relation of I and Thou.

Matson and Montagu relate a similar message conveyed by Gabriel Marcel through his formulation of the concept of intersubjectivity (p. 7). Marcel wrote:

> My experience is in a real communication with other experiences. I cannot be cut off from the one without being cut off from the other... The fact is that we can understand ourselves by starting from the other, or from others, and only by starting from them. (p. 7)

Karl Jaspers, in Matson and Montagu's The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication, commented that "we are what we are only through the community of mutually conscious understandings. There can be no man who is a man for himself alone, as a mere individual" (p. 7). Selfhood emerges in active participation with others in the creation of mutual understanding. Again, the important variable in the development of the self is the relation between the self and other. Gabriel Marcel and Karl Jaspers reached a similar conclusion in their philosophy of human personhood. As Matson and Montagu stated, the religious existentialists lived and believed in the understanding that "knowledge of the highest order (whether of the world, of oneself, or of the other) is to be sought and found not through detachment but through connection, not by objectivity but by intersubjectivity..." (p. 6).

Laing, Phillipson, and Lee, in the book Interpersonal Perception, posited their analysis of the growing interest in the significance of the other:

> Some philosophers, some psychologists, and more sociologists have recognized the significance of the fact that social life is not made up of a myriad I's and me's only, but of you, he, she, we, and them, also, and that the experience of you or he or them or us may indeed be as primary and compelling (or more so) as the experience of 'me.' (p. 3)

The experience of the other is as primary and compelling for the self as is the self's own experience. Laing, et al. concluded, "The critical realization here is that I am not the only perceiver and agent in my world" (p. 3).

The preceding section of Chapter 2 established a foundation for the I-Thou philosophy through historical and contemporary perspectives of the I-Thou concept. The first part of the section was devoted to examination of the I-Thou philosophy as discussed in the writings of Dilthey, Feuerbach, and Simmel. This examination constituted the historical perspective. The second part of the section was committed to the contemporary perspective of the I-Thou concept. Consideration was given to Mead's concept of the generalized other, Marcel's theory of intersubjectivity, and Jaspers' understanding of being through community. Personal growth was seen to develop not in the self, or in the other, but in the dialogical relation between the I and the Thou.

The second section of Chapter 2 will give consideration to research which proposes that "dialogue is the third revolution in communication" (Matson and Montagu, 1967, p. 3). The potential relationship between the I-Thou dialogical concept and communication will be examined.

Dialogue: The Third Revolution in Communication

This section of the review of literature considers a single idea; that is, dialogue as the third revolution in communication. This concept had its origination in Floyd W. Matson and Ashley Montagu's book, The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication. The importance of this section for the study is to serve as a transition between the philosophical foundations of the I-Thou concept and the applications of Buber's dialogic philosophy by contemporary communication scholars. Matson and Montagu provided meaningful insight into the relationship of dialogue and human communication. This section proposes to examine the importance of their insight.

Matson and Montagu (1967) stated that the field of human communication has undergone a revolution (p. 1). They wrote:

> It would be more accurate to say that the realm of communications, like the modern world it accurately reflects, has undergone a succession of revolutions--or (to do justice to the truism) a single continuing revolution of recurrent active phases, already more than a century old, the end of which is yet beyond our vision or prevision. (p. 1)

According to Matson and Montagu, there have been two previous revolutions in human communication. The first revolution in communication was the development of scientific investigation and mechanical engineering; it gave us the telephone, radio, and the giant printing press. The principals of the revolution were Thomas Edison and Alexander Graham Bell (pp. 1-2). The second communication-revolution was the maturation of scientific theory and human engineering. It has given us cybernetics and mass motivation research. Matson and Montagu propose that with the second revolution came the rise of the principle of mechanization (p. 4). This concept involves increased reliance and investment of authority by man upon electronic communication partners. This reliance, according to Matson and Montagu, fostered a mechanical style of thought, with emphasis on human engineering through strategic gamesmanship and combative role playing (p. 4). The second revolution affirmed a monological mode of communication; a linear, one-way communication system from sender to receiver. The revolutionary theory presented here is not intended as an exhaustive study of Matson and Montagu's concept. Rather, it is presented to establish a context in which to consider the third revolution in communication: dialogue.

Dialogue, Matson and Montagu relate, has been viewed as a counterrevolution to the monologic, mechanist systems created in the second revolution (p. 5). They state:

> The favorable reception that the dialogical theory of communication is receiving, in so many circles of thought and influence, is surely an index of its relevance--both to the felt needs of men and to the felt lacks of conventional theory. (p. 5).

The revolution, then, is identified as the view of human communication as dialogue (p. 3). The origin and interest in the concept of communication as dialogue are pertinent to the study.

Matson and Montagu identify Martin Buber as the earliest contemporary spokesman of the theory of dialogue (p. 5). While Buber's theory will be examined thoroughly in Chapter 3, it may be safely said that the concept of dialogic communication has drawn international interest. Matson and Montagu catalog the diversification of interest in dialogue in the following paragraph taken from The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication. Pope Paul VI, in his encyclical "Ecclesiam Suam," issued an endorsement of the principle of dialogue, both as practical mission of the church and as a norm for all human encounter (p. 5). Joost A. M. Meerloo, in "Conversation and Communication," stressed the importance of dialogic communication for understanding of self and other (pp. 141-147). Meerloo stated, "There is a mutual redemption and mutual self-clarification in human communication" (p. 142). He concluded, "Mutual understanding is the result of maximal communication through mutual empathy" (p. 143). Reuel L. Howe wrote, "Indeed, this is the miracle of dialogue: it can bring relationship into being, and it can bring into being once again a relationship that has died" (p. 148). Howe also saw a relationship between dialogue and love. "Dialogue is to love, what blood is to the body. When the flow of blood stops, the body dies. When dialogue stops, love dies and resentment and hate are born" (p. 148).

The theory of dialogue as a revolutionary concept in communication has been examined in the second section of the review. The writings of Buber, Marcel, Jaspers, Howe, and Meerloo attest to a contemporary interest in the concept of dialogical relation. Martin Buber has been identified as the earliest contemporary spokesman of the theory of dialogue whose writings have "served as a stimulus for the views of others on dialogue" (pp. 373-382).

Two major questions will be considered in the final section of this review:

1. What significance, or application, have communication scholars given to Buber's I-Thou dialogical philosophy in their writing and research?
2. What, if any, recurring themes emerge from the writing and the research?

Section three of the review, entitled "Communication and Dialogue," is concerned specifically with communication research on the I-Thou dialogical philosophy of Martin Buber and his importance in the development of the concept of dialogue.

Communication Research and Dialogue

The majority of communication research completed on Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy has centered on his concept of dialogue. This is a natural phenomenon. Buber's philosophy has been called a philosophy of dialogue. He has been identified as the earliest contemporary spokesman of the theory of dialogue (Matson and Montagu, 1967, p. 5). Martin Buber established a language of dialogue in the early twentieth century through his book I and Thou. In the last ten years, communication scholars have written with increasing awareness and clarity regarding the significance of Buber's theory of dialogue for communication (Clark, 1973; Johannesen, 1971; Jourard, 1964; Poulakos, 1974; Stewart, 1975; and Stewart & D'Angelo, 1975). The author will examine this research and identify its recurring themes in the final section of the review. Johannesen (1971) has noted, "Among contemporary existentialist philosophers, Martin Buber is the primary one who places the concept of dialogue at the heart of his view of human communication and existence." He continued, "His writings have served as a stimulus for the views of others on dialogue." Johannesen's assertions supported the statement of Matson and Montagu regarding the primacy of Buber as the contemporary spokesman of the dialogic concept.

In his article, "The Emerging Concept of Communication As Dialogue," Johannesen established the characteristics of dialogue from a communication standpoint. That is, he attempted to identify communication behaviors and attitudes that would enhance the possibility of dialogical relation. Johannesen identified six characteristics of dialogue: genuineness, accurate empathic understanding, unconditional positive regard, presentness, spirit of mutuality, and a supportive psychological climate. "Dialogue," he wrote, "seems to represent more of a communication attitude, principle, or orientation than a specific method, technique, or format." Martin Buber's I-Thou concept is at the heart of this communication attitude. "Martin Buber's concept of two primary human attitudes and relationships, I-Thou and I-It, is seminal in influencing the emerging concept of communication as dialogue." "For Buber," wrote Johannesen, "The increasing difficulty of achieving genuine dialogue between men of divergent natures and beliefs represents the central problem for the fate of mankind;" the future of man, he feels, depends on a rebirth of dialogue.

Poulakos (1974) identified the components of dialogue as the Self, the Other, and the Between (p. 199). Poulakos believed that his major contribution was not an analysis of the self or the other, but consideration of the between. He wrote:

> At this point, it may be said that the most significant thing about these two components (self and other) is that they both possibilitate and subsequently define a third reality which belongs to neither one of them but without which dialogue is negated. This reality Martin Buber designates as the realm of the 'Between.' (p. 207)

Buber (1965) himself had noted:

> If I and another come up against one another... The sum does not exactly divide, there is a remainder, somewhere, where the souls end and world has not yet begun, and this remainder is what is essential. (p. 204)

Poulakos concludes that from the available communication literature, theorists and researchers have largely neglected to pursue the Between as an object of inquiry (p. 208). Based on Buber's concept, Poulakos proposed that the Between is a component, like the Self and Other, continually growing, changing, and developing (p. 210).

Acceptance and confirmation, according to Poulakos, occur in the Between and are essential elements of interpersonal relation. "Accepting the other means allowing him to partake in one's life. It also means denouncing one's egocentric tendencies, an act of admission of personal imperfection and desire for growth possible only in relation" (p. 206). Confirming is the act of accepting. "According to Buber," Poulakos wrote, "confirmation constitutes the basis of the existence of man with man. Every man needs confirmation from others" (p. 207). Poulakos concluded by emphasizing that the Between, as the arena of acceptance and confirmation, might become a new direction in future communication research (p. 212).

Stewart and D'Angelo (1975) incorporated Buber's I-Thou dialogic philosophy into the basic assumption of their book Together. Their approach to teaching and learning interpersonal communication was stated: "The quality of our interpersonal relationships determines who we are becoming as persons" (p. 23). The authors gave credit to Martin Buber's understanding that "Man becomes man with the other self. He would not be man at all without the I-Thou relationship"

(Friedman, 1965, p. SVIII) as a philosophical foundation of their assumption.

In his paper entitled, "Foundations of Dialogic Communication," Stewart (1975) wrote, "The clearest expression of the relationship between dialogic communication and philosophical anthropology's holism appears in Martin Buber's later writings" (p. 19). "Buber's emphasis," wrote Stewart, "on the importance of holism takes on special importance for the student of dialogic communication when it becomes clear that for Buber the <u>whole</u> person means the person as an <u>interpersonal</u> phenomenon" (p. 20). Buber's philosophy develops the concept of the ontologically interpersonal nature of the human being; the notion that personhood is an interpersonal phenomenon (p. 21). Stewart commented, "In his (Buber's) work are combined all the fundamental elements of dialogical approach to speech communication" (p. 22).

Griffin and Patton (1971) recognized the significance of the essays of Fromm and Buber as insightful and penetrating observations of the human condition (p. 160). Yet, they remained uncertain as to how the relationships that Fromm and Buber proposed could be achieved.

Several conclusions may be drawn from the communication research. First, dialogue has been a recurring topic of research. The writings of Clark, Jourard, Johannesen, Poulakos, Stewart, and D'Angelo support this statement. These scholars have identified the foundations, characteristics, and components of dialogue. Secondly, Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy was viewed as significant to communication theory through review of communication literature. The interest in the dialogic concept is both historical and contemporary. Third, there remain essential elements of Martin Buber's philosophy that have yet to command the attention of communication researchers. Mention has only been given to the spheres of relation, the principle of inclusion, and the problems impeding the growth of dialogue. The concepts might prove to be fruitful areas of research for the communication scholar.

This review of the literature has traced the development of the I-Thou dialogical concept from historical origin to contemporary communication perspectives. The significance of Martin Buber's contribution to the development of the I-Thou concept has been established. Chapter 3 proposes to examine the significance of Buber's I-Thou philosophy for communication theory and instruction through analysis of Buber's concepts of relation and dialogue.

References

Buber, M. Between Man and Man. New York: Macmillan, 1965.

Clark, A. Philosophers On Rhetoric. In D. G. Douglas (Ed.), Skokie, Illinois: National Textbook Company, 1973.

Giffin, K. & Patton, B. R. Fundamentals of Interpersonal Communication. New York: Harper and Row, 1971.

Friedman, M. Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue. New York: Harper and Row, 1960.

Heim, K. Ontologie und Theologie. Zeitschrift fur Theologie und Kirche, Meue Folge XI, 1930. In M. Buber, Between Man and Man. New York: Macmillan, 1965.

Howe, R. In Matson, F., & Montagu, A. The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication. New York: Free Press, 1967.

Jaspers, K. In Matson, F., & Montagu, A. The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication. New York: Free Press, 1967.

Johannesen, R. L. The Emerging Concept of Communication as Dialogue. The Quarterly Journal of Speech, 1971, LVII, No. 4.

Jourard, S. M. The Transparent Self. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1964.

Laing, R. D., Phillipson, H., & Lee, A. R. Interpersonal Perception. New York: Springer Publishing Company, 1966.

Marcel, G. In Matson, F., & Montagu, A. The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication. New York: Free Press, 1967.

Matson, F., & Montagu, A. The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication. New York: Free Press, 1967.

Mead, G. H. Mind, Self, and Society. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934.

Meerloo, J. In Matson, F., & Montagu, A. The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication. New York: Free Press, 1967.

Poulakos, J. The Components of Dialogue. Western Speech, 1974, XXXVIII, No. 3.

Stewart, J. Foundations of Dialogic Communication, Unpublished Manuscript, 1975.

Stewart, J., & D'Angelo, G. Together. Reading, Ma.: Addison-Wesley, 1975.

Chapter 3

The Significance of Martin Buber's I-Thou Philosophy for Interpersonal Communication Theory: Relation

The concept of relation is of primary importance in Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy. In Between Man and Man, Buber (1965) writes:

> The individual is a fact of existence insofar as he steps into a living relation with other individuals... The fundamental fact of human existence is man with man. (p. 209)

Buber's I-Thou philosophy is a philosophy of relation; relation between the Self or I, and the Other, or Thou. Martin Buber is deeply concerned with the interpersonal relation which he views as the meaning and substance of life. "All actual life," he states, "is encounter" (1970).

With this in mind, the following two specific objectives for Chapter 3 are:

1. Interpreting Buber's use of the term "Thou."
2. Defining Martin Buber's concept of relation.
    a. In what areas, or spheres, does relation occur?
    b. What are the two relational attitudes of man?
    c. What are the essential elements of relation?
    d. What are the primary steps in the developmental process of relation?

Interpreting Buber's Use of the term "Thou:

Martin Buber wrote I and Thou in 1923. Written originally in German, the title of the book was Ich und Du. The translation of the title has resulted in confusion regarding Buber's philosophy. Kaufmann (1970), in his introduction to I and Thou, notes that the word Thou is not very similar to the German Du (p. 14). "German lovers say Du to one another and so do friends. Du is spontaneous and unpretentious, remote from formality, pomp, and dignity. What lovers or friends say Thou to one another? Thou is scarcely ever said spontaneously" (p. 14). Kaufmann continues, "Thou immediately brings to mind God; Du does not" (p. 14).

The English language does not have a term that corresponds in meaning to the German "Du." Therefore, the use of "Thou" has implied a metaphysical meaning not intended by Buber. Martin Buber's I and Thou is primarily a book about human relationships. While it also discusses relation between man and nature, and man and spiritual being, its primary focus is on interpersonal relation.

Martin Buber (1970) states an essential assumption of the book when he proposes that "All actual life is encounter" (p. 62). Stewart (1975) concludes, "In Buber's view, then, humanness is ontologically an interpersonal phenomenon" (p. 22). Kaufmann, in his introduction to Buber's I and Thou, emphatically states the proper usages of the word "Thou":

> Thou is a preacher's word but also dear to anti-clerical romantic poets. Thou is found in Shakespeare and at home in the English Bible although recent versions of the Scriptures have tended to dispense with it. Thou can mean many things, but it has no place whatever in the language of direct, nonliterary, spontaneous human relationships. (p. 15)

In his translation of I and Thou, Kaufmann chooses to use the word You in place of Thou. The title remains unchanged; however, You is used in the text instead of Thou. Thus, I-Thou relation becomes I-You relation. This is more than a simple semantic change. Rather, it is Kaufmann's pointed attempt to establish a human quality of relation in Buber's philosophy. The study will follow Kaufmann's example in the use of the You in the remaining text of this study.

As stated in the introduction, the significance of the I-You philosophy has been realized in the areas of philosophy, religion, education, and psychotherapy. The purpose of Chapter 3 is to examine the possible significance of Buber's concept of relation for communication theory.

Examining the Meaning of the Concept of Relation

The purpose of this section of Chapter 3 is to examine the concept of relation and its role in the I-You philosophy of Martin Buber. The author proposes to resolve four principle questions concerning relation:

1. In what areas, or spheres, does relation occur?
2. What are the two relational attitudes of man?
3. What are the essential elements of relation?

4. What are the primary steps in the developmental process of relation?

In order to address these questions, the author has divided this section of the chapter into four corresponding parts. Each part bears the question it addresses as its title.

<u>In what areas, or spheres, does relation occur?</u> Buber (1970) identifies three spheres in which relation may occur. Relation may develop between man and nature, man and man, and man and spiritual being (pp. 56-57). In the sphere of relation Buber terms "life with nature," he proposes, "Here the relation vibrates in the dark and remains below language. The creatures stir across from us, but they are unable to come to us, and the You we say to them sticks to the threshold of language" (p. 57). The person may feel "in relation" with a living creature or inanimate object, yet no evidence of this relation can become apparent through language. This is also the case in the sphere of relation Buber terms life with spiritual beings. He states:

> Here the relation is wrapped in a cloud but reveals itself, it lacks but creates language. We hear no You and yet feel addressed; we answer--creating, thinking, acting: with our being we speak the basic word, unable to say You with our mouth. (p. 57)

The person, as in "life with nature" may feel addressed or "in relation" with metaphysical being, yet this relation, too, remains outside the realm of language.

For this reason, this study is concerned with the concept of relation as it occurs between man and man. The relation between persons, or life with men, enters into language. Buber writes, "We can give and receive the You" (p. 57). The majority of this study is concerned with the philosophy of Martin Buber in the I-Thou interpersonal relationships as they enter into language and their possible significance to communication theory. The relational spheres of life with nature and life with spiritual beings may prove fruitful areas of research for researchers in communication, philosophy, theology, or a number of other disciplines. However, the emphasis of this study is clearly on interpersonal relation; the dialogue between man and man.

While it is true that Martin Buber's I-You philosophy is deeply rooted in the interpersonal nature of man, it is equally accurate to assert that Martin Buber is a religious writer. These statements are not mutually exclusive; a denial of either is to miss an essential message of Buber's philosophy. "In every sphere," writes Buber (1970), "through everything that becomes present to us, we gaze toward the train of the eternal You; in each we perceive a breath of it; in every You we address the external You, in every sphere according to its manner" (p. 57). For Buber, there is an intimation of the relation between man and spiritual being in all three spheres of relation. The essential difference between the three spheres involves the manner of address between the participants in relation. The following examples clarify this essential difference, and shed light on the nature of relation as it occurs in all three spheres.

