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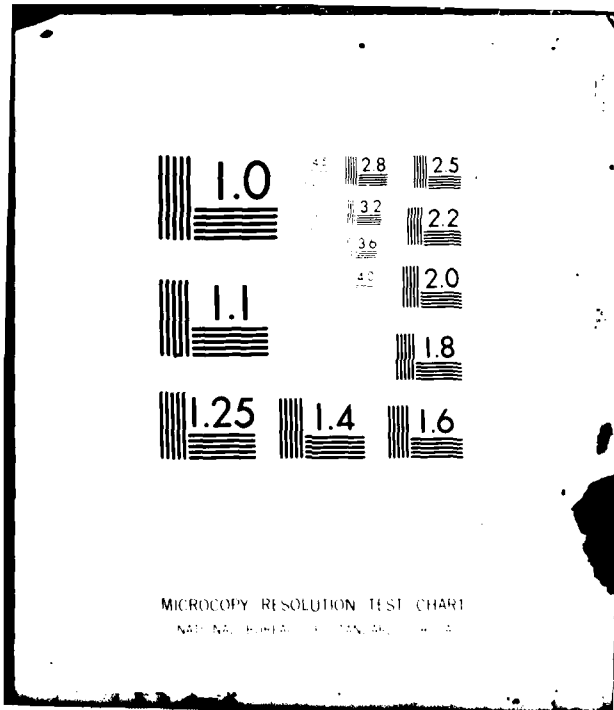
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**INTERACTIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND
ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR**

Benjamin Schneider

**Research Report No. 82-1
February 1982**

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20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) This paper first reviews some of the classic recent writings on interactional psychology and then presents an interpretation of current thinking about job attitudes, socialization to work, and leadership from the interactionist perspective. In the review, the debate between Mischel and Bowers is discussed, the former representing the situationist, the latter the interactionist position. Then, a summary of other interactionist writers is organized around three key interactionist themes: (1) human behavior is both internally and externally controlled with the person as well as the		

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situation playing an active role in the resultant observed behavior; (2) there is no one best way to collect data on human behavior but the laboratory experiment has inherent problems in that it fails to allow for naturally occurring person-situation interactions and the unfolding of behavior in situ; and (3) the term "interaction" has many conceptual and statistical meanings only one of which is captured by the ANOVA "X" as in "A X B interaction."

After exploring each of these three themes, the research on job attitudes, socialization, and leadership is shown to be quite situationist in perspective with a concentration, respectively, on socially constructed rather than interactionist realities, what the organization does to newcomers rather than how newcomers and settings influence each other, and how behavior is a function of the decision situation rather than how leader attributes and setting interact. Thus, it is shown, human behavior at work has been overwhelmingly assumed to be situationally rather than personally determined. Finally, some perspectives for a more trait- or person-oriented approach are presented and it is concluded that the interactionist position seems to most accurately represent the emergent nature of the real world of work organizations.

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INTERACTIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

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¹I have profitted from helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper by Dave Bowen, Arnon Reichers, John Wanous, and Ken Wexley.

INTERACTIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

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The major purpose of this essay is to introduce the student of organizational behavior to the thinking of interactional psychologists. To accomplish this goal, first some background on the views of interactional psychologists is presented, then a summary of some ideas about integrating interactionism and organizational behavior is presented. Finally, the potential relevance of this integration and interactional psychology to three key O.B. areas of research is suggested.

BACKGROUND

The Mischel-Bowers Debate

Interactional psychology represents a rapprochement between trait- and dynamic-oriented personality theorists (personologists) on the one hand and social learning and behavioral psychologists (situationists) on the other hand. Until the middle 1960's personologists and situationists functioned independently under a kind of implicit truce with neither casting public aspersion on the other. This changed in 1968 when Mischel (1968) published a book particularly critical of trait theorists. The following lengthy quotation summarizes the extreme case of Mischel's (1968, pp. 295-296) position:

The trait position leads one to infer enduring generalized attributes in persons and to predict from the inferred trait to behavior in various situations. This would be an appropriate

procedure if it could be done reliably and provide predictive power. The problem is that the heuristic yield from the trait approach over the last five or more decades has been . . . remarkably slim.

