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<th>AMIC-Thammasat University Symposium on Mass Communication Theory: the Asian Perspective, Bangkok, Oct 15-17, 1985: [workshop group reports]</th>
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Workshop Group Reports
Workshop I: The Relevance and Validity of Western Communication Theory to Media Practice in Asia

Western communication theory has been useful in defining principles, objectives, and hypotheses relative to media practice in Asia. However, the parameters and assumptions of Western communication theory have to be critically examined from time to time, redefined and reshaped in the light of existing realities as well as developments in the various cultures of Asia. This is necessary for further theory building, for expansion of applicability of specific theories.

Such an examination will have to take into account at least four specific areas, namely:

1. Religion and/or philosophical thought;
2. Language;
3. Freedom and Control; and
4. Other cultural values.

Religion or philosophical thought pervades Asian life. It is not seen as a compartmentalized activity but rather a way of life that affects or influences communication processes and behavior, and by extension, media practice in Asia.

Language is a requisite for redefining and reshaping theory. It is likewise a necessity for articulating the Asian - whether Sri Lankan, Thai, Chinese, Malaysian, Indonesian, Indian, or Filipino - perspective of communication theory and practice. It is a necessary tool for understanding the mances of reportage, for instance, in Asian newspapers, radio, television, and other media.
Freedom and control are concepts and issues that define the limits of applicability of communication theory pertaining to the media. Western theory may specify ideas or limits of media practice, but the existing sociopolitical conditions in any Asian country may reshape these specifications.

Other cultural values may affect full application of certain theoretical formulations. Cultural taboos and attitudes, like those on privacy, sex, and violence, for example, will have to be considered in media practice, even as some theories may specify such media values as full disclosure of information, objective reporting, freedom from prior restraint, and the like.

Western communication theory, the group felt, will remain relevant and valid to media practice in Asia, for as long as it is critically assessed and reassessed, defined and redefined, to reflect the socio-cultural conditions of the many different cultures of Asia. Such a continuous process of culture-based critical assessment and redefinition give Western communication theory its Asian perspective. It is the same process that has evolved one of the most influential communication theories today - that of development communication theory, the principles, assumptions, and hypotheses of which have been drawn from interpersonal, group, traditional, and mass media communication practice in much of Asia and the Third World. To be specific, the experiences of China, India and the Philippines in the use of communication and media in modernization and social change have given a definite Asian perspective to development communication theory.
International Symposium

on

Communication Theory: the Asian Perspective

October 17, 1985 9.30-13.00 h.

Meeting Room: Second Floor,
Faculty of Journalism

Workshop II

"Integrating the Asian Perspective in Communication Theory Course in Asian Communication Schools"

1. Dr. Godwin Chu
2. Dr. Harold von Gottberg
3. Dr. Djajusman
4. Mr. R.D.K. Jayawardene
5. Dr. (Ms) Usha Vyasulu Reddi
6. Mr. Chao Thongma
7. Assist. Prof. Aruneprabha Homsettee
8. Assist. Prof. Chamroenluk Thanawangnoi
9. Assoc. Prof. Sunit Siriwong
10. Assoc. Prof. Darunee Hiranruk
11. Miss Sudjai Chongvorakitwatana
Workshop II: Integrating the Asian Perspective in Communication Theory Courses in Asian Communication Schools

The Workshop met under the Chairmanship of Dr Godwin Chu to consider the following questions as part of the Agenda.

I What is being taught in the various Asian Communication schools.

II How can we improve the relevance by incorporating an Asian perspective.

III What teaching materials are available on the Asian perspectives? Where can we find them.

IV Is there an Asian perspective? What can be done to define or refine the Asian perspective.

V Any other issues of relevance.

I Various members of the committee elaborated on their teaching programmes and it was found that while the development perspective is incorporated in almost all teaching programmes, in many this perspective was Western-oriented. There is no one pattern but as far as possible, teaching programmes offer at least one course in development communication with an Asian perspective.

II One question that kept coming up in the discussion was the need for a clarity on the Asian perspective and it was suggested that there should be a "national perspective" developed first, whether Thai or Indian, Indonesian, etc. The importance of incorporating the Asian perspective was stressed.
III Another aspect of concern was the importance of reading materials and the lack of intra-Asian flow of information. The need for a clearing house of information was strongly felt and it was felt that AMIC's facilities could be better utilised by sending abstracts of research and syllabi of courses to AMIC on a more regular basis.

IV Several other ideas were mooted by the workshop. The imperative of starting an association for communication educators in Asia along the lines of AEJMC and an Asian Journal of Communication was felt by the workshop. An update on the AMIC Directory was also necessary to enable Asian scholars to know more about themselves.

V Finally, the problems of language was seriously felt and the Workshop was unanimous in its feeling that translation of research must be done at a national level as and when required and a greater exchange of research findings among scholars at national and international level was necessary.
Workshop III: How to Adapt and Develop Communication Theory in Thai Context

Like all fields, Communication Theory must be scientific therefore universal. There are General Theory and Specific Theory.

Application of theories is effective if suitable, flexible, adaptable to socio-cultural environment.

Communication Theory in Thailand is practical, philosophical and scientific and proved to be effective, in long-term perspective. Buddhism (a Thai communication theory!) is both source, message, channel and effect almost entirely.

Diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>American Theory</th>
<th>Buddhist Theory (or traditional Thai theory)</th>
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<tr>
<td>19 - 20 century</td>
<td>6 B.C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>mechanical )</td>
<td>(philosophical )</td>
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<td>technological linkup</td>
<td>Spiritual linkup</td>
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<td>short-term survey observation and test</td>
<td>long-term observation and test</td>
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<td>Professionalization</td>
<td>Humanization</td>
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Thai Theories are practical and effective because -

Way of life and Society

Law of Life and Society

Matter of Life and Society

Element of Life and Society
Application for Macro-level

Uses and Gratification
Inferation System Theory
Two step flow
Devcom
Socio-cultural Model
Normation Theory
Media Mix
Traditional Comments
ICE
CCC
Cognition Theory

Mirco-level