The first sphere is the relation man and nature, or life with nature. Buber writes:

> Here the relation vibrates in the dark and remains below language. The creatures stir across from us, but they are unable to come to us, and the You we say to them sticks to the threshold of language. (p. 57)

In a forest, or at the sea, man comes in contact with the environment around him. According to Buber, if man allows himself to see his environment in its totality, he becomes a partner in a reciprocal relation between human being and natural being. Buber states:

> There is nothing that I must not see in order to see, and there is no knowledge that I must forget. Rather is everything, picture and movement, species and instance, law and number included and inseparably fused. (pp. 58-59)

Buber illustrates his point through the potential relation between a man and a tree. He writes:

> I contemplate a tree. I can accept it as a picture: a rigid pillar in a flood of light, or splashes of green traversed by the gentleness of the blue silver ground... I can assign it to a species and observe it as an instance, with an eye to its construction and its way of life. (p. 57)

The tree remains only as an object; the sum of its height, weight, circumference, and species. Pragmatically, it may also be viewed only as a certain number of board feet of timber. Buber proposes another option for perceiving the tree. He states:

> But it can also happen, if will and grace are joined, that as I contemplate the tree I am drawn into a relation, and the tree ceases to be an it... The tree is no impression, no play of my imagination, no aspect of a mood; it confronts me bodily and has to deal with me as I must deal with it--only differently. (p. 58)

In relation with nature, the relation "vibrates in the dark and remains below language" (pp. 56-57). Finally, Buber questions, "Does the tree then have consciousness, similar to your own? I have no experience of that. But thinking that you have brought this off in your own case, must you again divide the indivisable? What I encounter is neither the soul of a tree nor a dryad, but the tree itself" (pp. 58-59). Human beings cannot prove the existence of relation between themselves and natural being. However, Buber believes that persons who have felt themselves addressed by natural being can no longer deny the presence of being totally outside the realm of their objective experience. What does this have to do with the relation between person and person? Three important distinctions in Buber's concept of relation emerge in the sphere of man and nature that have direct application in the sphere of man and man.

Relation, regardless of the sphere, is reciprocal. Buber (1970) writes, "One should not try to dilute the meaning of the relation: relation is reciprocity" (p. 58). The reciprocal nature of relation is the first important distinction of relation that is identified by Buber in "life with nature" and developed in "life with man" and "life with spiritual beings." The reciprocal nature of relation is a common element of all three spheres of relation.

The second distinction found in life with nature involves the manner of address between the participants in relation. In the relation between man and nature, the address remains below language. The relation between man and man enters language; here the address, or communication, is verbal and nonverbal. In the relation with spiritual being, man hears no spoken voice and yet feels addressed. Buber states, "We answer--creating, thinking, acting..." (p. 57). Man feels addressed in all three spheres of relation. The interpersonal relation is unique as it enters language; one may be addressed verbally and nonverbally.

The relation between person and person has special significance in Buber's concept of relation. He proposes that the person who is available to relation in all three spheres may feel addressed in all relational areas. However, in interpersonal relation, the intent becomes obvious; the relation enters language. The interpersonal relation is unique as it affords the participants both verbal and nonverbal opportunities for interaction. The manner of address is the second important distinction of Buber's concept of relation.

Buber also proposes a spiritual element in all forms of address due to the similarity of relation in all three spheres. This is the third important distinction of his concept of relation. In silence, man may feel commonly addressed in the relation between himself and nature, self and other, and self with spiritual being. Most often, the sphere of relation between man and spiritual being is interpreted to mean the relation between man and God. Diamond (1960) writes that the use of the term "spiritual beings" unfortunately suggests extrasensory or metaphysical phenomena. He states, "As Buber uses it, the term refers to all the products of human creativity--to works of art, philosophical systems and the like" (p. 23). In the sphere of relation between man and spiritual being, or stated differently, between man and the products of human creativity, man feels addressed by a work of art or a symphony of music and many enter into relation with it. He may be similarly addressed by all products of human creativity. It is important to remember that relation, in all spheres, is reciprocal. When Buber speaks of the relation between man and God, he uses the term "Eternal Thou," or "Eternal You." This, according to Diamond, is a different realm than the sphere of relation between man and spiritual being. This is a theological as well as an interpersonal understanding of relation. Martin Buber is clearly a religious writer. He realizes a sacred presence in the secular relation between man and man. That is, he believes there is the possibility between man and the Eternal You in every situation where two persons enter into relation. Whether the persons realize the potential presence is totally their decision and largely a result of their value system. Buber contends, however, that the secular relation between persons is at the same time a sacred event.

For the purpose of this study, the concentration is on the relation between man and man and on the development of a structural model of relation and dialogue based on the

I-You philosophy. The religious nature of Buber's writing is mentioned here in fairness to Buber and the reader. Buber speaks directly to the fundamental issue of improving interpersonal relations.

Buber also identifies a spiritual aspect of the relation between person and person. The acceptance or rejection of the spiritual nature of relation is not essential for the purposes outlined in this study. Rather, it is suggested that the reader focus his or her attention on the writings of Buber as they pertain directly to interpersonal relation.

The study now focuses on the two interpersonal relation attitudes of man according to Martin Buber; the I-You and the I-It.

<u>What are the two relational attitudes of man</u>? There are two basic words, or attitudes, of relation in the interpersonal philosophy of Martin Buber. They are actually "word pairs" rather than words. Buber (1970) writes, "One basic word is the word pair I-You... The other basic word is the word pair I-It..." (p. 53). "Basic words," Buber proposes, "do not state something that might exist outside them; by being spoken they establish a mode of existence" (p. 53). Thus, the I-You and I-It word pairs are not actually spoken words; rather, they describe two possible relational attitudes with which man may approach interpersonal relation.

The I-You and the I-It imply a person's orientation toward the other person in relation. The two word pairs are Buber's attempt to describe the values or attitudes the two partners bring to the relation. As stated above, they are not spoken words.

Why does Buber propose only two potential relational attitudes for man? Kaufmann (1970), in the prologue to Buber's I and Thou, comments:

> Those who tell of two ways and praise one are recognized as prophets or great teachers. They save man from confusion and hard choices. They offer a single choice that is easy to make because those who do not take the path that is commended to them live a wretched life... Wisdom offers simple schemes, but truth is not so simple. Not all simplicity is wise. But a wealth of possibilities breeds dread. Hence, those who speak of many possibilities speak to the few and are of help to even fewer. The wise offer only two ways, of which one is good, and thus help many. (p. 9)

The I-You and I-It relational attitudes apply to all three spheres of relation. The "tree" example discussed above clarifies the relationship of the I-You and I-It attitudes to the three spheres of relation.

Buber states that many experience the tree; objectifying it through attention to its particulars. The particulars might include species, height, weight, and density of wood. This constitutes an I-It orientation in man. The tree exists only in the objective experience of man; its worth and purpose determined solely by him. With an I-It orientation, a person approaches the three with some sort of intention. For example, to determine how many board feet of lumber the tree represents for later use. In contrast, a man may approach the tree as nothing more than a tree. Its purpose rests in its own existence. If will and grace are joined, according to Buber, man may enter into relation with the tree. He may feel addressed, sensing the presence of "being" wholly other than his own being. The tree ceases to exist as an object of his experience, but emerges as a separate partner in a reciprocal relation between human being and natural being. The person entering relation with an I-You orientation has no intention other than to enjoy the other being in its own right. That is, the tree is enjoyed as a tree, not as potential lumber. This constitutes an I-You relational attitude in man. The experience is not "in him" as it is in the I-It attitude, but he participates in a relation "between" himself and the tree. What does this have to do with the relation between man and man? To answer this question, it is essential that the characteristics of the I-You and I-It word pairs are examined.

Wood (1960), in his book entitled Martin Buber's Ontology, writes, "The world as developed by our desire and need for security is a world organized for predictable experience and consequent utility. Being exists round about us as entities and their interchanges, but developed experience views them as things and processes" (p. 70). It is important to note that "being" as used by Wood, refers to natural being, human being, and spiritual being. Being is seen as a series of things and processes in the I-It attitude. Every thing borders on another thing. Processes are analyzed and become predictable. This perception may be called objectification in the sphere of natural being. However, its proper title in the sphere of human interaction is dehumanization. Persons are viewed as objects; their behavior a series of predictable events. Uniqueness is lost in the desire for security, structure, and utility. Persons are viewed as the sum of their usable and exploitable qualities. Human beings become the means to an end, rather than the end themselves. In the text that follows, the nature of the I-It attitude is explored. The I-It orientation is characterized as the realm of experiencing, detachment, impersonalism, and utility.

Buber (1970) describes the I-It relation as the world of experience (p. 55). He states:

> We are told that man experiences his world. What does this mean? Man goes over the surfaces of things and experiences them. He brings back from them some knowledge of their condition--an experience. He experiences what there is to things. (p. 55)

Experience occurs in man; he possesses it. He is in indirect relation with his subject. Direct relation demands participation; relation is reciprocal. Buber concludes:

> Those who experience do not participate in the world. For the experience is 'in them' and not between them and the world. The world does not participate in experience. It allows itself to be experienced, but it is not concerned, for it contributes nothing and nothing happens to it. (p. 56)

Diamond (1960) views the difference between I-It and I-Thou as the distinction between the detached approach to truth and that of engagement (p. 20). "The 'I' of the I-It," writes Diamond, "differs fundamentally from the 'I' of the I-Thou; in the I-It posture the 'I' holds back--measuring, using, and even seeking to control the object of its attention--but never, as in the I-Thou relation, affirming the other just as it is in itself" (pp. 21-22). The person who holds an I-It orientation seeks detachment rather than relation. The I-You oriented person seeks participation in relation.

Moore (1974) identifies the relationship between the I-It world and the growth of impersonalism in the writings of Martin Buber. Moore states, "Again and again throughout his writings Buber has pointed to the growing impersonalism between man and man and the increasing power of I-It" (p. 108). In the realm of human interaction, impersonalism means dehumanization. Buber perceives human beings who prefer to observe and use other persons whom they encounter rather than turning toward them with fulness of their being (p. 108). The other person becomes a "sum of qualities which are more or less useful to me; he is an aggregate of forces which I regard as excellent or poor prospects for my exploitation" (p. 108). Moore views the growth of the It world as a threat to the existence of man.

The I-It world is a world organized for predictable experience and consequent utility. Being, whether natural, human, or spiritual, is viewed as a series of things and processes. Persons are viewed as objects: as an aggregate of their usable qualities. The I-It orientation establishes the world of experience. Experience is an indirect form of relation. The I-It world is marked by detachment, observation, and using; the I-You world by engagement and participation. Yet, the world of It is essential for personal growth. "The world of It is a reliable world," writes Moore, "it is necessary for the growth and sustenance of human life; its organization can be surveyed and verified; it puts things in terms of categories and connections; it is comprehensible and orderable" (p. 103). The I-It world is characterized by experience, objectification, and use; yet, it is necessary for the growth of human life. On the surface, this may seem contradictory. How is it possible that as Buber calls for engagement and participation through relation, he, and his interpreters, state the need for the I-It attitude in human beings? The meaning of this paradoxical statement is clarified in the analysis of the I-You world and its characteristics. The I-It world and the I-You world are contrasted and synthesized to achieve an understanding of Martin Buber's philosophy of interpersonal relation.

The I-You word pair describes the world of relation. In contrast to the I-It world which relies on experience and objectification, the I-You world demands participation and engagement. Buber (1970) writes, "When I confront a human being as my You and speak the basic word I-You to him, then he is no thing among things nor does he consist of things" (p. 59). Persons are considered in their totality; not as the sum of their usable qualities. Each human being is addressed wholly and uniquely. Wood (1960) comments upon the progression from the I-It world to the I-You world:

> Authentic truth and value emerge when one moves out of this self-articulated ordering to meet what confronts him, not as an instance of this or that structure or as an object of this or that desire, but simply as an entity, in its wholeness and uniqueness. (p. 71)

The I-It world is the world of experience and detachment. The outcome of this world is utility. The I-You world is the world of participation and engagement. The outcome of this world is relation. Buber concludes:

> --What, then, does one experience of the You?
> --Nothing at all. For one does not experience it.
> --What, then, does one know of the You?
> --Only everything. For one no longer knows particulars. (p. 61)

The I-It world and the I-You world do not strictly adhere to the world of objects and persons. That is, one may approach nature, man, or spiritual being with either an I-It attitude or an I-You attitude. Friedman (1960) explains:

> The It of I-It may equally well be a he, a she, an animal, a thing, a spirit, or even God, without a change in the primary word. Thus, I-Thou and I-It cut across the lines of our ordinary distinctions to focus our attention not upon individual objects and the causal connections but upon the relations between things, the dagwischen ("There in-between"). (p. 57)

An individual may be approached by another person with an I-It relational attitude. Human beings may approach natural beings with an I-You form of address. The choice between the I-It attitude and the I-You attitude is explained in greater detail in the structural model of relation presented in the last section of this chapter. The choosing of relational attitudes is a dynamic process; the choice between an I-It or I-Thou response is made upon every new encounter. Each interpersonal encounter is a new opportunity to enter into relation. Persons are not limited or restricted to a certain relational response unless they continually choose that option. Human beings choose their relational option, either I-You or I-It, whenever they confront or are confronted by other persons. The I-You and I-It options are the two possible relational "stands" in the interpersonal philosophy of Martin Buber.

It could follow, from the analysis presented, that the I-It world is negative and should be avoided while the I-You world is desirable and should be pursued at all times. This is not the case. Not only is permanence in the I-You world unattainable; it is also undesirable. Diamond (1960) states:

> Since it is clear that the I-Thou posture is the one to which the deeper meaning of existence is disclosed, readers are sometimes misled into thinking that the I-It is a negative, or even an evil, category in Buber's thought. This is far from being the case, '...human life neither can nor ought to overcome the connection with it...' (p. 22)

The It world is a world of structure, objectification, and order. Two questions are proposed: What are the appropriate realms of the It world? In what areas are structure, objectification, and order desirable characteristics? Diamond explains:

> The relation (I-It) is necessary and appropriate to many activities. Through knowledge acquired in detachment, man is able to achieve a reliable perspective on the world and a considerable degree of control over nature. It is in the It perspective that physicists all over the world can communicate by means of mathematical symbols that are free of the cultural nuances that haunt words such as 'democracy' and 'freedom' and make them susceptible to so many radically conflicting interpretations. (p. 22)

The I-It relation becomes a negative manner of address when it is abused. Diamond proposes, "The I-It attitude becomes a source of evil whenever the individual becomes so addicted to it that he remains absorbed in his own purposes and concerns when he should be responding in a fresh way to the beings he meets" (pp. 22-23). In his statement, Diamond calls for a "fresh way" of response between the Self and the Other. This fresh way of response is the I-You relational option described above. It is Diamond's conviction that since the I-You stance facilitates dialogue, it should be the option most often chosen by the person interested in dialogue. However, the I-You option is facilitated by the existence of the I-It relational stance. The I-It world is a necessary relational option which establishes the possibility of I-You relation. Friedman (1960) writes, "I-It is not to be regarded as simply evil, however, It is only the reliability of its ordered and surveyable world which sustains man in life" (p. 60). "The I-It world is essential for human life. It provides an ordering; a systemization of things and persons one comes in contact with. Man can live totally in the I-It world.

However, man, according to Buber, can only actualize in the I-You relation. Buber (1960) observes, "This is part of the basic truth of the human world: only It can be put in order. Only as things cease to be our You and become our It do they become subject to coordination. The You knows no system of coordinates" (p. 81). Thus, the I-It world and the I-You world are both essential for human growth and development. Rather than being mutually exclusive, the two relational options are actually mutually interdependent. The I-It orientation provides an ordered context out of which I-You relations may spring. Buber (1970) concludes with a synthesis of the two relational worlds:

> There are two basic privileges of the It-world. They induce men to consider the It-world as the world in which one has to live and also can live comfortably--and that even offers us all sorts of stimulations and excitements, activities and knowledge. In this firm and wholesome chronicle the You-moments appear as queer lyric-dramatic episodes. Their spell may be seductive, but they pull us dangerously to extremes, loosening the well-tried structure, leaving behind more doubt than satisfaction, shaking up our security--altogether uncanny, altogether indispensable. Since one must after all return into 'the world,' why not stay in it in the first place? Why not call to order that which confronts us and send it home into objectivity? And when one cannot get around saying You, perhaps to one's father, wife, companion--why not say You and mean It? After all, producing the sound 'You' with one's vocal cords does not by any means entail speaking the uncanny basic word. Even whispering an amorous You with one's Soul is hardly dangerous as long as in all seriousness one means nothing but experiencing and using. One cannot live in the pure present: it would consume us if care were not taken that it is overcome quickly and thoroughly. But in pure past one can live; in fact, only there can a life

> be arranged. One only has to fill every moment with experiencing and using, and it ceases to burn. And in all the seriousness of truth, listen: without It a human being cannot live. But whoever lives only with that is not human. (pp. 84-85)

As a point of illustration, the I-You and I-It relational option may be conceptualized as two concentric circles; the smaller I-You cirlce inside the larger I-It circle. Interpersonal tension is the result of the expansion of the smaller I-You circle inside the larger I-It circle. As the person seeks to relate with other persons, the I-You circle grows in direct conflict with the safety and order available in the impersonal outer circle of I-It. The Self's need for relation seeks to enlarge the inner circle; the Self's need for order and structure seeks to shrink it.

The I-It orientation and the I-You relation may also be viewed as two poles of existence. The choice between the two attitudes establishes a mode of being. The choice is made over and over; the same thing or person may be an It one moment and a You the next moment. Thus, Buber writes, "There are not two kinds of human beings, but there are two poles of humanity. No human being is pure person, and none is pure ego; none is entirely actual, none entirely lacking in actuality. Each lives in a twofold I" (p. 114). Whether a man is more "other" oriented or "self" oriented depends on what he means when he says "I". No I can be spoken alone. The I implies a You or an It. "How much of a person a man is," says Buber, "depends on how strong the I of the basic word I-You is in the human duality of his I. The way he says I--

what he means when he says I--decides where a man belongs and where he goes" (p. 115).

When the I implies a You, the choice is made to enter into relation. The relation is reciprocal; it implies the meeting of will and grace. The Self willfully says You to the Other, while gracefully receiving the You of the Other. The I-You relation is the meeting of will and grace; a time of both action and a time of waiting. Self disclosure is initially a risk; a willful action by the Self. The Self then awaits grace; the unmerited entering into relation of the Other. One does not earn the You of the Other. Rather, it is given gracefully by the Other. Buber states:

> Our concern, our care must be not for the other side but for our own, not for grace but for will. Grace concerns us insofar as we proceed toward it and await its presence; it is not our object. The You confronts me. But I enter into a direct relationship to it. Thus, the relationship is at once being chosen and choosing, passive and active. (pp. 124-125)

In the second section of this chapter on "Relation," the two basic words, I-You and I-It, have been examined. The I-It world has been seen as a necessary world of structure and order in which man can live comfortably. It is a world of experiencing and using. I-It orientation occurs in all three spheres of relation. While man lives comfortably in the It world, he cannot live fully with an I-It orientation.