. . . Although it is evident that persons are the source from which human responses are evoked, it is situational stimuli that evoke them, and it is changes in conditions that alter them. Since the assumption of massive behavioral similarity across diverse situations no longer is tenable, it becomes essential to study the differences in the behaviors of a given person as a function of the conditions in which they occur.

. . . The notion of "typical" behavior, which is fundamental to trait conceptualizations, has led psychometricians and trait theorists to view situational variability as "error". The social behavior position, however, construes what the psychometrician considers error to actually be critical determinants of behavior.

Most of the criticisms of Mischel's position that followed concentrated on his extreme social learning perspective, as set forth in the above quotation. While clearly a part of his book, he seems to have used the extreme social learning perspective more as a frame of reference than as a total representation of his own position. Thus, conclusions like the following also exist:

. . . it is important to include the subjects' own phenomenology and constructs as data sources since he construes, abstracts and

experiences behavior, as well as performing overtly, just as much as the psychologists who try to study him (1968, p. 300).

Indeed, in later works (e.g., Mischel, 1973) more of the cognitive flavor of his position comes through; these will be noted below. So much of his book focused on the external control of behavior, however, that retorts to that position were not long in appearing.

Perhaps the most insightful of these was a paper by Bowers (1973) in which the interactionist perspective was presented. Thus, rather than arguing for traits or against situationism, Bowers presented the interactionist perspective (1973, p. 307):

It is my argument that both the trait and the situationist positions are inaccurate and misleading and that a position stressing the interaction of the person and the situation is both conceptually satisfying and empirically warranted.

Bowers' paper is a tour de force with two major themes: (1) a refutation of the metaphysical, psychological and methodological underpinnings of situationism, and (2) the presentation of the interactionist perspective.

For purposes of the present paper, Bowers' major refutation of situationism is its dependence on the experimental method as the source of data for drawing conclusions about (a) the power of situations to control behavior and (b) the non-validity and non-utility of the trait approach. As Bowers notes, situationists have ". . .subtly coopted [the] prestige of the experimental method . . ." and used the assumed superiority of the method as a basis for claims regarding the strength of findings. The crux of Bowers' argument is that experimentalists play with experimental

conditions until the manipulation has the desired effect and then argue, persuasively, that situations control behavior. The fact that actual experimental treatments are typically non-representative of the potential range of treatments (i.e., there is no random assignment of treatments to participants) is not recognized by researchers themselves nor by reviewers of research who are already disposed to view the world through situationist lenses.

Bowers' perspective on interactionism is that ". . . situations are as much a function of the person as the person's behavior is a function of the situation" (1973, p. 327, italics in original). He argues from the Piagetian assimilation-accommodation framework that situations for persons exist as a result of the means and methods used for knowing them. The situation, then, is a function of the perceiver in the sense that perceivers' cognitive schemas filter and organize situation; situations, then, are not separable from persons.

Why are person and situation typically not separable? Because people tend to choose to locate themselves in environments which are compatible with their own behavior tendencies. That is, as Wachtel (1973) noted, much about the nature of the environments in which people behave is an outcome of the behavior of the people in those environments. This yields similarity in the kinds of situations similar people create for themselves. It follows, then, that if people foster environments which are consistent with their own inclinations, those environments will be isomorphic with, not separable from the people in them.

It should be obvious that Bowers argues that the experimental method, through rigid controls on behavior and short time perspective, does not permit for the definition of situation by persons. He notes how the

"enormous constraints" imposed on variability in behavior in the typical experiment vitiate the potential for the variance in people to play a role in the emergent nature of situation. In summary, then, he argues for more flexibility in research designs and more attention to the reciprocation of person and situation in defining one another as the key to understanding the nature of person and situation. In McGuire's (1973, p. 448) terms:

. . .[S]imple a-affects-b hypotheses fail to catch the complexities of parallel processing, bi-directional causality, and reverberating feedback that characterize cognitive and social organization.

Of course Mischel and Bowers are not the only parties to a discussion of the nature of the personal and situational correlates of behavior. Indeed in the past five years at least three books of readings on interactional psychology have appeared (Endler & Magnusson, 1976a; Magnusson & Endler, 1977a; Pervin & Lewis, 1978a). Although some writers on personality theory think interest in interactional psychology may have peaked (Maddi, 1980) a consideration of the major themes of interactionism reveals as yet unrealized potential for insight into a number of contemporary topics in O.B.