The I-You relation is the arena where man meets, dialogues, and actualizes with other men. Moments of I-You relation are fleeting; destined to become I-It orientation again.

I-You relation is not an unqualified good; its presence loosens security, postpones order, and leaves man with many more questions unanswered than answered. However, men that live most closely aligned with the I-It pole are not as fully human as those who continually seek and await the I-You relation.

Human beings relate, Buber believes, because persons as persons need relation to not only reach their full potential, but to be fully human. Persons enter into relation to reduce the interpersonal distance between them. In relation, isolation and separation are replaced by dialogue and community. Since Buber's primary assumption is that all actual life occurs in interpersonal interaction, persons enter into relation to actualize their own potential and the new potential created in the Between by the Self and the Other. In the I-You philosophy of Martin Buber human potential reaches its highest expression through relation. To be fully actualized necessitates full participation by the Self and the Other in the creation of the Between. In the Between, human potential is created that is greater than the sum of the potential of the Self and the Other. Thus, the partners in dialogue can only fully actualize in relation with each other. Actualization demands relation in the I-You philosophy of Martin Buber.

The I-You and the I-It are the two basic word pairs. In the following section of the chapter, the essential elements of the I-You relation are identified.

What are the essential elements of relation? The author intends to discuss seven essential elements of the I-You relation in this section. These elements are: (1) participation; (2) risk; (3) sacrifice; (4) exclusiveness; (5) will; (6) grace; and (7) reciprocity. Some of these elements have been discussed earlier in the section. However, the author proposes the examination of the elements in greater detail.

The primary element for the I-You relation is participation. In the realm of interpersonal relation, this means participation of two persons. Participation is a creative process. The two persons must be willing to create a relation that is more than the sum of themselves. Buber (1970) writes, "The purpose of relation is the relation itself--touching the You. For as soon as we touch a You, we are touched by a breath of eternal life" (pp. 112-113). Creativity involves sacrifice and risk; whether in art or interpersonal relation (p. 60). A relation is created between the partners. Both partners must participate in the creation. Thus, the first and primary element of relation is creative participation.

Creation is at once an active and a passive process. Buber proposes, "What is required is a deed that a man does with his whole being: if he commits it and speaks with his being the basic word to the form that appears, then the creative power is released and the work comes into being" (p. 60). The basic word Buber refers to is the word pair, I-You. What is meant by "the form that appears"? In the realm of interpersonal relations, it represents the You that is said by the Other. The You appears, gracefully, searching for another You. The Self gives its You to the form, or other You, that appears. Thus, the form, or relation, comes into being. The creative action involves a sacrifice and a risk. "The deed," comments Buber, "involves a sacrifice and a risk. The sacrifice: infinite possibility is surrendered on the altar of the form; all that but a moment ago floated playfully through one's perspective has to be exterminated; none of it may penetrate into the work; the exclusiveness of such a confrontation demands this" (p. 60). Buber is stating that an I-You relation is absolute; it is absolutely exclusive. While there may have been numerous relational possibilities for the Self before the I-You relation, all other possibilities are necessarily relinquished and absolute full attention is given to the Other and to the Between of one particular and unique relation. All relational possibilities are sacrificed, save one; the I-You relation between the Self and the Other.

Sacrifice and risk are the second and third essential elements of relation. In making oneself available to the Other, or giving the You, an individual must take a risk. The risk occurs as a result of the nature of the relation; the relation is the intersection of will and grace. The Self has no guarantee in giving his You that he will receive the You of the Other. This is the risk; an unconditional giving of the You with only hope that it will be reciprocated. A guarantee of reciprocation is impossible. The risk must be taken because of the nature of the I-You word pair. Buber (1970) states:

> The risk: The basic word can only be spoken with one's whole being; whoever commits himself may not hold back part of himself; and the work does not permit me, as a tree or man might, to seek relaxation in the It-world; it is imperious: if I do not serve it properly, it breaks, or it breaks me. (pp. 60-61)

One enters into relation with his whole being, or one does not enter into it at all.

Sacrifice is the third essential element of relation. In entering into relation, infinite possiblity is surrendered. That is, by the very fact that two people enter into relation, a third or fourth person is excluded as a result. This, according to Buber, is unavoidable and is not inherently a negative factor. As the relation is formalized and given structure, whether implicit or explicit, the relation moves closer to the I-It world and farther from the I-You world. This, too, is not inherently bad. Buber writes, "This, however, is the sublime melancholy of our lot that every You must become an It in our world" (p. 68). Sacrifice, then, implies the exclusionary nature of relation and the realization that in giving form to the relation it is doomed to enter the world of It. The entry of the You into the realm of the It may be temporary while the relation is recreated by partners, or nearly permanent according to the disposition of the Self and Other.

Persons generally fluctuate in a circular pattern from the I-You option to the I-It option and back again. The cycle is dynamic at its best and nearly static at its worst. While the partners strive for the freedom of the I-You world, it is of the utmost necessity that they give form to the relation. Persons reach understanding through structuring and ordering the relation. They clarify communication channels and establish a commonality of thought. However, the benefit of this ordering is in the realizing of the everpresent possibility for direct I-You relation. As one moves from the I-It world to the I-You world, structure and order are left behind. Buber states, "The It is the chrysalis, the You the butterfly" (p. 69). After an unspecified period of time, the formlessness of the relation begins to create anxiety and a wanting for order in the participants. As they begin to structure their relation, the participants facilitate the return of the You to the It. "Every You in the world," professes Buber, "is doomed by its nature to become a thing or at least to enter into thinghood again and again" (p. 69). He concludes, "In the language of objects: every thing in the world can--either before or after it becomes a thing--appear to some I as its You. But the language of objects catches only one corner of actual life" (p. 69). In sacrifice, the participants give, and give up. They give their You, wholly and without reservation. They give up infinite possibilities of relation to enter into one specific and unique relation. This relation is exclusionary; a temporary suspending of all other relations (Buber, 1970, p. 126).

The process of relation begins with distance. Interpersonal distance is overcome by the Self and the Other through participation in the creation of the Between. In the Between, relation replaces distance. The partners risk to self-disclose, and patiently wait for the graceful self-disclosure of the Other. All other relations are sacrificed, or temporarily ignored, for total concentration on one I-You relation between the Self and the Other. Soon, the freedom from order present in the Between causes anxiety for the partners. They structure their relationship, giving it names, labels, and psychological "handles" so they may grasp or understand it more clearly. The I-You relation, unorderable by nature, is transformed into the ordered I-It orientation. Having once been in I-You relation, the partners tire of the I-It structure and once again seek the freedom and spontaneity of the I-You relation. The Self and the Other recreate the Between and the cycle of relation is complete.

The fourth essential element of relation is exclusion. As a person enters a relation with his whole being nothing is held back. All other relations are temporarily suspended. Buber (1970) asserts, "Every actual relationship to another being in the world is exclusive" (p. 126). Persons sacrifice an infinite possibility of relations, choosing one relation at the exclusion of many others. This is, according to Buber, a natural phenomenon of relation. As the participants move from an I-You relation to an I-It orientation, the exclusionary nature of the relation is lost. In the I-You relation only the unique and particular being across from the Self is addressed. "Its You is freed," Buber proposes, "and steps forth to confront us in its uniqueness. It fills the firmament--not as if there were nothing else, but everything else lives in its light" (p. 126). The exclusiveness of such a confrontation demands this manner of address. Buber affirms this understanding, stating:

> The basic word I-You can be spoken only with one's whole being. The concentration and fusion into a whole being can never be accomplished without me. I require a You to become; becoming I, I say You. All actual life is encounter. (p. 62).

As the participants encounter each other, their relation becomes exclusionary; all other relational possibilities are temporarily disregarded by the partners in dialogue.

The fifth and sixth essential elements of relation exist in an interdependent relationship. The concepts of will and grace refer to the efforts of the self and other to make themselves available for relation. Will is associated with the actions of the self while grace pertains to the actions of the other. Both will and grace are intimately related with the giving of the You. Buber writes, "The You encounters me by grace--it cannot be found by seeking. But that I speak the basic word to it is a deed of my whole being, is my essential deed" (p. 62). The You of the other confronts the self gracefully; that is, it is given unearned.

The essential deed of the self is to address the other with its own You. Since the You of the other is given gracefully and is not under control of the self, the self must be concerned with giving its You; willing itself to address the You of the other. "Our concern, our care," Buber warns, "must be not for the other side but for our own, not for grace but for will. Grace concerns us insofar as we proceed toward it and await its presence; it is not our object" (p. 124). The attention of the self must be focused on giving, not receiving. The self gives through will, receives through grace. Buber concludes:

> The You encounters me. But I enter into a direct relationship to it. Thus, the relationship is election and electing, passive and active at once: An action of the whole being must approach passivity, for it does away with all partial actions and thus with any sense of action, which always depends on limited exertions. (p. 62)

Through giving willingly and receiving gracefully, the partners create their unique relation. Buber proposes:

> Such work is creation, inventing is finding. Forming is discovery. As I actualize, I uncover. I lead the form across--into the world of It. The created work is a thing among things and can be experienced and described as an aggregate of qualities. But the receptive beholder may be bodily confronted now and again. (p. 61)

Discovery leads the formless into form, and into the world of It. As the composer hears the melody, or the artist recognizes the shape, the Self realizes the potential relation, a sense of formlessness is present. The musician codifies the melody into notes, the artist paints the shape, the Self moves the relation into words; the formless becomes form. The relation between composer and melody, artist and shape, the Self and Other is in the I-You world in its formless state.

However, to communicate the formless to others, the music is codified, the shape painted, and the relation moved into static verbalization. This is necessary. Without form, only the primary person, or perceiver, may experience. Yet, to have meaning to others, the formless must be formalized into a commonly understood form. The formalized discovery can then be shared by many, and according to Buber, may again become formless to the musician, artist, Self, and to the new perceiver of the form. The music, art, and relation come alive, defying structure in relation with new perceivers. The formless is thus communicated through form. The relation is given form as a result of the partner's need for order and understanding.

The relation moves from the formlessness of the I-You world to the form and structure of the I-It world. This is only evil if, Buber asserts, it remains in the I-It orientation. If the channels remain open for reentry into the I-You relation, then form and order have their place in the relation. Although the relation evolves into the partner's experience of each other, the receptive partners may be bodily confronted by the I-You relation time and time again if they allow themselves to be open to the possibilities. They may allow themselves to be open by willing their Selves to the relation and awaiting the presence of the graceful entry of their partner. Can the existence of the relation be proven? "Tested for its objectivity, the form is not 'there' at all; but what can equal its presence?", writes Buber (1970, p. 61).

The relation, according to Buber, does not exist in the minds of the partners. That would allow them to experience it; it therefore would not be relation at all. Relation exists in the in-between. The "between" as a component of dialogue is discussed in Chapter 4. The relation is not "owned" by either of the partners; it is created by them and between them. Buber writes, "and it is an actual relation: it acts on me as I act on it" (p. 61). The relation occurs between two mutually giving and receiving partners.

Reciprocity is the seventh and final essential element of relation. The Self can only come to know the thoughts and feelings of the Other in encounter. Buber tells a story, "When we walk our way and encounter a man who comes toward us, walking his way, we know our way only and not his; for his comes to life for us only in the encounter" (p. 124). Relation by its very nature involves mutuality; a reciprocity of action. "Relation is reciprocity. My You acts on me as I act on it. Our students teach us, our works form us" (p. 67).

Buber's point here is that the You of the word pair I-You acts as much on the I as the I acts on the You. The Self and the Other mutually affect each other; both affecting the other to a similar degree. Buber recognizes the potential for the "reciprocity of action" in all three spheres of relation; man with nature, man with man, and man with spiritual being. There is a mutual interaction between every I and You. The reciprocal nature of relation is an important point in the I-You philosophy of Martin Buber.

Not all relationships benefit by a total reciprocation of thought and action. There are some I-You relationships that by their very nature may "never unfold into complete mutuality if they are to remain faithful to their nature" (p. 178). Buber explains this type of relation:

> Every I-You relationship in a situation defined by the attempt of one partner to act on the other one so as to accomplish some goal depends on a mutuality that is condemned never to become complete. (p. 179)

Examples of this kind of relation are the relation between genuine educator and pupil, psychotherapist and patient, and between minister and congregation (pp. 178-179). There is a holding back, a purpose, a hidden agenda that makes the relation, although I-You, less than whole and open. This is not a negative factor; rather, it is a necessary component of the specialized relationships mentioned above.

Generally, complete reciprocity is an essential element of relation. In the unique examples mentioned above, there is a "degree" of mutuality between the partners. This "graduated" reciprocity is necessitated by the special circumstances of the relation. These are unique situations, however, and do not minimize the importance of mutuality or reciprocity in Buber's concept of relation. Buber (1970) emphatically states, "One should not try to dilute the meaning of relation: relation is reciprocity" (p. 58). Mutuality in the giving and receiving of the You is of the utmost importance; without it, the relation ceases to be. It evolves into one partner's experiencing of the other.

In the third section of this chapter, the essential elements of relation have been discussed. Creative participation was seen as the first and primary element of relation. Participation involved a risk and a sacrifice. The risk was defined as the unconditional presentation of the You with no guarantee of the actions of the other. Sacrifice was viewed as the surrendering of an infinite number of possibilities for relation in order to enter one unique relation. In entering this relation, all other relations were temporarily suspended. Thus, the relation was exclusionary. The relation was viewed as the intersection of will and grace. Will referred to the action of the self, while grace was seen as the action of the other. Finally, to be termed a "relation," the partners had to be involved in a reciprocal venture of give and take.

To this point in Chapter 3, consideration has been given to the spheres or areas where relation occurs, the basic relational statements, and the essential elements of relation. One question remains: Why do persons relate? With this question in mind, the author proposes to present a developmental model of relation in the final section of the chapter on "Relation." The model examines the quest for relation in early childhood and develops this theme into a structural model of the lifelong search for relation.

<u>What are the primary steps in the developmental process of relation</u>? It is reported in the previous section that man must enter into relation with his whole being. He approaches the relation holding back nothing from his partner. Buber is concerned with persons actualizing; that is, becoming whole in relation. The theme of wholeness permeates his writings on the interpersonal relation.

It follows that Buber presents a wholistic concept of relation. This section completes the circle of relation. In the previous parts of this section, the author has examined Buber's understanding of where persons relate, how persons relate, and what elements compose relation. This section of the chapter presents Buber's understanding of why persons relate. Why are persons motivated to seek and search out opportunities to relate with other human beings? Buber proposes a wholistic understanding of the motivational question also. He begins with the being in early childhood, tracing the development of selfhood and discussing the separation of the I from the You. The self moves forward into detachment and then back into relation. The concept is circular in nature; the questing for relation and choice between the I-You and the I-It occurring time and time again. In the remainder of this chapter a structural model stating Martin Buber's assumption regarding the innately relational character of man is proposed: one must only consider the following statement to realize the significance that Buber gives to relation. He states, "All actual life is encounter" (p. 62).

Buber (1965) asserts, "In the beginning is the relation" (p. 78). This statement is the essence of Buber's understanding of why man seeks relation. During its prenatal days, the child exists in pure association with its mother. Buber observes, "The prenatal life of a child is a pure natural association, a flowing toward each other, a bodily reciprocity..." (p. 76). The mother and child exist in an interdependent relation; she needing the child to actualize her self as mother, the child needing her to actualize its self as person. Buber writes, "In the beginning is the relation--as the category of being, as readiness, as a model of the soul; the a priori of relation; the innate You" (p. 78). The possibility for saying You rests in the a priori of relation (pp. 78-79). Thus, the initial state of being for the child is pure relation. This predates the development of the I, You, or It. Does the child have conscious awareness of this relation? The answer to this question is unknown. The relation, conscious or unconscious, is imprinted in the memory of the child and is a significant lifelong influence on the child, according to Buber. For the purposes outlined in the study, it is sufficient to identify the a priori nature of relation as the first step in the developmental process of relation.

The longing for relation is the second step in the developmental process of relation. This is not, according to Buber, a wish to return to a prenatal state, neither is it a longing for relation with a You or an It. It is simply a longing for pure relation. The child, whether consciously or subconsciously, exists as person-in-relation. It exists in pure relation. The child knows no I, You, or It; no self, other, or object. The drive for relation aims at reciprocity; first through tactile contact, then also through optical contact (p. 79). Buber (1970) posits an understanding of the longing for relation:

> The innateness of the longing for relation is apparent even in the earliest and dimmest stage. Before any particulars can be perceived, dull glances push into the unclear space toward the indefinite; and at times when there is obviously no desire for nourishment, soft projections of the hands reach, aimlessly to all appearances, into the empty air toward the indefinite. Let anyone call this animalic: that does not help our comprehension. For precisely these glances will eventually, after many trials, come to rest upon a red wallpaper arabesque and not leave it until the soul of the red has opened up to them. (pp. 77-78)

Buber adds, "Many a motion that is called a reflex is a sturdy trowel for the person building up his world" (p. 78).

The constant longing for relation continues; the self appears for a long time woven into the being of the other until one day "the bonds are broken and the I confronts its detached self for a moment like a You--and then it takes possession of itself and henceforth enters into relations in full consciousness" (p. 80). This is the third step in the developmental process of relation; the detachment of the I from the You accompanied by the emergence of the I as existing separate from the You. At this point, no concept of It has been developed. The child remains in relation; aware now of his separateness from his You and also his ability to choose whether or not to enter into relation. Buber (1970) writes:

> It is not as if a child first saw an object and then entered into some kind of relationship to it. Rather, the longing for relation is primary... But the genesis of the thing is a late product that develops out of the split of the primal encounters, out of the separation of the associated partners--as does the genesis of the I. (p. 78)

Through the detachment of the I from the You and the emergence of the I, Buber is intimating the development of selfhood; a being consciously aware of its separateness from the other. The child still seeks the relation; only now it chooses to enter the relation cognitively. Nothing exists, however, as the child's object at this stage of the developmental process. With the development of the I, or self, and the recognition of the separate other, or You, the basic word I-You is spoken.

Objects, too, become separate and detached from the I. They are soon manipulated and controlled. Buber states, "Only now can the other basic word be put together. For although the You of the relation always paled again, it never became the It of an I--an object of detached perception and experience, which is what it will henceforth..." (p. 80). Here is the fourth stage in the developmental process of relation; the encounter with It. "The I that has emerged," observes Buber, "proclaims itself as the carrier of sensations and the environment as their object" (p. 74). Buber clarifies the nature of the encounter with It:

> Of course, this happens in a 'primitive' and not in an 'epistemological' manner: Yet once the sentence 'I see the tree' has been pronounced in such a way that it no longer relates a relation between a human I and a tree You but the perception of the tree object by the human consciousness, it has erected the crucial barrier between subject and object; the basic word I-It; the word of separation, has been spoken. (pp. 74-75)

Thus, the two basic words, I-You and I-It, are realized as potential relational positions. Buber states, "here it becomes unmistakably clear how the spiritual reality of the basic words emerges from a natural reality: that of the basic word I-It from a natural discreteness" (p. 76). The child has progressed from a directionless participant in relation to a creator of his own relations and experiences. "From the glowing darkness of the chaos," Buber conceptualizes, "he has stepped into the cool and light creation without immediately possessing it: He has to get it up, as it were, and make it a reality for himself; he or she gains his world by seeing, listening, feeling, forming" (p. 77). The child becomes a creative participant in structuring and ordering his or her personal reality. Buber sees the child as first existing in prenatal relation with its mother. After birth, the child exists in relation with the world around him or her. At this point, relation is all the child knows. There is no self-awareness, or I, or Other awareness, or You. All that is reality for the child is formless relation. In time, the child is able to differentiate Self from Others, and Self from Objects. Buber does not specify how much time, or during what years the change from formless relation to a sense of selfhood takes place.

Nonetheless, the child's "I" is born. He or she perceives the Self as separate; as a distinct person different from other distinct persons and things. The child begins to form its own world, seeing, listening, feeling and forming the distinct Others. The child now chooses the Others he or she wishes to relate with. The basis for the child's choices are not explained by Buber. However, it would appear to be a matter of individuality and uniqueness involving the innate and learned behavior of the child. Pure relation is gone; a process of self-initiated choosing of relation is present. The child has moved from unknowing participant to knowing selector of relation.

In what time frame does this developmental process occur? It is certain that Buber sees the roots of the process in the basic nature of man. The earliest stages of the relational process may even be seen in the prenatal life and early childhood of the person. Does this process occur only in early childhood? Buber (1970) questions, "Then our melancholy lot took shape in primal history?" He answers, "Indeed it developed--insofar as man's conscious life developed in primal history. But in conscious life cosmic being recurs as human becoming" (p. 75). Persons exist, according to Buber, in pure relation from the beginning of their prenatal life. Thus, while it begins in early childhood, the process of relation never ends. It is a lifelong process. Each time a person chooses between the I-You and I-It option, the process of relation is recreated. For this reason, the choice between the I-You and I-It options is the fifth and final stage of the developmental process of relation.

If the developmental process were a singular event taking place in childhood, then a person could be accurately labeled as an "I-You realizing" person or an "I-It orienting" person. This, according to Buber, is not possible. Buber suggests, "There are not two kinds of human beings, but there are two poles of humanity. No human being is pure person, and none is pure ego; none is entirely actual, none entirely lacking in actuality. Each lives in a twofold I" (p. 114). Persons continually choose to participate in the I-You relation, or experience in the I-It orientation. While the choice finds its earliest expression in childhood, the decision is made and remade throughout the life of the individual. The choice between the I-You relation and the I-It orientation, then, is the fifth and final stage which endows the developmental process with unending life. What begins in prenatal life and early childhood as the emergence of selfhood is renewed in the continual choice between I-You and I-It.

The child has a much easier time moving into the I-You world of relation than does the adult. Why? The child is innately driven toward relation from its beginning. Without the analytical tools to pre-think the possible outcomes of the relation, the child is unaffected by thoughts of personal gain or risk involved in the relation. The adult has a difficult time due to the sophistication of his or her analytical processes. Before entering relation, the adult is more likely than the child to measure risk involved, calculate the movement and motivation of the Other, and predict an outcome. This may be a result of a sharpening of relational skills, life experiences, or a number of other reasons. The child, at least in early life, is unable to do this. The child moves willingly toward relation; the adult sometimes willingly but almost always cautiously. The child must learn to manipulate; the adult is cognitvely aware of the process of manipulation. The adult, like the child, must continually choose the option of relation, I-You, or orientation, I-It. The choice is a lifelong process with its roots in the prenatal life of the child according to Buber.

A systematic examination of Martin Buber's concept of relation has been made in Chapter 3. In the first part of this section, relation was seen to occur in three spheres: man with nature; man with man; and, man with spiritual beings. The relation between man and man, labeled the interpersonal relation, was identified as the central focus of the study. The second part of the section concentrated on the two basic relational attitudes in the philosophy of Martin Buber. These were the word pairs I-You and I-It. The I-It world was defined as a place of experience and using, while the I-You world was viewed as the realm of participation and relation. The I-You word pair embodied a direct relation between two beings in contrast to the I-It word pair which created an indirect subject to object orientation. I-You relation and I-It orientation were identified as occurring in all three spheres of relation. The third part of the section described seven essential elements of I-You relation. These were: (1) creative participation; (2) risk; (3) sacrifice; (4) exclusion; (5) will; (6) grace; and (7) reciprocity. Creative participation by the partners in relation was observed to be the primary essential element of relation. Finally, the fourth part of the chapter, a developmental model for the process of relation between man and man, was presented. A five part model was presented that traced the question of why man seeks relation from his prenatal existence to his continual choice between I-You relations and I-It orientations.

Martin Buber designates a single path to relation; a path which provides a tangible method of entry into relation. Of this path, Buber (1965) writes:

> In all ages it has undoubtedly been glimpsed that the reciprocal essential relationship between two beings signifies a primal opportunity of being, and one, in fact, that enters into the phenomenon that man exists. And it has also ever again been glimpsed that just through the fact that he enters into essential reciprocity, man becomes revealed as man; indeed, that only with this and through this does he attain to that valid participation in being that is reserved for him; thus, that the saying of Thou by the I stands in the origin of all individual human becoming. (p. 109)

Human beings relate with one another, according to Buber, because only through relation with an Other can the Self fully actualize. The precedent for this understanding is in the initial relation between the mother and her child. This pure relation is the essential nature of personhood and establishes human personhood as relational in nature at its most basic level. A child, born of the relation between man and woman, strives for relation in a lifelong choice between I-You and I-It. Self-actualization in the philosophy of Martin Buber occurs in the Between; that area where the Self and Other enter into dialogue.

The path to relation is through dialogue between person and person. Dialogue is the central focus of Chapter 4.

References

Buber, M. Between Man and Man. New York: Macmillan, 1965.

Buber, M. I and Thou. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970.

Diamond, M. Martin Buber: Jewish Existentialist. New York: Oxford University Press, 1960.

Friedman, M. Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue. New York: Harper and Row, 1960.

Moore, D. J. Martin Buber: Prophet of Religious Secularism. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1974.

Stewart, J. Foundations of Dialogic Communication. Unpublished manuscript, 1975.

Wood, R. E. Martin Buber's Ontology. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1960.

Chapter 4

Toward an Understanding of Interpersonal Relationships: Martin Buber's Concept of Dialogue

Dialogue, according to Buber, is a process through which persons enter into interpersonal relation. Chapter 4 addresses five major questions relating to Martin Buber's concept of dialogue:

1. What are the components of dialogue?
2. What are the characteristics of dialogue?
3. How does Buber define genuine dialogue?
4. What are the essential "Elements of the Interhuman" in the interpersonal philosophy of Martin Buber?
5. What is a "Buberian" definition of interpersonal communication?

Chapter 4 has been divided into five corresponding sections to address these questions. The sections are entitled:

A. "The Components of Dialogue"

B. "The Characteristics of Dialogue"

C. "Martin Buber's Concept of Dialogue"

D. "Elements of the Interhuman"

E. "Toward a Definition of Interpersonal Communication: An Ethic of Responsibility"

The importance of dialogue in the interpersonal philosophy of Martin Buber cannot be overstated. In Buber's view, humanness is ontologically an interpersonal process. Buber (1965) states, "The fundamental fact of human existence is man with man" (p. 203). Persons enter relation through genuine dialogue. The author proposes a thorough analysis of Buber's concept of dialogue to establish the significance of the concept for communication theory and research.

The Components of Dialogue

Poulakos (1974) states, "Clear understanding and appreciation of any concept necessitates an accurate isolation of the fundamental components of the concept and a subsequent analysis of each component... The concept of dialogue is no exception" (p. 199). Therefore, the purpose of this section is to identify the fundamental components of Buber's concept of dialogue.

The Self, the Other, and the Between. Stewart (1975) proposes that there are two basic assumptions which underlie Buber's understanding of the Self, the Other, and the Between as the three components of dialogue. First, human beings must not be studied as individuals, but as persons-in-relation (p. 22). Man's existence is ontologically an interpersonal process. The Self, then, must be examined in relation to the Other. Second, primal knowledge of and by the Self and the Other is experiential. Arriving at understanding is less a matter of conceptual knowing than of experiential knowing (p. 23). Experiential knowledge is gained through active participation of the Self and the Other.

Where does this participation occur? It cannot occur in either the Self or the Other according to Buber. Participation must occur in the Between; that component of dialogue which is neither in the Self, or in the Other, but exists separate from and between the two participants in dialogue. The Self, the Other, and the Between comprise the Buberian model of interpersonal communication. Buber's Model is concerned with persons-in-relation with each other. Stewart (1975) explains:

> Buber's emphasis on the importance of holism takes on importance for the student of dialogic communication when it becomes clear that for Buber the whole person means the person as an interpersonal phenomenon. (p. 20)

"From a phenomenological point of view, then," adds Poulakos (1974), "it may be said that the components of dialogue are three. They are the Self, the Other, and the Between" (p. 199). Stewart concludes:

> 'Human' and 'person' are words like 'husband' and 'student'; they become meaningful only in relation; husband to wife, student to teacher, and person to person. An holistic study of persons will thus necessarily be a study of persons in living relations. (p. 24)

The components of Buber's concept of dialogue are integrally related to each other. However, Poulakos indicates that a clear understanding of a concept necessitates the temporary isolation of its major components. With this in mind, the components will be examined separately to identify each of their roles in the process of genuine dialogue.

<u>The Self</u>. The first distinctive characteristic of the Self is a longing for confirmation or validation. The growth and development of the Self is intimately related to the growth and development of the Other. Poulakos (1974) states, "Clearly the meaning of Self for oneself arises in the process of interaction between Self and Others" (p. 200). Confirmation or validation of the Self occurs through relation with significant Others. "It is a Self in search of justification for and affirmation of being by way of meaningful encounters with the Other" (p. 200).

Buber identifies a personal "readiness" as the second necessary condition for growth. The Self realizes its own limitations and acknowledges the need for growth. "Therefore, what one brings with him in dialogue," adds Poulakos, "is a Self that has room and desire to grow" (p. 200). Dialogue will not occur if the Self is hesitant or unwilling to impact and be impacted by the Other.

A sense of "direction" is the third condition for growth and development of the Self and Other. Poulakos observes, "In the context of dialogue, the incomplete Self aims toward personal growth and seeks self-knowledge" (p. 204). This "aiming" is a willful act; any dialogical happening depends upon the decision of two separate selves to alter their present condition of separateness and enter into dialogue (p. 200).

The recognition and acceptance of the implicit differences between the Self and the Other is the fourth vital condition for personal growth. "This recognition of the differentiation implicit in the Other," writes Poulakos, "seems to be necessary before the Other can be accepted by the Self (p. 206). It is Buber's theory that dialogue can occur only after the Self and the Other have recognized their essential differences and have set each other at a "distance." The partners may enter into dialogue once this fundamental "distancing" has taken place. Self growth and development occur through the relation. The essential realization necessary for growth is an understanding of the essential differences between the Self and the Other. Buber's emphasis is on a confirmation of personhood; not on philosophical or ideological agreement. Growth and development occur in the dialogue between two partners who confirm each other's existence through relation. Confirmation does not necessitate agreement. The realization of the differentiation implicit in the Other is an essential step in entering dialogue and working through the unessential differences between the Self and the Other.

There are four necessary conditions for the growth and development of the Self according to Poulakos. They are:

1. A recognition that growth occurs through interaction. Confirmation or validation of Self occurs in the dialogue with significant Others.
2. For dialogue between Self and Other to occur, there must be a "readiness" on the part of both partners.

3. This "readiness" must take the form of active direction; the Self must will him or her self to dialogue with the Other.
4. There must be a recognition by the Self of the implicit differentiation of the Other.

The Self is the first component of dialogue. Four necessary conditions for the growth and development of the Self have been discussed. The focus of the study now turns to the Other as the second component of dialogue.

The Other. Laing, Phillipson, and Lee (1966) write, "Over a hundred years ago Feuerbach effected a pivotal step in philosophy... He discovered that philosophy had been exclusively oriented around 'I'... No one had realized that the 'you' is as primary as the 'I'" (p. 3). The I and You, or Self and Other, are seen by Feuerbach as equally important partners in an interaction. "Philosophically," state Laing, et al., "the meaninglessness of the category 'I' without its complementary category of 'You," firsted stated by Feuerbach, was developed by Martin Buber" (pp. 3-4).

The essential and equal importance of Self and Other in the dialogical relation is a significant understanding in the interpersonal philosophy of Martin Buber. Kuhn (1967) asserts, "For Buber...the criterion of reality in all its forms, or rather, the human approach to reality, consists in an encounter--in meeting a partner" (p. 640). Buber (1970) states, "All actual life is encounter" (p. 62). Stewart and

D'Angelo (1975) support Buber's understanding, writing that interpersonal communication is the defining dimension of who persons are becoming and will eventually become (p. 23).

Poulakos (1974) writes, "It may be said, then, that the Other is a component of dialogue insofar as he is different and distinct from the Self, yet always potentially in relation with the Self" (p. 204). The availability of the Other in dialogical relation directly effects the ability of the Self to enter dialogue. The dialogue is dependent upon the willing participation of the Self and the Other. "As a component," Poulakos states, "the Other constitutes a vital force whose presence largely determines the shaping of one's Self" (p. 204).

The Buberian concept of dialogical relation calls for a certain acceptance between the Self and the Other. Accepting the Other means allowing him to partake in one's life. According to Poulakos, it also means denouncing one's egocentric tendencies, an act of admission of personal imperfections and desire for growth possible only in relation (p. 206). This acceptance does not necessarily mean approval or acceptance of the other's ideas. "One can accept the Other's being," writes Poulakos, "while opposing the Other's views" (p. 206).

The Self and the Other are viewed as mutually essential components of dialogue. However, there exists a third component which is equally significant in Buber's concept of dialogue. Poulakos explains:

> At this point, it may be said that the most significant thing about these two components (the Self and the Other) is that they both possibilitate and subsequently define a third reality which belongs to neither one of them but without which dialogue is negated. This reality Martin Buber designates as the realm of the 'Between'. (p. 207)

The Between as the third component of dialogue will be examined in the final part of this section.

<u>The Between</u>. Martin Buber identifies the "Between" as the third component of dialogue. A philosophical foundation for the Between and an operational definition of the concept are presented in this section to clarify the meaning of the Between in the context of Martin Buber's philosophy of dialogue.

Poulakos (1974) identifies a striking lack of inquiry by communication scholars into the concept of the Between. "Judging from available communication literature," he writes, "one may conclude that theorists and researchers in the field have for the most part neglected to pursue the Between as an object of inquiry" (p. 208). However, the Between has been represented in many communication models. Poulakos states:

> It is ironic, however, that the Between is unknowingly represented in known communication models, although it is not accounted for. Most models include two major foci, one of which is labelled source, originator, etc., while the other is termed receiver, interpreter, etc.; they also include various other things such as message, noise, channel, feedback, etc. Conceivably, the area devoid of labels or pictures that is between the two foci, the empty space, is what represents the Between. (p. 208)

Stewart (1977) identifies the Between as an important component of interpersonal communication. "When I say that interpersonal communication is communication between persons," he writes, "the word 'between' also has some special meaning" (p. 19). He continues, "Just as your ability to communicate interpersonally is affected by your recognition of what it is to be a person, it will also be affected by your recognition of what it means to say that communication occurs between persons" (p. 19).

Marcel (1967) identifies a concept very similar to Buber's component of the Between as he discusses the idea of "co-belonging." He proposes:

> The heart of my existence is what is at the center of what we might also call my vital interests; it is that by which I live, and which, moreover, is usually not an object of clear awareness for me. The community between Thou and Me, or the co-belonging, is the more real, the more essential, the closer it is to this heart. (p. 46)

Matson and Montagu (1967) conclude, "Deep understanding and communication begin between two people" (p. 141).

Rotenstreich (1967) is succinct in his analysis of the importance of the Between. Persons alone are abstractions; a person becomes a fact of existence only by stepping into relation with others (p. 98). Unity of the Self and the Other occurs in experience between the two partners in relation. Experience, explains Rotenstreich, occurs only in actual meeting; a meeting that can only become a living actuality in the sphere of the Between (pp. 100-101). Experience is the property of the Self and the Other only inasmuch as they are co-creators of it. Buber proposes that experience occurs in the Between; not in the Self or in the Other. Experience is co-created and a shared phenomenon. The individual and society derive their basic meaning from the relations that exist between person and person.

The importance of the Between as a component of interpersonal communication has been identified in the writings of scholars both in and out of the field of communication. While Poulakos described the subtle presence of the Between in many communication models, Marcel, Montagu, and Matson clarified the importance of the "intersubjective" and the "co-belonging." From the philosophical understanding of the Between presented above, an operational definition of Buber's concept of the Between is proposed. In the following pages, specific characteristics of the Between as a component of genuine dialogue are isolated, analyzed, and synthesized in order to reach a definitive understanding of the third and final component of dialogue.

The Between is that area where persons meet and enter into relation. It has both psychological and, at times, physiological dimensions. The Between does not belong to either the Self or the Other. Poulakos (1974) states, "The Between, then, may be seen as the interhuman force which sustains dialogue between two people and makes the actual relationship be an end, not a means to some other end" (p. 109). Buber does not segregate the Self, the Other, and the Between into isolated components. "Neither the Self nor the Other," writes Poulakos, "has boundaries which are really obvious and clearly defined. One can never be certain where one personality ends and another begins" (p. 209). Buber (1965) clarifies his understanding of the essential importance of the Between, stating:

> If I and another come up against one another... the sum does not exactly divide; there is a remainder, somewhere, where the souls end and the world has not yet begun, and this remainder is what is essential. (p. 204)

While boundaries between the components of dialogue are difficult to fix and the Between remains "somewhere" in between the Self and the Other, it is nonetheless important to recognize the Between as a separate component of dialogue in the interpersonal philosophy of Martin Buber. Friedman (1960) concludes:

> Through relation the person shares in a reality which neither belongs to him nor merely lies outside him, a reality which cannot be appropriated but only shared. The more direct his contact with the Thou, the fuller his sharing; the fuller his sharing, the more real his I. (p. 68)

The Self and the Other share a mutual responsibility for creation of the Between. Buber (1965) states, "Man exists anthropologically not in his isolation, but in the completeness of the relation between man and man; what humanity is can be properly grasped only in vital reciprocity" (p. 84). This vital reciprocity can only occur in the Between; that area where two persons meet and enter into dialogue with each other. As the Between is created by the partners in dialogue, growth and development of the Self and the Other becomes a possibility. Poulakos (1974) comments, "When this unity is present, the participants are neither one nor two. Instead, by interacting with each other and by responding to one another simultaneously, each becomes himself" (p. 209). The importance of the Between as a component of dialogue cannot be overstated. While Buber proposes that all actual living occurs in encounter, it is important to note that all actual encounter occurs in the Between.

While the Self and the Other are visibly seen, heard, and can be touched, the Between is less easily recognizable. Therefore, for the purpose of defining the Between, the actions of the Self and Other that facilitate the creation and development of the Between will be examined in the following section.