Interactional Psychology: The Major Questions

Table 1 summarizes the three major questions in interactional psychology. The table is a condensation of the writings of Endler and Magnusson (1976b), Magnusson and Endler (1977b) and Pervin and Lewis (1978b), as well as Ekehammar's (1974) review of the history of research on interactionism.

Insert Table 1 about here

Table 1

Three Major Questions in Interactional Psychology

1. The Internal-External Question:
Is human behavior controlled internally (inner; person), externally (outer; situation) or both internally and externally? One corollary to this issue is whether behavior is the result of proactivity or passivity on the part of the behavior. A second corollary concerns the conceptualization of the external world, i.e., is the physical or psychological environment the important situation in person-situation research?
2. The Data Collection Question:
Is the appropriate data collection strategy self-report, experimental or observations or combinations of these? A corollary to this issue concerns time perspective: Should we be freezing behavior or witnessing it unfold?
3. The Data Analysis Question:
Is the appropriate data analysis strategy based on correlation/regression, analysis of variance, or some combination? A corollary issue here is the variety of meanings given the term "interaction" and whether the focus of analysis should be on traits, situations, or the interaction.

The Internal-External Question. As revealed in the discussion of the Mischel-Bowers debate, a core question in understanding human behavior is the attribution of cause. This seems only logical given the proclivity of humans to want to make such attributions (e.g., Kelley, 1971). Interactionists, and most contemporary personologists, would agree that behavior is a function of both internal and external causative agents, but that for different people different kinds of behavior in different kinds of situations may be expected.

While this appears to support Mischel's negative conclusions about behavioral stability and the predictability of behavior, the interactionists' concept of coherence in behavior provides the vehicle for avoiding Mischel's conclusion. Coherence

. . . refers to behavior that is inherently lawful and hence predictable without necessarily being stable in either absolute or relative terms . . . Coherence means that the individual's pattern of stable and changing behavior across situations of different kinds is characteristic of him or her . . .

(Magnusson & Endler, 1977b, p. 7).

The concept of coherence exists in contrast to ideas regarding absolute consistency in behavior (i.e., a particular individual will behave the same way across all situations) or even relative consistency (i.e., a group of individuals ranked with respect to a particular behavior in situation A will retain the same rank in situation B even though the average level of behavior may have changed). Absolute and relative consistency were the criteria Mischel used in denying the predictability of the behavior of

individuals based on trait assessments. Coherence, on the other hand, suggests that individuals may exhibit neither absolute nor relative consistency yet still be predictable because the way they are inconsistent from situation to situation is consistent (reliable) for them..

What accounts for coherence? The consensus among interactionists is that it results from information processing. Thus, interactionists view humans as generally proactive perceivers who, through their perceptions and cognitions, actively structure the external world. Essentially no interactionist, then, construes the situation in person-situation research in terms of the physical situation:

In the two prevailing views man is to be viewed either as a passive recipient, being acted upon or alternatively, one who models his world and who by his actions affects his perceptions and cognitions. The former passive model is compatible with the position that there exists a real world and the function of man's perceptions and cognitions is to uncover the world while in the active model the world of experience and knowledge is the result of the interaction between the external world, however defined, and man himself (Pervin & Lewis, 1978b, p. 8).

What is critical here is the idea of active involvement in a situation, through perception and other behaviors, as the way people come to understand situations. While it is true that such variables as past experiences, preferences, needs and values, play a role in assisting individuals' understanding of a situation, interactionists emphasize actual behavior in situ as the main vehicle. This belief in the way individuals come to understand

situations places interactionists on common philosophical grounds with action researchers (Sanford, 1970) or action scientists (Argyris, 1980) or ticklers (Salancik, 1979). All believe that one comes to understand a situation by making it, the situation, behave.

In summary, then, interactionists believe in the coherence of behavior which, in turn, is thought to be a function of the active psychological construction of situations through perception and based on experience. Because situations are actively constructed, the separation of person from situation is difficult. This is especially true in the long run, since assessing coherence in people requires a relatively long period of time with a number of observations of different people in different settings.