<u>The essential conditions for creation of the Between</u>. Four essential psychological and physiological conditions must be met to facilitate the creation of the Between. Poulakos (1974) states, "Physical presence, mutual awareness, interaction, and willingness to be influenced on the part of the partners constitute the conditions necessary for the emergence of the Between" (p. 212). Egan's (1973) concept of physical, psychological, active, and passive availability provides another perspective of the importance of the four essential conditions in the formative stages of the development of the Between (pp. 96-98). Stewart (1975) comments, "Some type of physical availability is a prerequisite for

any kind of communication; you can't communicate with someone you're completely out of touch with. Interpersonal communication generally requires relatively long-term, face-to-face physical presence" (p. 100). Human communication occurs in the Between in Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy. Physical presence, or physical availability, is an essential condition which supports the emergence of human communication in the Between.

Mutual awareness is the second necessary condition of the Between. Egan's concept of psychological availability facilitates understanding of this condition. "In order to be psychologically available to someone else," writes Stewart, "you need to be open to that person's view of the world so that your perceptions are affected by the way the other individual sees things" (p. 100). Mutual awareness involves a dual realization; a recognition of one's own attitudes, values, and perceptions, and secondly, an attempt by each of the partners in dialogue to "see and hear" what the Other is saying from the point of view of the Other. Nilsen (1964) proposes that a basic assumption greatly impeding communication is that the perspective of the problem perceiver is the only way to look at a problem (pp. 40-44). Mutual awareness, and consequently, the Between, cannot occur unless both partners are committed to being psychologically available to each other.

Interaction occurs as result of active, not passive, physical and psychological availability. Stewart (1975) asserts:

> Both physical and psychological availability can be either active or passive. When you're passively available, you just allow others to share with you--you let them be close by and you are more or less willing to listen. To promote interpersonal communication, however, you need to be actively available. (p. 102)

The active role involves making a conscious effort to be "with" the Other; being available to the Other with a physical and psychological presence.

Finally, as well as physical presence, mutual awareness, and interaction, there must be a willingness to be influenced on behalf of the partners to create the conditions necessary for the Between. Rogers (1961) affirms this understanding as he comments:

> Our first reaction to most of the statements which we hear from other people is an immediate evaluation, or judgement, rather than an understanding of it. When someone expresses some feeling or attitude or belief, our tendency is, almost immediately, to feel "That's right"; or "That's stupid"; "That's abnormal"; "That's unreasonable"; "That's incorrect"; "That's not nice." Very rarely do we permit ourselves to understand precisely what the meaning of his statement is to him. (p. 18)

The importance of this "willingness to be influenced" in the I-Thou philosophy of Buber is evident in his writings in The Knowledge of Man. Buber (1965) proposes:

> For the inmost growth of the Self is not accomplished, as people like to suppose today, in man's relation to himself, but in relation between the one and the other, between men, that is, preeminently in the mutuality of the making present--in the making present of another self and in the knowledge that one is made present in his own self by the other--together with the mutuality of acceptance, of affirmation and confirmation. (p. 71)

The willingness to influence and be influenced is the fourth and final condition of the Between. Without this willingness, mutuality ceases to be a possibility. Consequently, the Between is not mutually created and ceases to be "lived."

The Between: a living relation. What is meant by lived? Rotenstreich (1967) states that the Between is created time and time again (p. 98). Poulakos (1974) adds, "The creation of the Between is never complete" (p. 210). Once created, the Between never again ceases to exist. Rather, it is constantly defined and redefined by the partners in dialogue. "Once created," writes Poulakos, "it is permanent but is constantly changing form in accordance to the interaction of its creators" (p. 212). Thus, the Between is a living, or "lived" relation. It remains dynamic and ever-changing as long as the partners strive to maintain the relation. The lived Between is by its nature a mutual relation. When the partners, for whatever reason, cease to be willing to be influenced, they step out of a lived mutual relation and out of the Between.

Following the initial stages of development of the Between, i.e., physical presence, mutual awareness, and interaction, these conditions diminish in importance while a continual willingness to be influenced emerges as the single most important condition necessary for a living Between. Poulakos proposes, "Once established, the Between is there permanently, and it no longer requires the physical presence, awareness, and interaction on the part of the partners" (p. 210). Thus, the creation of the Between is a developmental process. The need for physical presence is essential in the early stages of formulating the Between. Constant awareness and interaction between the partners is absolutely necessary in this stage. However, as the Between becomes created, a willingness to be influenced by the Self and the Other emerges as the most important variable in strengthening a living relation in the Between. As Poulakos states above, once created, the Between does not require the primary three variables mentioned but does demand a willingness to impact and be impacted by the Self and the Other.

Since interpersonal encounter takes place in the Between, the creation of the Between is a determining factor of whether persons live what Buber terms an "actual" life. This understanding is also at the core of Buber's philosophy of interpersonal relations. Interpersonal relations are made possible in Buber's thinking through creation of a living Between where dialogical encounter may flourish.

Entering into dialogue, and thus relation, encounter, and actual life, is a "becoming process." Stewart (1975) states, "The quality of our interpersonal relationships determines who we are becoming as persons" (p. 23). A person becomes, according to Buber, in and through dialogical relation with other persons. Poulakos (1974) comments, "'Becoming' in this situation means interconnecting oneself with other centers, constructing something between oneself and particular others, or to use Buber's phrase, "entering into relation" (p. 210).

The three components of dialogue in the I-Thou philosophy of Martin Buber; the Self, the Other, and the Between, have been presented. The Self and the Other are the essential partners in dialogue while the Between is the component created by the two partners. Once created, the Between becomes the place where genuine meeting occurs. The four conditions necessary for the emergence of the Between are physical presence, mutual awareness, interaction, and a willingness to be influenced on behalf of the partners. A living Between calls for a continual willingness by the parters to be influenced by each other. The Between is an essential component of Martin Buber's I-Thou dialogical philosophy. Buber (1965) restates the importance of dialogical relational between the partners.

> Human life and humanity come into being in genuine meeting. There man learns not merely that he is limited by man, cast upon his own finitude, partialness, need of completion, but his own relation to truth is heightened by the other's different relation to the same--different in accordance with his individuation, and destined to take seed and grow differently. (p. 69)

Buber (1965) emphatically concludes, "The individual is a fact of existence insofar as he steps into a living relation with other individuals. The aggregate is a fact of existence insofar as it is built up of living units of relation. The fundamental fact of human existence is man with man" (p. 203).

The Self, the Other, and the Between are the components of Buber's concept of dialogue. In the second section of Chapter 4, the characteristics of dialogue are identified and examined in relation to the three components of dialogue.

The Characteristics of Dialogue

The Self, the Other, and the Between are identified as the components of dialogue in the first section of Chapter 4. In this section, the six major characteristics of dialogue are described. Johannesen (1971) identifies the emergence of the concept of "communication as dialogue." He describes six characteristics that "virtually all scholars of dialogue under whatever label, identify as essential for dialogic communication" (pp. 373-382). These characteristics are: (1) genuineness; (2) accurate empathic understanding; (3) unconditional positive regard; (4) presentness; (5) spirit of mutual equality; (6) supportive psychological climate (pp. 373-382).

Genuineness. Genuineness is the first characteristic of a dialogical relationship. The partners in dialogue are direct, honest, and straightforward in their communication with each other. In doing so, they avoid facades, manipulative strategies, and misleading imaging. Johannesen comments that while a certain degree of role filtering is inevitable, the partners engaged in genuine dialogue minimize filtering opting for a more open and free interpersonal communication (pp. 373-382).

Accurate Empathic Understanding. Accurate empathic understanding is the second essential characteristic of the dialogical relationship. Meerloo (1967) underscores the interdependent relationship of understanding, communication, and empathy. He states, "Mutual understanding is the result of maximal communication through mutual empathy" (p. 143). Accurate empathic understanding is a determining factor in whether the relation is to become dialogical between the partners. Meerloo concludes, "Human understanding means identification with the behaviors of others, getting acquainted with it in order to be able to anticipate behavior. The thinking man is an anticipating man" (p. 142).

Unconditional Positive Regard. The dialogical relation demands genuineness, empathy, and the third essential characteristic of dialogue, unconditional positive regard. Rogers (1977) advances the hypothesis that the relationship will be more effective the more the positive regard is unconditional (p. 245). Johannesen (1971) characterizes unconditional positive regard as a non-possessive warmth; a spirit of mutual trust (pp. 373-382). In the relationship characterized as dialogical, Johannesen proposes, the personhood of the partners is confirmed by each of them as they engage in discussion. This confirmation does not necessarily mean agreement. It does mean that both partners are respected and confirmed as unique individuals whose worth and integrity are innate in their personhood (pp. 373-382). Buber (1965) describes a type of regard he labels "an acceptance of otherness" that is essential to genuine dialogue.

> Genuine conversation, and therefore every actual fulfillment of relation between men, means acceptance of otherness. When two men inform one another of their basically different views about an object, each aiming to convince the other of the rightness of his own way of looking at the matter, everything depends so far as human life is concerned, on whether each thinks of the other as the one he is, whether each, that is, with all his desire to influence the other, nevertheless unreservedly accepts and confirms him in his being this man and in his being made in this particular way. The strictness and depth of human individuation, the elemental otherness of the other, is then not merely noted as the necessary starting point, but is affirmed from the one being to the other. (p. 69)

This is a point where Buber's philosophy varies from the characteristics presented by Johannesen. Roger's concept of the most conducive atmosphere for genuine dialogue involves an unconditional acceptance and confirmation of the otherness of the partners. In a dialogue with Rogers, Buber (1965) questions the possibility of "unconditional" positive regard (p. 66). Buber's position is that while persons must accept and positively regard the distinct "otherness" of their partner, each of the partners must at some time actively confront the Other and attempt to change their behavior if, in the eyes of the problem perceiver, the behavior of the Other is not productive to the relation. Rogers supports Buber's belief in the recognition of "Otherness" but labels this acceptance an unconditional positive regard. Buber's position is one of positive regard and acceptance while Rogers proposes an unconditional positive regard and acceptance.

This point is considered in some length here because both men call on the writings of the other as support for their own philosophy of regard and because this is the major area where Buber differs philosophically from the scholars of dialogue included in Johannesen's article. For the purposes of this study, it is sufficient to note that positive regard of "distinct Otherness," whether unconditional or conditional, is the first characteristic of a dialogical relation.

Presentness. The concept of presentness is very similar to the theory of availability presented in the previous section. Presentness involves the physical and psychological availability of the partners. Presentness means more than availability, however. It is an "active focusing"; a careful attentiveness by the Self and the Other to their partner in dialogue. Johannesen (1971) reports that listening receptively and attentively, being willing to self-disclose, and being willing to receive the self-disclosure of the other person are major components in being present (pp. 373-382). Persons must be present; physiologically, psychologically, and actively, in order to enter into dialogical relation with each other. Active presence refers to a purposeful attempt by the Self and Other to be "with" or "attentive to" each other physically and psychologically. Presentness is necessarily mutual. Presentness is achieved by the coming together of two willing partners in the Between.

Spirit of Mutual Equality. A spirit of mutual equality is essential to the dialogical relation. A relationship characterized by mutual equality involves recognition by the partners of the equal importance of the partners in the relation. Johannesen (1971) relates that the exercise of power or superiority in the relationship is avoided (pp. 373-382), as entering into dialogue is to enter into mutuality. Underscoring the importance of this mutuality, Meerloo (1967) concludes, "Without mutual understanding community life is impossible" (p. 142). The spirit of mutual equality is essential for the development of community. It finds its origin in the dialogical relation between the Self and the Other.

Supportive Psychological Climate. The sixth and final characteristic of dialogue is the establishment of a supportive psychological climate. The primary component in establishing this climate is listening. Listening without anticipating, interfering, competing, or warping meanings into preconceived interpretations is absolutely necessary in helping another person feel comfortable and psychologically supported. Personal comfort levels are an important variable in an individual's willingness to enter into dialogue. Buber (1965) writes, "The help that men give each other in becoming a self leads the life between men to its height" (p. 85).

In the first two sections of Chapter 4, the components and the characteristics of dialogue are presented. Dialogue is discussed in general terms with the author creating a philosophical framework for dialogical relation. The writing and research of Poulakos, Johannesen, Meerloo, Howe, Rotenstreich, and Buber identify the Self, the Other, and the Between as the Components of dialogue and genuineness, accurate empathic understanding, unconditional positive regard, presentness, a spirit of mutual equality, and a supportive psychological climate as the six major characteristics of dialogue. The third section of Chapter 4, entitled "Martin Buber's Concept of Dialogue," proceeds from this general understanding of the components and characteristics of dialogue to a specific analysis of Buber's theory of dialogue. It will examine the physiological and psychological movements demanded by Buber's theory of dialogue, stressing the relationship of his theory to the components and characteristics of dialogue discussed in the previous two sections.

Martin Buber's Concept of Dialogue

The two sections that have preceded this section have served the purpose of laying the necessary groundwork for analysis of Buber's concept of dialogue. The components and characteristics of dialogue outlined in those sections are taken from the general concept of dialogue and applied to the single most important concept in Buber's I-Thou philosophy. Buber conceives the nature of man as person-in-relation. The way to relation is through dialogue.

Two basic assumptions that deal directly with the importance of dialogue and accurately parallel Buber's belief in the power of dialogue are:

1. "Communication means life or death to persons" (Howe, 1967, p. 148).
2. "The quality of our interpersonal relationships determines who we are becoming as persons" (Stewart & D'Angelo, 1975, p. 23).

The first assumption, formulated by Howe, proposes that communication is not an element or facet of human existence; rather, it is the determining factor in the existence or non-existence of personhood. Persons live or die according to their ability to communicate with the world around them. The second, formulated by Stewart, states that personhood is a becoming process, and communication between persons directly determines who the partners will become as human beings.

Howe further defines dialogue as serious address between two or more persons, in which the being and truth of each is confronted by the being and truth of the other (p. 148). Poulakos (1974) provides another definition of dialogue in the introduction to his research on the components of dialogue. He states:

> Dialogue in this essay is regarded as a mode of existence manifested in the intersubjective activity between two partners, who, in their quest for meaning in life, stand before each other prepared to meet the uniqueness of their situation and follow it wherever it may lead. (p. 199)

These two definitions establish a conceptual setting in which to consider one final general statement regarding the nature of dialogue. Buber implies a certain suffering that necessarily accompanies the dialogical relation. Friedman (1960) relates:

> This relation 'Dialogue' means suffering and action in one, suffering because one must be chosen as well as choose and because in order to act with the whole being one must suspend all partial actions. (p. 59)

Thus, dialogue is serious address, a confrontation of selves, an interpersonal activity between the partners, and finally, a suffering act of choosing and being chosen, characterized by actions of the whole person.

Martin Buber's concept of dialogue is philosophical in nature. Yet, his writing, according to Buber (1965) is based on experience (p. 14). Dialogue is composed of specific suggestions to the partners that they might follow to more readily enter relation. The remainder of the section is devoted to careful consideration of these specific suggestions.

Stewart (1977) presents a summary of the characteristics of Buber's concept of genuine dialogue as one approach to interpersonal communication in his book, Bridges, Not Walls, (pp. 274-292). The seven steps toward dialogical relation that are identified by Stewart are:

1. Each person must turn toward and be open to the other, a 'turning of the being.'

2. Each must make present the other by imagining the real.

3. Each confirms the other's being; however, confirmation does not necessarily mean approval.

4. Each must be authentically himself or herself.

    a. Each must say whatever she or he 'has to say.'
    b. Each cannot be ruled by thoughts of his or her own effect or effectiveness as a speaker.

5. Where dialogue becomes genuine, 'there is brought into being a memorable common fruitfulness which is to be found nowhere else.'

6. Speaking is not always essential; silence can be very important.

7. Finally, all participants must be committed to dialogue; otherwise, it will fail. (pp. 279-280)

In the following section each of the seven qualities of dialogue are discussed as an approach to a theory of interpersonal communication.

Turning of the Being. A turning of oneself toward the other is the essential act necessary for the creation of dialogue. The Self only has control over the actions of the Self. The actions of the Other are only anxiously anticipated. Matson and Montagu (1967) state, "The basic movement of the life of dialogue is the turn toward the other" (p. 115).

The turning of the being toward the Other occurs in several ways. The Self may look at the Other, addressing him or her verbally and nonverbally. This can also involve turning the body positionally to face the Other (p. 115). Not all interactions take place in a face-to-face setting. As was stated earlier, once the Between in created, it exists permanently and is only restructured to fit the dynamic relationship.

In the beginning stages of the relation, active psychological and physiological presence is very important. Physiological availability, however, while essentially important in the initial creation of the Between, becomes of less importance as the relationship evolves beyond its initial creation. Thus, in the case of encounters that take place in a non-face-to-face setting, psychological availability of the Self to the Other is tremendously important. While not there in person, the Self can nonetheless be "with" the person psychologically. Johannesen (1971) emphasizes the importance of the turning of the being as he states, "The essential movement in dialogue is turning toward, outgoing to, and reaching for the other" (pp. 373-382).

The essential movement of dialogue is that movement which creates the possibility of response from the Other and reduces the separation or distance between the Self and the Other. The second movement of dialogue focuses on "imagining the real of the Other."

Imagining the real of the Other. Martin Buber identifies the second quality of dialogical relation as the "imagining the real" of the Other. As the Self turns toward the Other, Buber recognizes a need for each of the partners to attempt to "see" the reality of the Other. Speaking to the need for such perception, Stewart & D'Angelo (1975) relate the principle of adaptation. "The principle of adaptation," they write, "says that you can communicate more clearly if you continually try to put yourself in the psychological frame of reference of the other person" (p. 228).

Buber defines "imagining the real" in his book The Knowledge of Man. He discusses the necessity of making an honest attempt to see the meaning in another person's perception. Buber (1965) writes, "I prefer the name 'imagining the real,' for in its essential being the gift is not a looking at the other, but a bold swinging--demanding the most intensive stirring of one's being--into the life of the other" (p. 81). The "bold swinging" called for by Buber demands that the partners listen to each other not to instantly evaluate, but rather to confirm each other. "Listening to confirm" involves both verbal and nonverbal confirmation between the partners. Stewart & D'Angelo observe:

> Verbal and nonverbal confirming behavior says to the other person, 'I'm listening; I might not agree or accept your point of view, but I care about what you're saying, and I'm aware of what's going on." 9p. 186)

"Imagining the real" facilitates dialogue in the philosophy of Martin Buber. Buber's emphasis is always the relation; the dialogue between two persons. Listening with the intention of confirming the Other is one step toward dialogical relation. As Stewart points out, putting oneself in the psychological frame of reference of the Other is another step toward dialogue. In the dialogical philosophy of Martin Buber, the essential matter is the relation. Turning of the being and imagining the real of the other are two phrases Buber uses to capture essential qualities of dialogue. These two qualities, as well as the five remaining qualities, describe the necessary conditions that must be present for dialogue to take place. The important matter is not the qualities which describe the necessary conditions. What is essential is the relation itself. Buber describes the necessary attitude of the partners needed to bring the relation about in The Knowledge of Man.

> The only thing that matters is that for each of the two men the other happens as the particular other, that each becomes aware of the other and is thus related to him in such a way that he does not regard and use him as his object, but as his partner in a living event, even if it is no more than a boxing match. (p. 74)

Each partner in dialogue places the Self in the psychological frame of reference of the Other, making a sincere attempt to understand from the perspective of the other.

Turning one's being toward the Other, and imagining the real of the Other are the first two qualities of a dialogical relationship. In turning their being toward each other, the partners make themselves available, or ready, for interaction. The possibility of interpersonal communication is greatly enhanced when the partners imagine the real of the Other; putting themselves in touch with the perceptions of the Other by making a sincere effort to be in the psychological frame of reference of their partner. Underlying the dialogical relation is a mutual confirmation between the Self and the Other. Confirmation is the third essential quality of dialogue.

Confirmation. Martin Buber perceives confirmation between person and person as an essential human need. "The human person needs confirmation," Buber (1965) writes, "because man as man needs it" (p. 71). Being confirmed by another person is at the core of human existence according to Buber.

The ability to confirm another being is man's most meaningful act in the dialogic philosophy of Martin Buber. He proposes, "Men need, and it is granted to them, to confirm one another in their individual being by means of genuine meetings" (p. 69). The importance of confirmation in the philosophy of Martin Buber is evident. Poulakos observes, "According to Buber, confirmation constitutes the basis of the existence of man with man. Every man needs confirmation from others. In turn, every man is capable of confirming others" (p. 69).

Confirmation is important to the dialogic relation on at least two levels. The first level involves the Self in need of, and receiving, confirmation. "Confirmation is the most critical factor in the growth and development of the Self," writes Poulakos, "...because it allows one to confidently become himself" (p. 207). Giffin and Patton (1971) note that the individual's search for confirmation is actually an implied request by the Self to "validate Me' (p. 192). The Self in search of validation grows and develops confidence as it is confirmed by others.

The second level involving confirmation is centered on the confirming Self rather than the confirmed Self. In confirming the Other, the Self grows and develops as a result. Poulakos asserts, "A proper recognition, acceptance, and confirmation of the Other leads into a meaningful sense of selfhood" (p. 207). Through authentic confirmation of the Other, the Self gains an insight into the existence of the Other, as well as a heightened sense of selfhood. The insight gained facilitates an enriched ability by the Self to imagine the real of the Other.

Buber questions the possibility of dialogue between two partners where no confirming takes place. Reflecting on Buber's philosophy, Poulakos affirms this understanding. "It may be said," he writes, "that acceptance of the Other is one of the prerequisites for authentic experience.... Yet the Other is not only to be recognized and accepted; he is to be confirmed, too" (pp. 206-207).

That there is a lack of confirmation between persons constitutes more than an individual problem. The inability to confirm is a problem that transcends individuals, involving entire societies and calling into question the nature of humanity. The importance of confirmation in the philosophy of Buber (1965b) is evident in the passage that follows:

> The basis of man's life with man is two-fold and it is one; the wish of every man to be confirmed as what he is even as what he can become, by men, and the innate capacity of man to confirm his fellow men in this way; that this capacity lies so immeasurably fallow constitutes the real weakness and questionableness of the human race;

> actual humanity exists only where this capacity unfolds. (pp. 67-68)

A man or a society is called "human" only so far as confirmation takes place between person and person. This is a fundamental understanding in the philosophy of dialogue proposed by Martin Buber.

It might seem that confirmation by the Self of the Other constitutes a type of unconditional positive regard or unconditional acceptance. This is not the case in Buber's development of the term confirmation. Persons confirm personhood; not necessarily ideas, concepts, or philosophies. Buber writes:

> Perhaps from time to time I must offer strict opposition to his view about the subject of our conversation. But I accept this person, the personal bearer of a conviction, in his definite being out of which his conviction has grown--even though I must try to show, bit by bit, the wrongness of this very conviction. (p. 79)

Buber uses the terms "struggle" and "over against me" to describe persons engaged in dialogue over philosophical differences. He writes:

> I affirm the person I struggle with: I struggle with him as his partner, I confirm him as creature and as creation, I confirm him who is opposed to me as him who is over against me. (p. 79)

The use of the word "struggle" describes a type of interpersonal wrestling where two partners question the "rightness" of each other's views. Confrontation and confirmation are not mutually exclusive terms. The person "over against me" refers to the other partner in dialogue; it does not mean that each of the participants are against each other personally or philosophically. They may struggle with each other and attempt to change the convictions of the other, but the person over against the Self is also confirmed as a human being. Again, the confirmation of the person who is over against the Self and with whom the Self struggles transcends the individual relation. Confirmation has societal implications in the philosophy of Martin Buber and in the writings of other scholars. Giffin and Patton (1971) observe, "At all levels, persons confirm one another in a practical way, to some extent or other, in their personal qualities and capacities, and the society may be termed human in the measure to which its members confirm one another..." (p. 192). While confirmation does have societal implications in the dialogic philosophy, Buber's primary attention is to the relation between person and person.

Confirmation is the third essential quality of dialogue. Personal growth and development occur both as a result of confirming others, and through the confirmation of the Self by Others. Buber's belief in the existential importance of confirmation is stated in the following passage which appears in his book, The Knowledge of Man. He states:

> Sent forth from the natural domain of species into the hazard of the solitary category, surrounded by the air of a chaos which came into being with him, secretly and bashfully he watches for a Yes which allows him to be and which can come to him only from another that the heavenly bread of self-being is passed. (p. 71)

The two partners turn toward each other, seeking understanding of each other, and confirming each other as persons over against one another. For Buber's concept of dialogue to occur, these actions must represent the real feelings and beliefs of the partners. There must be, in these interactions, an authenticity between the partners. Therefore, authenticity is a fourth essential quality of interpersonal dialogue.

Authenticity. Stewart (1977) reports that authentic dialogue between persons affords both individuals an opportunity to communicate whatever they believe is appropriate to their discussion (p. 280). Therefore, an interpersonal dialogue is never concluded until each person has said what he or she "has to say" (p. 280).

Authenticity and truth are synonymous in the dialogic philosophy of Martin Buber. Buber (1965b) writes:

> Whatever the meaning of the word 'truth' may be in other realms, in the interhuman realm it means that men communicate themselves to one another as what they are. It does not depend on one saying to the other everything that occurs to him, but only on his letting no seeming creep in between himself and the others. It does not depend on one letting himself go before another, but on his granting to the man whom he communicates himself a share in his being. This is a question of the authenticity of the interhuman and where this is not to be found, neither is the human element itself authentic. (p. 77)

The authentic relationship is composed of an equal opportunity for sharing and a personal commitment of honest communication.

There is one other factor that is necessary for authentic dialogue to occur. While each partner has a chance to say whatever he or she has to say, Stewart points out that each partner cannot be ruled by thoughts of his or her own effect or effectiveness as a speaker (p. 280). Buber (1965b) states:

> Further, if genuine dialogue is to arise, everyone who takes part in it must bring himself to it. And that also means that he must be willing to, on each occasion, say what is really in his mind about the subject of the conversation. (p. 85)

Buber also points out that the individual who is ruled by the thought of personal effectiveness not only weakens the possibility of dialogue, but actually has a destructive effect on the interpersonal relationship (p. 86).

Authenticity is a component of dialogue because Buber is convinced that the Self and Other must be disconcerned with thoughts of personal effectiveness and enter the Between with a commitment to interpersonal communication. For Buberian dialogue to occur, the partners must relinquish self-centered concerns of personal effectiveness and approach each other with a willingness to share and listen.

Memorable common fruitfulness. Buber strongly believes that all actual, or real, life is encounter; reality existing in the interpersonal relation. A memorable common fruitfulness refers to those things or processes that occur uniquely in the interpersonal relationship. What exactly does Buber mean? An examination of literature relative to dialogue helps to clarify Buber's meaning.

Reuel S. Howe in The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication, discusses the miracle of dialogue. "Indeed, this is the miracle of dialogue: it can bring relationship into being once again, a relationship that has died" (p. 148). Meerloo (1967) adds, "There is mutual redemption and mutual self-clarification in human communication" (p. 142). Howe and Meerloo assert that in interpersonal dialogue, processes take place that cannot by their very nature take place in the life of the individual not in relation with an Other.

This is very similar to Buber's understanding. Interpersonal interaction between the Self and the Other promotes possibilities of growth that are unique to dialogic encounter. This growth potential cannot be equalled by the individual alone. Where dialogue becomes genuine, there is a memorable common fruitfulness which can be found nowhere else. It is memorable in that it is distinctly different from the individual's solitary experience. The dialogue is a common experience in that it is shared by the Self and the Other. It is a fruitful, or growthful, experience because new possibilities are opened up that previously were not perceived. Marcel presents a clear and concise explanation of Buber's concept. Marcel (1967) concludes, "He (Buber) means basically that, in the presence of human beings, there is created among them, let us not say even a field of forces, but a creative milieu, in which each finds possibilities of renewal" (p. 45). The interpersonal dialogue presents new possibilities which are memorable, common, and fruitful for the partners in dialogue.

Silence. Silence is the sixth component of Buber's concept of dialogue. It is Buber's belief that silence can promote dialogue, and further, that dialogue can even occur in silence. Meerloo (1967) supports Buber's understanding of the role of silence in interpersonal communication. "Good understanding," writes Meerloo, "means freeing oneself of word and language and of one's personal limitations of thinking" (p. 143). He concludes, "Understanding is possible without words" (p. 143). Buber (1965b) comments, "Of course it is not necessary for all who are joined in a genuine dialogue actually to speak; those who keep silent can on occasion be especially important" (p. 87).

Dialogue can occur in silence as well as in words. Where genuine dialogue occurs there is an authenticity, or a saying of what has to be said, and an acceptance of silence in the absence of speech. Silence is not discomforting or a problem for persons who have developed dialogue.

Commitment. Commitment is the seventh and final component of dialogue. Like the six components before it, commitment is present where genuine dialogue occurs.

The term "commitment" refers to the attitudes and actions of the partners in dialogue. Mutual commitment to dialogue is essential. Howe (1967) indicated, "There is only one qualification to these claims for dialogue: it must be mutual and proceed from both sides, and the parties to it must persist relentlessly" (p. 148).

There is a risk in committing oneself to dialogue. Commitment is unconditional; that is, it is not based on the willingness of the Other to commit him or her self to dialogue. Authenticity on the part of both partners is essential. There must be a very narrow gap, if any gap exists at all, between one's word and one's action. If the commitment is not authentic and mutual, the dialogue will cease to exist. Buber (1965b) states, "It is true that my basic attitude 'commitment' can remain unanswered, and the dialogue can die in seed. But, if mutuality stirs, then the interhuman blossoms into genuine dialogue" (p. 81). Thus, the risk lies in the unconditional commitment of Self to the dialogue with another person. Howe views mutuality in the sense of commitment as the essential element in releasing the power of dialogue. "There is a risk," Howe (1967) warns, "in speaking the dialogical word. That is, in entering into dialogue--but when two persons undertake it and accept their fear of doing so, the miracle-working power of dialogue may be released" (p. 148).

Commitment, then, is essential to the growth and development of dialogue. Mutuality is the essential component of commitment. Buber (1965b) concludes, "All the participants, without exception, must be of such nature that they are capable of satisfying the presuppositions of genuine dialogue and are ready to do so" (p. 87).

The seven components of Martin Buber's concept of dialogue are:

1. A turning of the being.
2. Imagining the real of the other.
3. Confirming the other.
4. Authenticity.
5. A memorable common fruitfulness.
6. Silence.
7. Commitment.

These conditions must be realized where interpersonal dialogue is to occur.

Dialogue is the primary concept of Martin Buber's philosophy that is relevant to interpersonal communication theory. Dialogue occurs in the realm that Buber labels the Between. The Self and the Other are the essential components that choose, or do not choose, to actualize the seven components mentioned above. In the fourth section of Chapter 4, the author examines the relationship of Buber's "Elements of the Interhuman" and his concept of dialogue. The "Elements of the Interhuman" are special considerations that confront the individuals as they move through the steps of dialogue. In the fifth and final section of Chapter 4, a definition of interpersonal communication is formulated which is based on the theories of dialogue and the elements of the interhuman as presented by Martin Buber. In this way, the significance of Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy for interpersonal communicative theory can be clarified.

Elements of the Interhuman

The "Elements of the Interhuman" are special considerations that effect the partners as they attempt to enter into dialogue. For the purpose of organization, the section has been divided into five parts. The first four parts treat specific considerations of the interhuman. The considerations are potential "stumbling blocks" for the Self and the Other as they attempt to enter into dialogue. The four parts are: "The Social and the Interhuman"; "Community and Collectivity"; "Distance and Relation"; and "Problems Impeding the Growth of Dialogue." The fifth part of the section deals with Martin Buber's "presuppositions of the interhuman." These are three conditions that must occur in support of dialogue to allow it to work. This part is entitled, "An Assumption and the Presuppositions of the Interhuman."

The special considerations are not to be viewed as totally separated from dialogue. Rather, they represent major concerns that Buber believes confront the partners as they work toward dialogue. They represent the major intrapersonal and interpersonal problems with which the partners must deal if they are to create a dialogical relation. The first special concern is that of "The Social and the Interhuman."

The Social and the Interhuman. The first danger that confronts the Self and the Other is the dilemma of the social and the interhuman. Buber views the social and the interhuman as two separate realms which are often confused as synonymous terms. The two terms are different in the philosophy of Martin Buber.

Buber (1965b) explains:

> We may speak of social phenomena wherever the life of a number of men, lived with one another, bound up together, brings in its train shared experiences and reactions... But to be thus bound up together means only that each individual existence is enclosed and contained in a group existence. (p. 72)

Buber continues, "It does not mean that between one member and another of the group there exists any kind of personal relation" (p. 72). Buber identifies a real difference between social existence and interhuman existence. A social existence or relation need not be an interhuman existence or relation. Members of a social group may feel that a special relation exists between themselves and another member of the group. Buber explains:

> They do feel that they belong together in a way that is, so to speak, fundamentally different from every possible belonging together with someone outside the group. And there do arise, especially in the life of smaller groups, contacts which frequently favour the birth of individual relations, but, on the other hand, frequently make it more difficult. (pp. 72-73)

Too often, Buber insists, the social group minimizes the importance of the interhuman relations for the sake of group goals and objectives. "In no case, however," Buber observes, "does membership in a group necessarily involve an existential relation between one member and another" (p. 73).

The social mentality found in groups particularly concerns Buber, for in this collective thought, the interpersonal relation is de-emphasized. He states, "But in general... groups, especially in the later course of human history, have rather been inclined to suppress the personal relation in favour of the purely collective element" (p. 73).

The collective, or group, offers a seeming escape from the loneliness of personal isolation. Buber warns:

> Where this latter element (collectivity) reigns alone or is predominant, men feel themselves to be carried by the collectivity, which lifts them out of loneliness and fear of the world and lostness. When this happens--and for modern man it is an essential happening--the life between person and person seems to retreat more and more before the advance of the collective. (p. 73)

It is apparent that Buber views the collective social group as a direct threat to the interhuman relation and dialogue. He is aware that groups may spawn interpersonal relations; yet, according to his experience, the collective subdues the interhuman. The danger of falling into collective relation is the first special concern that confronts the partners of dialogue. Their constant attention must be focused on the relation between them. Relation for Buber, occurs on an interpersonal level.

Community and collectivity. From the discussion presented previously, it might seem as if Buber is suspect of all gatherings of more than two people. This is not true. Buber is supportive of that group of people who through their thoughts and actions may be labeled a community. He is suspicious of the group he labels the collective. The second concern that confronts the partners in dialogue is the differentiation between a community and a collective.

Howe (1967) identifies a positive relationship between dialogue, personhood, and community. "It is through dialogue," he writes, "that man accomplishes the miracle of personhood and community" (p. 149). Through dialogue between persons in the community, personal growth takes place. Buber (1965) attempts to differentiate between the two concepts, stating, "Collectivity is based on an organized atrophy of personal existence, community on its increase and confirmation in life lived towards the other" (p. 31). In the collective, life is lived or directed toward the group; its goals and objectives. In the community, life is lived toward each individual as a specific other. The community binds individuals together; the primary goal of the community being the support of inter-human relation. "Collectivity is not a binding," Buber warns, "but a bundling together: individuals packed together, armed and equipped in common, with only as much life from man to man as will inflame the marching step" (p. 31). Marcel (1967) identifies the "philosophy of intersubjectivity" which is similar to Buber's understanding of the interhuman (p. 42). Marcel observes two dangerous poles; one an individualism that considers man only in reference to himself and the other a collectivism which has "eyes" only for the society. He proposes that meaning can be found in the inter-subjective between the two partners. Marcel interprets Buber's thought to mean that only a heightened awareness of the importance of the intersubjective can rescue man from the two dangerous poles of isolation and loneliness (pp. 42-43).

Entering a community is the more demanding of the two possibilities. The collective settles for partial actions and commitments from the partners. The community demands availability from its members; psychological, physical, and active presence between the partners. Buber (1965) concludes, "The modern zeal for collectivity is a flight from community's testing and consecration of the person, a flight from the vital dialogic, demanding the staking of the self, which is at the heart of the world" (p. 31). The second special consideration facing the partners is the avoidance of the temptation to seek the simpler path of collectivity. While entering community life demands commitment and active concern, it is the community that supports the growth of dialogue between person and person.

Distance and relation. The relationship of distance and relation is the most difficult of the special considerations to explain. Friedman attempts to clarify the relationship in the introduction to Martin Buber's The Knowledge of Man:

> Entering into relation is an act of the whole being: it is the act by which we constitute ourselves as human, and it is an act which must be repeated over again in ever new situations. Distance, in contrast, is not an act, and neither is failure to enter into relation: both are states of being. (p. 22)

Distance, a state of being, is a necessary precondition of relation. Relation, an act, is the coming together of two separate beings that have previously existed in some distance from one another. This distance can be physical distance, psychological distance, or both. The important point here is that until beings have been set at a distance, they cannot come together through relation. Setting another being at a distance occurs psychologically; the awareness is reached that every being is separate, distinct, and unique from every other being. Buber (1965b) states:

> The principle of human life is not simple, but twofold, being built up in a twofold movement which is of such kind that one movement is the presupposition of the other. I propose to call the first movement 'the primal setting at a distance' and the second 'entering into relation.' (p. 60)

This is the underlying existential understanding of Martin Buber's I and Thou philosophy. In order to relate to another person, an individual must first recognize his or her existential "oneness." Each living person is separate from every other living person; that is, they exist in distance from each other. "One can enter into relation," Buber proposed, "only with a being that has become an independent opposite" (p. 60). Buber adds, "Distance provides the human situation; relation provides man's becoming in that situation" (p. 64). Through entering into relation persons overcome their existential separateness. The dilemma of distance and relation is a special concern because the partners must accept the distance between them as a natural state of being and then willfully choose to relate with each other. Buber identifies a fear of distance as a stumbling block to relation. An acceptance of interpersonal distance and the risk of entering relation are the two primary movements in Buber's concept of human relation. Entering into relation narrows the distance and brings the two partners together. Failing to enter into relation can establish harmful interactional patterns which are difficult to change. Friedman (1965b) observes:

> When man fails to enter into relation, however, the distance thickens and solidifies; instead of making room for relation it obstructs it. This failure to enter into relation corresponds to I-It, and distance thus becomes the presupposition for both I-Thou and I-It. (p. 22)

A setting and acceptance of interpersonal distance is essential for the possibility of relation. Distance can be viewed as an essential presupposition of relation or as an insurmountable block. Setting persons at a distance and accepting them as independent others is a special consideration in Martin Buber's concept of interhuman dialogue.