The Data Collection Question. It is clear that personologists have tended to focus on self-report measures as their trait data (predictors) and observations as their criteria (usually some form of rating of behavior by an observer). In contrast, situationists have depended upon manipulations of situational contingencies as their predictors and observation as their dependent variables.

As noted earlier, while situationists most often subscribe to the concept of random assignment of participants to treatments, some situationists do focus on case studies (one participant in many treatments). However, none practice random assignment of treatments to participants, and they rarely recognize that humans select themselves into particular situations, i.e., into treatment conditions.

Bowers (1973) made the issue of random assignment of treatments to individuals a major weapon in his arsenal for attacking the situationists' tendency to depend upon laboratory experiments as support for inter-situational

instability. There are two major reasons for suspecting the utility of laboratory experiments for understanding coherence in behavior. First, as already mentioned, assessing coherence in people requires observing behavior across many situations so that the kinds of changes in behavior that characterize a person as s/he moves from situation to situation can be documented.

On this first reason, Pervin and Lewis (1978b, pp. 18-19) note that:

Much of our research to date has involved a freezing of behavior rather than a witnessing of the unfolding of behavior . . . Processes such as regulation, adaptation, and exchange seem to be at the core of organismic behavior and an understanding of such processes would appear to require long-term observations and a longer time perspective than is often the case in psychology today. Observation of behavior as process suggests that variables often indeed have a reciprocal effect upon one another and that the determinants of action at one point in the process can be very different from and understood only in the light of determinants of action at another point in the process.

Pervin and Lewis praise the research procedures practiced by ethologists (behavioral biologists) as an example of the kind of processual research required to illuminate the unfolding of behavior: Ethologists study complex social behavior as the result of the interactions among variables such as hormone level, prior learning experience, eliciting stimuli in the environment and surrounding cues.

The second reason why dependency upon laboratory experimentation may not be useful as a vehicle for understanding naturally occurring behavior

concerns the self-selection of situations. Situationists, as active manipulators of the environments for randomly assigned "subjects" completely deny participants the opportunity to self-select themselves into situations. In this process, situationists completely obscure the data regarding the non-randomness by which people come to be in situations:

The situations that an individual encounters are not a random selection of all possible situations. Many of the situations in which we participate are chosen by ourselves (selected situations) but some seem to be imposed on us (required situations) . . . The result of this process of selection of situations that one encounters is that each individual appears in a restricted set of situations and these types of situations are a function of and have relevance for the person concerned (Mannusson & Endler, 1977b, p. 20).

Both the issues of time perspective and the idea of self-selection into situations argue against dependence upon laboratory experimentation as a basis for conclusions about the stability, coherence, or situation-dependence of human behavior. Both issues suggest the necessity for long-term observational/correlational research and for inclusion of prior experience/history as important issues in understanding today's, and in predicting tomorrow's behavior (on the latter point see also Mischel, 1973).³

³The "volunteer subject" phenomenon (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1969) suggests that many laboratory experiments are themselves being conducted on self-selected participants of a particular type: e.g., higher need for social approval, more intelligent, more sociable non-volunteers. This phenomenon yields, then, research on a restricted range of people, who are then randomly assigned to demanding situations.

The Data Analysis Question. Situationists have typically analyzed their data using ANOVA strategies, while personologists of the trait (compared to dynamic) persuasion have employed regression techniques. This difference in analytic preference fits well with underlying assumptions about the causes of behavior and the choice of the locus for research (i.e., laboratory or field).

In both kinds of analytic techniques, the potential for observing person-situation interaction effects is minimal. Paradoxically, then, both ANOVA and moderated multiple regression procedures for testing for the significance of algebraic interaction terms (i.e., A X B interactions) are frequently inappropriate and non-useful in interactional studies. Especially in laboratory studies this is true because to obtain a significant interaction term, there must be extremes of the variables and rarely in laboratory research are there any extremes on measures of the person. Thus, even when some "personality" measure is employed in a laboratory study, because of the nature of such research (e.g., male college sophomores) extremes of personality are unlikely.