Problems impeding the growth of dialogue. Three special concerns facing the partners attempting to enter into dialogue are discussed in the first three parts of this section. This final section is concerned with three problems that impede the growth of dialogue. Martin Buber identifies these problems to be:

1. The duality of being and seeming.
2. The inadequacy of perception.

3. Two means of affecting others; imposing and unfolding.

Each of the problems is examined in separate divisions labeled "Being and Seeming"; "The Inadequacy of Perception"; and "Imposing and Unfolding." Buber views the three problems as serious challenges to the growth of dialogue between persons. He identifies the paramount challenge as the duality of being and seeming.

Being and seeming. "The essential problem of the sphere of the interhuman," writes Buber (1965b), "is the duality of being and seeming" (p. 75). The two terms are descriptive of the two poles of human existence identified by Buber. "Being" refers to those actions which truly represent the attitudes, values, and beliefs of the person involved in dialogue. Seeming, on the other hand, represents a facade or "false front" exhibited by a person who wishes to seem to be that which he or she is really not. Buber proposes, "We may distinguish between two different types of human existence. The 'one' proceeds from what one really is, the 'other' from what one wishes to seem. In general, the two are found mixed together" (pp. 75-76). Partners in dialogue fluctuate between Being and Seeming. Dialogue flourishes where persons most closely align themselves with the Being pole of existence.

Buber believes that a person who is predominantly Being exhibits certain characteristics that differentiate him or her from a person of Seeming. Buber (1965b) states, "The man who chooses being is direct in his expressions and spontaneous in his actions" (pp. 210-211). The Being individual is less in need of structured or patterned responses than the Seeming person. For this reason, he or she is able to confront each person as a unique human being with unique thoughts and needs; each situation a new opportunity for dialogue. In contrast, the Seeming person is overly image conscious; responding from a set of personally acceptable and calculated behaviors. There is little room for spontaneity in the life of the Seeming person. Without regard for the Seeming person's dislike for spontaneity, life can present a never-ending series of spontaneous, non-calculable events that defy categorization or standardization.

While the Seeming individual attempts to force people into preconceived categories and responds to situations with structured response styles, the Being person confronts each person and situation he or she faces with spontaneity and openness. Buber discusses a person of Being:

> His look is 'spontaneous,' 'without reserve'; of course he is not uninfluenced by the desire to make himself understood by the other, but he is uninfluenced by any thought of the idea of himself which he can or should awaken in the person whom he is looking at. (p. 76)

The Seeming man assumes quite a different position. "Since he is concerned," Buber asserts, "with the image which his appearance, and especially his look or glance, produces in the other, he 'makes' this look" (p. 76). If dialogue is facilitated by Being, then why does an individual choose Seeming as an existential option? The answer to this question according to Buber, involves man's need for confirmation.

As mentioned previously in this study, Buber believes that human beings need confirmation. He maintains, "It is no light thing to be confirmed in one's being by others, and Seeming deceptively offers itself as a help in this" (p. 78). Rather than Being him or herself, one person speculates what the other wants him or her to be and Seems to become that person. Thus, Seeming to be someone he or she is not, the person chooses not to "Be" that person he or she actually is. It is important to note that this choice is made time and time again. However, each choice between Being and Seeming is an essential existential dilemma. Buber posits, "To yield to seeming is man's essential cowardice, to resist it is his essential courage" (p. 78).

The choice between Being and Seeming is a continuous personal struggle, according to Buber, The choice is a significant factor in the growth of interpersonal dialogue. Buber affirms the necessity of the struggle:

> One can struggle to come to oneself--that is, to come to confidence in being. One struggles, now more successfully, now less, but never in vain, even when one thinks he is defeated. One must at times pay dearly for life lived from the being; but it is never too dear. (p. 78)

For Buber, a life lived from the Being is a life that facilitates dialogue. Through dialogue, the partners can approach their full potential for growth and development.

It is stated above that a life lived in Being is a spontaneous life, open and honest, while a life lived in Seeming establishes facades and patterned responses to people and situations. Persons, due to their unique and dynamic nature, are not easily categorized, however. No person, writes Buber, is strictly a Being or a Seeming person. Buber (1965b) affirms the possibility of change in man, proposing, "Thus, there arises the false perspective of the seemingly fixed 'nature' which cannot be overcome. It is false; the foreground is deceitful; man as man can be redeemed" (p. 78). Persons confront the choice between Being and Seeming with people and in situations on a day to day, hour to hour, minute to minute basis. The choice they make establishes an existential stance which greatly affects their ability to enter into dialogue. However, simply choosing to Be rather than to Seem does not guarantee dialogue between the partners. Each partner, in his or her own way, must work to conquer what Buber calls the "inadequacy of perception."

<u>The inadequacy of perception</u>. Martin Buber proposes that one problem which impedes the growth of dialogue is inadequate perception between the partners. While both partners may choose to live from a Being existential position, they still must accurately perceive and understand what the other person is saying.

Buber asserts that the partners can conquer the distance between them by imagining the real of the other. This is one of the steps of dialogue discussed earlier in the chapter. Each partner actively attempts to be available to the other; psychologically and physically. Buber observes:

> Applied to intercourse between men, 'imagining' the real means that I imagine to myself what another man is at this very moment wishing, feeling, perceiving, thinking, and not as a detached content but in his very reality, that is, as a living process in this man. (p. 170)

Buber terms this imagining the "making present" of one person's experience in the life of another person. "This making present," Buber hypothesizes, "increases until it is a paradox in the soul when I and the Other are embraced by a common living situation...between man and man. At such a moment something can come into being which cannot be built up in any other way" (p. 70). When a making present occurs by and between the partners, dialogical relation comes into being. Relation becomes a possibility in a full "making present" of and by the partners.

Having made themselves present to each other, a dialogue may now take place. Without a "making present," dialogue is replaced by what Buber describes as speechifying (p. 78). "By far the greater part of what is today called conversation among men would be more properly and precisely described as speechifying" (p. 78). This problem arises, Buber asserts, because the partners speak "at" each other and not "with" each other. He explains:

> In general, people do not really speak to one another, but each, although turned to the other, really speaks to a fictitious court of appeal whose life consists of nothing but listening to him. (pp. 78-79)

As a member of what Buber calls the "fictitious court of appeal," the listener or perceiver has no individual identity for the speaker. The speaker talks to no one in particular. All uniqueness of the listener is lost. This is impossible if the partners have become aware of each other through responding from Being and making each other present. In choosing the Being response and making present the other, the partners are confronted with the undeniable uniqueness of their partners. Buber writes that every utterance, action, and attitude is reflective of a dynamic center which is unique to each and every person. A full "personal making present" is a full realization of the uniqueness of the other. Buber states:

> I become aware of him, aware that he is different, essentially different from myself, in the definite, unique way which is peculiar to him, and I accept whom I thus see, so that in full earnestness I can direct what I say to him as the person he is. (p. 79)

"Personal making present" is Buber's way to describe the necessity of speaking honestly and only to a specific Other; being constantly aware of the individual characteristics and needs that the specific Other person has.

The choice between a "Being response" and a "Seeming response" is the first problem that may impede the growth of dialogue. The necessity for a full making present between the partners to avoid inadequate perceptions is the second potential problem. If the partners respond from their being and attempt to make the experience of the other person present in their own life, then the possibility for dialogue is enhanced. There remains a third problem which may serve as a block, thus interfering with the partners' attempt to enter into relation. Buber utilizes the terms "unfolding" and "imposition" to describe this problem. These terms describe the manner in which the partners choose to interact with each other.

Imposing and unfolding. Martin Buber writes, "There are two basic ways of affecting men in their views and their attitude to life" (p. 82). Imposition is one basic way of affecting the Other. By imposing, Buber means that one person tries to impose his opinion or his attitude upon the other person. "The first way," Buber (1965b) attests, "has been most powerfully developed in the realm of propaganda, the second in that of education" (p. 82).

The second basic way of affecting other persons is through unfolding. Buber proposes, "In the second basic way of affecting others, a man wishes to find and to further in the soul of the other the disposition toward what he has recognized in himself as the right" (p. 82). To illustrate his point, Buber offers the propagandist as a person interested in imposition and an educator as a person concerned with unfolding. He writes, "No other way may be imposed on a man, but another way, that of the educator, may and must unfold what is right, as in this case it struggles for achievement, and help it to develop" (p. 83). A relation that can be characterized as unfolding is a relation that promotes the growth of dialogue. A relation based upon imposition by one or both of the partners hinders the development of dialogue. The dilemma caused by the fluctuation between imposition and unfolding is the third problem which impedes the growth of dialogue.

Three problems which may impede the growth of dialogue are:

1. The duality of being and seeming.
2. The necessity of a full personal making present.
3. The dilemma between imposing and unfolding.

Based on these problems, Martin Buber proposes one basic assumption and three presuppositions regarding the interpersonal nature of human beings. In the final part of this section, the assumption and the presuppositions of the interhuman are examined.

<u>An assumption and the presuppositions of the interhuman</u>. Martin Buber states, "Man exists anthropologically not in his isolation, but in the completeness of the relation between man and man; what humanity is can be properly grasped only in vital reciprocity" (p. 84). This is Buber's basic assumption regarding the interpersonal nature of human beings. As discussed previously in Chapter 3 (pp. 65-68), Buber's understanding of personhood begins with relation:

the relation of the mother and her child. Persons are considered by Buber only in relation to things and other persons. To consider them as individuals is an abstraction to Buber. The nature of human personhood is strictly relational. Personhood cannot be properly grasped or understood by considering persons as isolated individuals. This assumption postulates an essential philosophical foundation of Martin Buber's writings on the interpersonal.

There are three presuppositions of the interhuman that must be fulfilled before dialogical relation becomes a reality. They are:

> 1. For the proper existence of the interhuman it is necessary...that the semblance not intervene to spoil the relation of personal being to personal being.
>
> 2. It is further necessary...that each one means and makes present the other in his personal being.
>
> 3. That neither should wish to impose himself on the other is the third basic presupposition of the interhuman. (p. 84)

The partners in dialogue are Being who they truly are; avoiding the temptation of Seeming to be someone they are not. While selfhood is a dynamic process, the "Being" person constantly seeks to act in a way that honestly represents his or her feelings and attitudes. While being themselves, the partners actively seek to understand each other by making the experience of the other as present in each other's lives as is humanly possible. Each partner is addressed as a unique individual. Finally, in addressing each other, the partners unfold those things in themselves they believe are the truth, allowing each other the freedom to choose their own options. The partners actively avoid the choice of imposing their way on each other. Where these considerations exist, asserts Buber, dialogue may flourish. Where these conditions are absent, the growth of dialogue is greatly impeded.

Section 4 outlines the special consideration of the interhuman which Martin Buber labels "The Elements of the Interhuman." Each element is considered individually as to its relation to the growth of dialogue. Together, the elements constitute a serious threat to dialogue and interpersonal growth. These problems, however, are not insurmountable. Interpersonal cooperation can promote dialogue between individuals. Persons can facilitate growth and development in other persons. Buber (1965) states, "The help that men give each other in becoming a Self leads the life between men to its height" (p. 16). At its height, the life between human beings reaches actualized selfhood through the miracle of dialogue. At its lowest, the life between human beings reaches isolation and loneliness through separation of the partners.

Whether life between persons reaches its highest or lowest depends a great deal on the personal ethics both partners bring to the relation. The basic assumptions and presuppositions of the interhuman that each partner brings with them into dialogue greatly determines their ability to enter into dialogue and respond to their partner. The fifth and final section of Chapter 4 presents Buber's "Ethic of

Responsibility" and proposes a definition of interpersonal communication based on Buber's I-Thou philosophy.

Toward a definition of interpersonal communication: an ethic of responsibility. Dialogue is the central focus of Chapter 4. The components and characteristics, as well as Buber's unique concept of dialogue, are examined. The question is posed: What is the most important element of dialogue? Buber (1965) writes:

> The idea of responsibility is to be brought back from the province of specialized ethics, of an 'ought' that swings free in the air, into that of lived life. Genuine responsibility exists only where there is real responding. Responding to what? To what is to be seen and heard and felt. (p. 16)

To Buber then, responsibility means an individual's ability to respond to his or her partner.

Martin Buber's concept of dialogue is intimately related to his definition of responsibility. Rotenstreich (1967) explains:

> It has been said that the dialogue is the focus of the 'between.' We may now add that responsibility is the focus of dialogue. As responsibility is rooted in the dialogue, the dialogue is rooted in the very essence of human life. (p. 100)

It follows in the philosophy of Buber that responsibility, like dialogue, is rooted in the very essence of human life. It is the nature of human beings to respond because responsibility is ultimately rooted in the nature of the human sphere (p. 100). Rotenstreich continues, "Buber's is the ethics of trust, trust being in turn a manifestation of of responsibility qua addressing and being addressed" (p. 100). This being so, he concludes, "The ethical attitude of trust is but an active manifestation of the factual basis and nature of human life" (p. 100). Responsibility is at the core of Martin Buber's philosophy of the interpersonal nature of man.

Why is responsibility so important to Buber? Johannesen proposes:

> For Buber, the increasing difficulty of achieving genuine dialogue between men of divergent natures and beliefs represents the central problem for the fate of mankind; the future of man he feels depends on a rebirth of dialogue. (pp. 373-382)

Stewart and D'Angelo (1975) assert, "The quality of our interpersonal relationships determines who we are becoming as persons" (p. 23). Howe (1967) also views communication at the core of human existence. He states, "From the very beginning of the individual's life it is communication that guarantees its continuation" (p. 149). Buber supports these statements with his own contention that responsibility, that is, one's ability to respond, is a determining factor in the process of self becoming. Buber (1965) concludes:

> Genuine responsibility exists only where there is real responding. Responding to what? To what happens to one, to what is seen and heard and felt. Each concrete hour allotted to the person, with its content drawn from the world and from destiny, is speech for the man who is attentive." (p. 16)

Interpersonal communication, that responsive dialogue between the Self and the Other, is of the utmost importance and value in Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy.

Communicating interpersonally is the very essence of a meaningful life according to Buber. Martin Buber's philosophy of interpersonal communication is an ethic of responsibility; it is at the very core of human life to respond to human beings through entering into dialogue with them. Responsibility is not merely a dimension of human existence; rather, it largely determines whether a person or a society can be called "human" in nature. Martin Buber's philosophy of interpersonal relation is a "call" to dialogue; a call inviting response. The degree to which a person is able to respond determines the humanness of that person according to Buber. An interpersonal relation may be deemed dialogic only where real responding takes place between the partners.

The I-Thou philosophy of Martin Buber is a philosophy of dialogue between the Self and the Other. Real and actualized life occurs in the relation between human beings. Buber utilizes the term dialogue to describe interperson communication of a very special nature.

Buber proposes an "Ethic of Responsibility." Persons become or develop through their ability to respond to the other beings around them. Buber's hope for mankind is in interpersonal relation through dialogue. He states, "Love is the responsibility of an I for a Thou" (p. 66). Relation, responsibility, and love are intimately related. To Buber, love is pure relation between the Self and the Other. A responsible world begins not on a worldwide level, but in the dialogical relation between I and Thou; between the Self and the Other. Buber is optimistic and committed to the power of dialogue. Howe (1967), in Matson and Montagu's The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication, supports Buber's belief in dialogue. He states: "Dialogue is to love what blood is to the body. When the flow of blood stops, the body dies. When dialogue stops, love dies and resentment and hate are born" (p. 148). Similarly, responsibility is to dialogue what interpersonal communication is to human life. When interpersonal communication stops, the world ceases to be human oriented and dehumanization and objectification reign. When responsibility stops, the growth of dialogue is impeded and loneliness and isolation are born.

For Buber then, hope for mankind lies in the growth and development of responsibility through the creation of dialogic communication between persons. The I-Thou philosophy is Martin Buber's philosophy of responsible dialogue on the interpersonal level.

References

Buber, M. Between Man and Man. New York: Macmillan, 1965.

Buber, M. The Knowledge of Man. New York: Harper and Row, 1965b.

Buber, M. I and Thou. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970.

Egan, G. Face to Face: The Small Group Experience and Interpersonal. Monterey, Ca.: Brooks/Cole, 1973.

Friedman, M. Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue. New York: Harper and Row, 1960.

Giffin, K. & Patton, B. R. Fundamentals of Interpersonal Communication. New York: Harper and Row, 1971.

Howe, R. In F. Matson & A. Montagu, The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication. New York: Free Press, 1967.

Johannesen, R. L. The Emerging Concept of Communication as Dialogue. The Quarterly Journal of Speech, 1971, LVII, No. 4.

Kuhn, H. Dialogue in Expectation. In P. A. Schilpp & M. Friedman (Eds.), The Philosophy of Martin Buber. La Salle, Ill.: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1967.

Laing, R. D., Phillipson, H. & Lee, A. R. Interpersonal Perception. New York: Springer Publishing Company, 1966.

Marcel, G. I and Thou. In P. A. Schilpp & M. Friedman (Eds.), The Philosophy of Martin Buber.

Matson, F. & Montagu, A. The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication. New York: Free Press, 1967.

Meerloo, J. In F. Matson & A. Montagu, The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication. New York: Free Press, 1967.

Mead, G. H. Mind, Self, and Society. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934.

Nilsen, T. R. Some Assumptions that Impede Communication. General Semantics Bulletin, XIV (Winter-Spring), 1954.

Poulakos, J. The Components of Dialogue. Western Speech, 1974, XXXVIII, No. 3.

Rogers, C. Some Significant Learnings. On Becoming a Person. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961.

Rotenstreich, N. The Right and the Limitations of Buber's Dialogical Thought. In P. A. Schilpp & M. Friedman (Eds.), The Philosophy of Martin Buber. La Salle, Ill.: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1967.

Stewart, J. Foundations of Dialogic Communication. Unpublished manuscript, 1975.

Stewart, J. (Ed.). Bridges Not Walls. Reading, Ma.: Addison-Wesley, 1977.

Stewart, J. & D'Angelo, G. Together. Reading, Ma.: Addison-Wesley, 1975.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Ideas for Further Research

This study calls into question the significance of Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy for communication theory. In order to determine this significance, four proposals were made in Chapter 1:

1. To examine the efforts of communication scholars as they have attempted to establish the significance of Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy for communication theory.
2. To present an analysis of Martin Buber's concept of relation.
3. To present an analysis of Martin Buber's concept of dialogue.
4. To propose a definition of interpersonal communication based upon Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy of dialogical relation.

The four proposals were addressed in four main chapters.

The literature relative to Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy was investigated in Chapter 2. The review of literature established an historical foundation of the dialogical concept and identified contemporary interest by communication scholars in the dialogical philosophy of Martin Buber. Buber's concept of dialogue was seen as seminal in its influence on other scholars' ideas relating to "communication as dialogue."

In Chapter 3, the significance of Martin Buber's concept of relation for communication theory was examined. Buber was seen to be deeply concerned with interpersonal relation which he viewed as the meaning and substance of life. "All actual life," he states, "is encounter" (1970, p. 62). Buber's belief in the importance of interpersonal relation supported Stewart and D'Angelo's (1975) contention that, "The quality of our interpersonal relationships determines who we are becoming as persons" (p. 23).

The majority of research on, and interest in, Buber's philosophy has been in the area of dialogue. Chapter 4 focused the attention of the study on dialogue. Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy was examined in the research of communication scholars Poulakos, Johannesen, Stewart, and D'Angelo. These scholars have utilized Buber's philosophy in the development of their own research and thinking. Chapter 4 considered the concept of dialogue, problems which impede the growth of dialogue, and defined interpersonal communication based on Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy of dialogue.

The study now concentrates on the original problem stated in Chapter 1: What is the significance of Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy for communication theory? Three statements regarding Buber's philosophy assist in providing a response to this question.

1. Martin Buber is absolutely concerned with the relation between person and person.

Friedman (1965), Martin Buber's primary translator, addresses Buber's understanding of the importance of interpersonal relation, stating, "Man becomes man with the other self. He would not be man at all without the I-Thou relationship" (p. xviii). This statement is Friedman's paraphrase of Buber's philosophical position. Buber continually stresses that meaning and actual life are found only in encounter.

2. <u>Communication scholars and researchers have shown contemporary interest in Buber's philosophy and its possible importance for communication theory</u>.

The communication research is conclusive on one point; certain aspects of Buber's concept of dialogue are relevant and significant for communication theory. Further, several studies indicate that Martin Buber's I-Thou construct is helpful in attempting to understand and describe the interpersonal dynamic (Jourard, 1964; Johannesen, 1971; Clark, 1973; Poulakos, 1974; Stewart, 1975; and Stewart & D'Angelo, 1975).

3. <u>Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy of dialogue remains a virtually untapped resource of theories, concepts and terminology relevant to the interpersonal relation and communication</u>.

Buber presents both specific behaviors, such as the "turning of the being," and underlying philosophic foundations, evident in the "developmental process of relation," relating to interpersonal interaction. Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy is a fertile field of study for the empirical researcher and the philosophical theorist alike.

The question is proposed: Will introduction of Buberian philosophy into the current body of knowledge create dialogue between the scholars? It is the contention of this study that Martin Buber's writings on the interpersonal are at least interesting and thought provoking; while at best, may provide a new terminology which describes the interpersonal communication event.

After consideration of the three statements in the first part of this Chapter and presentation of the scholars' opinions regarding Buber's philosophy, the study concludes that Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy of dialogue is significant for communication theory and merits further research. Buber's depth of experience in the interpersonal realm enriches his writing with a personalism and sensitivity of expression. His words and phrases are carefully chosen to represent those processes he believes are necessary for genuine dialogue to occur.

One problem remains unsolved regarding Buber's style of presentation and the potential use of his philosophy by communication researchers and teachers. Buber's style is poetic; he writes in a circular manner, often returning time and time again to a certain topic sentence. The writing of Buber can be puzzling and seemingly repetitive to the person reading him for the first time. To complicate the matter, Martin Buber has written on subjects including religion, philosophy, politics, nuclear weapons, education, and Israel to name just a few. How is the communication scholar to determine which sources relate to interpersonal relations and communication, and what theories and concepts in those sources are particularly relevant?

The author proposes a "Glossary of Terms and Phrases Relating to Martin Buber's I-Thou Philosophy of Dialogue," in the final section of Chapter 5. The sources most extensively used in the glossary are I and Thou, Between Man and Man, and The Knowledge of Man. These works are selected as they deal directly with the relation between person and person. They are also the most cited sources in the communication literature that is available.

The glossary is intended to assist communication scholars in their attempt to research Buber's philosophy. While the text of the study considers the concepts in some length, the glossary presents a concise definition of the term or phrase. The brevity in defining concepts will allow the researcher to determine if further investigation is desirable without having to read one or all of the primary sources above to make the same determination.

A second intention of the glossary is to identify selected key areas where Buber's philosophy may either support existing communication theory or supply new terminology and perspectives for original areas of theory and research.

The study concentrates on the glossary of selected terms and phrases in the final section of Chapter 5. A summary statement concludes the study.

A Glossary of Terms and Phrases Relating to Martin Buber's I-Thou Philosophy of Dialogue

The Basic Assumptions

There are two statements by Martin Buber which establish the basic philosophical assumptions underlying his writing on interpersonal relations.

1. "All actual life is encounter" (Buber, 1970, p. 62).

2. "Man exists anthropologically not in his isolation, but in the completeness of the relation between man and man; what humanity is can be properly grasped only in vital reciprocity" (Buber, 1965b, p. 84).

These statements identify the importance Buber places on the interpersonal relationship.

Characteristics of Dialogue

Johannesen (1971) identifies six major characteristics which are common to virtually all research on the concept of dialogue. They are:

1. Genuineness

2. Accurate empathic understanding

3. Unconditional positive regard

4. Presentness

5. Spirit of mutual equality

6. Supportive psychological climate

These characteristics are important because they provide a context in which to consider Buber's concept of dialogue. Also, Friedman (1963, p. x), Dance (1969, pp. 14-21), and Matson and Montagu (1967, p. 5) assert that Martin Buber is the primary person who places dialogue at the center of his view of human communication and existence.

Components of Dialogue

Poulakos (1974) proposes, "From a phenomenological point of view...it may be said that the components of dialogue are three. They are the Self, the Other, and the Between" (p. 199). Poulakos identifies a "striking lack of inquiry" by communication scholars into the concept of the Between. He establishes four essential conditions that must be met to create Buber's concept of the Between:

1. Physical presence
2. Mutual awareness
3. Interaction
4. Willingness to be influenced (p. 212)

These conditions must be met by the Self and the Other. Interpersonal growth occurs in the Between in the philosophy of Martin Buber.

Developmental Process of Relation

Martin Buber's concept of relation is a developmental process which is composed of five basic stages. The process begins in the prenatal life of the child and continues throughout the life of the individual. The stages are:

1. The pure natural association between mother and child; the "a priori" of relation.
2. The longing for relation.
3. The detachment of the I from the You: The development of conscious selfhood.

4. The encounter with It.

5. The choices: I-You or I-It

The stages are discussed in length in the study. This information, perhaps the most difficult to understand, is found in I and Thou.

The choice between the I-You and I-It relational options is not a singular event in the life of the individual. Rather, it is made each time the Self interacts with the Other. The choice is a dynamic decision making process.

Dialogue

Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy is a statement of the importance of the dialogical relation between person and person. Buber identifies dialogue as the means of entering into relation. Stewart (1977) presents a summary of the characteristics of Buber's concept of genuine dialogue as one approach to interpersonal communication (pp. 274-292). The seven steps toward dialogical relation are:

1. Each person must turn toward and be open to the other, a 'turning of the being.'

2. Each must make present the other by imagining the real.

3. Each confirms the other's being; however, confirmation does not necessarily mean approval.

4. Each must be authentically himself or herself.

    a. Each must say whatever she or he 'has to say.'

    b. Each cannot be ruled by thoughts of his or her own effect or effectiveness as a speaker.

5. Where dialogue becomes genuine, 'there is brought into being a memorable common fruitfulness which is to be found nowhere else.'

6. Speaking is not always essential; silence can be very important.

7. Finally, all participants must be committed to dialogue; otherwise, it will fail.

The majority of research by communication scholars on the I-Thou philosophy has centered on Buber's concept of dialogue. Dialogue is discussed in great detail in Chapter 4 of this study and in The Knowledge of Man.

Elements of the Interhuman

The "Elements of the Interhuman" are special considerations that effect the persons who are attempting to enter into dialogue. There are four major elements which may impede the growth of dialogue. They are:

1. The Social and the Interhuman. Buber identifies a distinct difference between "social" life and life between two persons called "interhuman." Membership in a social group does not necessarily mean that any interpersonal, or interhuman, relation takes place according to Buber. In his view, the social group often minimizes the interhuman relation for the sake of group goals and objectives. "In no case," Buber observers, "does membership in a group necessarily involve an existential relation between one member and another" (1965b, p. 73).

2. Community and Collectivity. Human existence in the collective is lived or directed toward the group; its goals and objectives. In the community, life is lived toward each individual as a specific Other. The community binds individuals together; the interhuman relation being of utmost

importance. Buber (1965) writes, "Collectivity is not a binding but a bundling together: individuals packed together, with only as much life from man to man as will inflame the marching step" (p. 31).

3. Distance and Relation. Persons exist, Buber writes, with some "distance" between them. That is, they are not in relation until they choose to be. Each living person is separate from every other living person; this is existential distance. Buber (1965b) proposes, "Distance provides the human situation; relation provides man's becoming in that situation" (p. 64). By entering into relation, persons overcome their existential separateness.

4. Problems Impeding the Growth of Dialogue. There are three problems which may impede the growth of dialogue. They are:

A. The duality of being and seeming.

B. The inadequacy of perception.

C. Two means of affecting others: imposing and unfolding.

These problems concern the interpersonal behavior and the communication style of the Self and the Other that either promote or impede the growth of interpersonal dialogue.

Essential Elements of Relation

There are seven essential elements, or components, of Martin Buber's concept of interpersonal relation. These seven elements are "characteristics" of a dialogical relation according to Buber. They are:

1. Participation
2. Risk
3. Sacrifice
4. Exclusiveness
5. Will
6. Grace
7. Reciprocity

Information regarding the concepts above can be found in Martin Buber's I and Thou. The seven "essential elements of relation" were selected from Buber's writing and identified under that title by the author for the purpose of organization.

Ethic of Responsibility

Martin Buber proposes that human beings have an ethical responsibility to respond, or communicate, interpersonally. An individual's responsibility is measured by his or her ability to respond to other persons. Buber (1965) states, "Genuine responsibility exists only where there is real responding" (p. 16). He concludes, "The idea of responsibility is to be brought back from the province of specialized ethics, of an 'ought' that swings free in the air, into that of lived life" (p. 16).

An individual's response ability, or communication ability, is at the very center of Buber's philosophy of dialogue. Interpersonal responding and communicating are ethical concerns for Buber. The Buberian definition of interpersonal communication is identified as an "Ethic of

Responsibility" in this study.

I-Thou and I-It

I-Thou and I-It are word pairs that represent Buber's terminology to describe the values or attitudes the two persons bring with them to the interpersonal relation. The I-Thou word pair describes a dialogical relation between the I, or Self, and Thou, or Other. The I-It word pair describes a subject to object relation where the Self uses the Other for the benefit of the Self. The two relational attitudes are discussed in detail in Chapter 3. The study reveals that the word pairs describe the kind of relation that is happening between the Self and the Other.

Presuppositions of the Interhuman

There are three presuppositions that must be fulfilled before dialogical relation becomes a possiblity. They are:

> 1. For the proper existence of the interhuman it is necessary...that the semblance not intervene to spoil the relation of personal being to personal being.
>
> 2. It is necessary...that each one means and makes present the other in his personal being.
>
> 3. That neither should wish to impose himself on the other is the third basic presupposition of the interhuman. (Buber, 1965b, p. 84).

The presuppositions relate directly to the "problems impeding the growth of dialogue." Presupposition 1 relates to, "The duality of being and seeming"; presupposition 2 concerns, "The inadequacy of perception"; presupposition 3 addresses the conflict between, "Two means of affecting others; imposing and unfolding." The presuppositions are the means of overcoming the difficulties presented by the three problems impeding the growth of dialogue.

Spheres of Relation

Martin Buber identifies three areas or spheres where relation may occur. These spheres are:

1. Man with nature
2. Man with man
3. Man with spiritual being

The relation between man and man has been the focus of this study. Descriptions of the spheres appears in I and Thou.

Summary Statement

The stated purpose of the glossary is to provide the communication scholar with selected areas of Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy which may support existing theory or provide terminology and perspective for new areas of theory and research.

Toward this goal, the author has attempted to resist oversimplification of Martin Buber's own categories, as well as in the creation of new categories for his often difficult phrasing.

The introduction of the study questions the significance of Buber's philosophy for communication theory. The available research, as well as Buber's own writing, has been examined. The fact that Martin Buber's writings are intensely devoted to interpersonal relation through genuine dialogue is evident.

Martin Buber has written considerably in the area of interpersonal relations and communication. His personal goal of a more humane world is achievable only through interpersonal dialogue. Morris and Pai (1976) recognize the importance of Buber's thought, concluding, "More than any other Existentialist thinker, Buber has examined the medium of communication between two human persons" (p. 99). Buber's contribution to psychotherapy, philosophy, religion, education, counseling, and other disciplines has been recognized.

Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy of dialogue, his concept of human personhood as person-in-relation, is significant for scholars of the human interaction labeled "interpersonal communication." Buber (1965) proposes:

> The fundamental fact of human existence is man with man.... If you consider the individual by himself, then you see of man just as much as you see of the moon; only man with man provides a full image. If you consider the aggregate by itself, then you see of man just as much as we see of the Milky Way; only man with man is a completely outlined form. (p. 204)

Martin Buber's philosophy remains a virtually untapped resource for communication scholars.

It is therefore the conclusion of this study that Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy of dialogue is significant for interpersonal communication theory and merits continued research to further establish and clarify this significance.

References

Buber, M. I and Thou. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970.

Buber, M. Between Man and Man. New York: Macmillan, 1965.

Buber, M. The Knowledge of Man. New York: Harper & Row, 1965.

Clark, A. Philosophers on Rhetoric. In D. G. Douglas (Ed.), Skokie, Illinois: National Textbook Company, 1973.

Dance, F. Communication and Ecumenism. Journal of Communication, XIX, March, 1969.

Friedman, M. In M. Buber, Between Man and Man. New York: Macmillan, 1965.

Friedman, M. In M. Buber, Pointing the Way. New York: Harper & Row, 1963.

Johannesen, R. L. The Emerging Concept of Communication as Dialogue. The Quarterly Journal of Speech, 1971, LVII, No. 4.

Jourard, S. M. The Transparent Self. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1964.

Matson, F. W. & Montague, A. The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication. New York: Free Press, 1967.

Morris, V. C. & Pai, Y. Philosophy and the American School. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976.

Poulakos, J. The Components of Dialogue. Western Speech, 1974, XXXVIII, No. 3

Stewart, J., (Ed.) Bridges Not Walls. Reading, Ma.: Addison-Wesley, 1977.

Stewart J. Foundations of Dialogic Communication. Unpublished manuscript, 1975.

Stewart, J. & D'Angelo, G. Together. Reading, Ma.: Addison-Wesley, 1975.

Bibliography

Buber, M. I and Thou. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970.

Buber, M. Between Man and Man. New York: Macmillan, 1965.

Buber, M. The Knowledge of Man. New York: Harper & Row, 1965.

Buber, M. Pointing the Way. New York: Harper & Row, 1957.

Buber, M. A Believing Humanism. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967.

Buber, M. The Way of Response. N. Glatzer (Ed.), New York: Schocken Books, 1966.

Buber, M. Meetings. M. Friedman (Ed.), La, Salle, Illinois: Open Court Publishing Co., 1973.

Buber, M. Daniel: Dialogues on Realization. M. Friedman (Trans.), New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1964.

Clark, A. Philosophers on Rhetoric. In D. C. Douglas (Ed.), Skokie, Illinois: National Textbook Company, 1973.

Dance, F. Communication and Ecumenism. Journal of Communication, XIX, March, 1969.

Diamond, M. Martin Buber: Jewish Existentialist. New York: Oxford University Press, 1960.

Egan, G. Face to Face: The Small Group Experience. Monterey, Ca.: Brooks/Cole, 1973.

Friedman, M. Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue. New York: Harper & Row, 1960.

Friedman, M. Martin Buber's Concept of Education: A New Approach to College Teaching. Christian Scholar, June, 1957, v. 40.

Giffin, K., & Patton, B. R. Fundamentals of Interpersonal Communication. New York: Harper & Row, 1971.

Heim, K. Ontologie und Theologie. Zeitschrift fur Theologie und Kirche, Meue Folge XI, 1930. In M. Buber, Between Man and Man. New York: Macmillan, 1965.

Hodes, A. Martin Buber. New York: The Viking Press, 1971.

Hora, T. Psychotherapy, Existence, and Religion. In H. M. Ruitenbeck (Ed.) Psychoanalysis and Existential Philosophy. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, and Co., 1962.

Howe, R. In F. Matson & A. Montagu, The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication. New York: Free Press, 1967.

Johannesen, R. L. The Emerging Concept of Communication as Dialogue. The Quarterly Journal of Speech, 1971, LVII, No. 4.

Jourard, S. M. The Transparent Self. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1964.

Kuhn, H. Dialogue in Expectation. In P. A. Schilpp & M. Friedman (Eds.) The Philosophy of Martin Buber. La Salle, Illinois: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1967.

Laing, R. D., Phillipson, H., & Lee, A. R. Interpersonal Perception. New York: Springer Publishing Co., 1966.

Manheim, W. Martin Buber. New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1974.

Matson, F. W., & Montagu, A. The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication. New York: Free Press, 1967.

Marcel, G. I and Thou. In P. A. Schilpp & M. Friedman (Eds.), The Philosophy of Martin Buber. La Salle, Illinois: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1967.

Mead, G. H. Mind, Self, and Society. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934.

Moore, D. J. Martin Buber: Prophet of Religious Secularism. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1974.

Moran, J. A. Buber and Dewey: The Redemption of Personal Experience. Philosophy Today, Spring, 1974.

Morris, V. C. & Pai, Y. Philosophy and the American School. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976.

Nilsen, T. R. Some Assumptions That Impede Communication. General Semantics Bulletin, XIV, Winter-Spring, 1954.

Pfuetze, P. E. The Social Self. New York: Bookman Associates, 1954.

Poulakos, J. The Components of Dialogue. Western Speech, 1974, XXXVIII, No. 3.

Rogers, C. Some Significant Learnings. On Becoming A Person, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961.

Rollins, E. W. Men of Dialogue: Martin Buber and Albrecht Goes. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1969.

Rotenstreich, N. The Right and the Limitations of Buber's Dialogical Thought. In P. A. Schilpp & M. Friedman (Eds.) The Philosophy of Martin Buber, La Salle, Illinois: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1967.

Schaeder, G. The Hebrew Humanism of Martin Buber. N. Jacobs (Trans.), Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1973.

Schilpp, A. & Friedman, M. (Eds.) The Philosophy of Martin Buber. La Salle, Illinois: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1967.

Smith, R. G. Martin Buber. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1967.

Stewart, J. (Ed.) Bridges Not Walls. Reading, Ma.: Addison-Wesley, 1977.

Stewart, J. Foundations of Dialogic Communication. Unpublished manuscript, 1975.

Stewart, J., & D'Angelo, G. Together. Reading, Ma.: Addison-Wesley, 1975.

Streiker, L. D. The Promise of Buber. New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1969.

Tallon, A. Person and Community: Buber's Category of the Between. Philosophy Today, Spring, 1973.

Winetrout, K. Buber: Philosopher of the I-Thou Dialogue. Educational Theory, January, 1963.

Wood, R. E. Martin Buber's Ontology. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1960.