Indeed, the issue of extremes applies not only to findings of significant algebraic interaction effects but also to the question of the relative stability of persons across situations. Epstein (1979, p. 1102) puts this issue as follows:

It has been falsely argued that if there were stability in personality, individual differences would necessarily account for a relatively large proportion of total variance. This argument is fallacious for two reasons. First, the proportion of variance attributable to any one factor, such as individuals, is always influenced by the range of variability represented

by the other factors. Thus, if situations are selected over a wide range of variability and individuals over a narrow range, the proportion of variance for individuals will be smaller than for situations. . . .Second, the analysis of variance has been misused in obtaining estimates of stability, for instead of using the appropriate error term for obtaining estimates of stability coefficients, the variance for individual differences has been compared to total variance.

Even in field studies, when techniques like moderated multiple regression (e.g., Zedeck, 1971) are used, significant effects for the interaction term are rarely observed (Schneider, 1978a). In field settings as in laboratory settings, extremes of person variables are not typically observed. If in both laboratory and field research significant algebraic interaction terms for person and situation cannot be expected how can we pursue the issue of an interactional psychology? The answer is that algebraic interaction is but one way to think about interaction. Indeed, Pervin and Lewis (1978b, pp. 13-16) describe at least five variations on the interpretation of the meaning of interaction: Descriptive interaction, statistical interaction, additive interaction, interdependent interaction, and reciprocal action-transaction. Their descriptions of these are paraphrased below and then discussed:

1. Descriptive interaction - refers to the mere description or codification of interpersonal relationships rather than an explanation of the interaction in terms of personal, situational, and reciprocal attributes. Pervin and Lewis provide the example of investigating how schizophrenic

disorders manifest themselves in interpersonal behavior and note that such a study would only be interactional if designed to examine how the observed behavior reflects characteristics of the participants and the context.

2. Statistical interaction - refers to what was previously termed "algebraic interaction", i.e., the traditional two (A X B) or three-way (A X B X C) interaction term in ANOVA, or the interaction term as a variable in multiple regression. If the interaction term's B weight is significant, the interaction is thought to be significant. It is important to note that inclusion of an interaction term in data analysis does not make a piece of research interactional, nor does lack of such a term make the effort non-interactional. Thus, statistical or algebraic interaction terms which fail to include as one element in the interaction term data on person attributes or contexts are not considered truly interactionist.

There are very few studies of a statistical or algebraic interaction sort in organizational behavior, and those that do exist typically fail to find support for the significance of the interaction term (Schneider, 1978a, in press; Terborg, 1977). I have already noted that the failure to obtain significance of these terms in work organizations can be attributed to the fact that the extremes of persons and situations rarely exist together; this absence of extremes mitigates against the possibilities for significance. Magnusson and Endler's (1977b) concept of the selected setting is useful here -- people select themselves into settings they fit and out of settings they do not fit. Extensive literatures in vocational psychology (e.g., Crites, 1969) and the psychology of turnover (e.g., Mobley, 1982) can be cited to support this fundamental principle. This principle in turn, produces the restriction in range of persons/situations which at best produce

linear (additive) effects for person and situation in the prediction of work behavior (Schneider, 1978a).

3. Additive interaction - refers, as noted, to the case where two or more variables combine linearly, but not interactively, in the prediction and understanding of some criterion of interest. While the idea of additive interaction makes little statistical sense, conceptually, it is appealing as a way to understand the real world in which manipulations are not so extreme as to produce the kinds of reactions required for the significance of an interaction term. Additive interaction argues, for example, that conditions at work can be established which facilitate job performance for the people who work in a particular setting and that, regardless of their personal ability level, the setting itself will make an independent positive contribution to their performance. Much of the literature reviewed by Schneider (1978a, 1978b) on ability and situation interaction at work and by Cronbach and Snow (1977) on aptitude and learning mode interaction seems to be best characterized as representing the additive interaction model. In these kinds of research, then, a typical result would be that ability correlates positively with performance but that the level of the scatterplot of that relationship is related to leadership style, reward system, job enrichment, goal setting condition, and so on, producing a significant linear combination of ability and situation in the prediction of performance (cf. Locke, Mento, & Katcher, 1978).

4. Interdependent interaction - refers to the case when two or more person and situation variables can be independently measured but the effects of those variables can only be understood in relation to one another.

Pervin and Lewis (1978b, p. 140) say:

When a phenomenon is conceived of in terms of the effect of many interdependent variables, we are faced with the problem of a system, a complex network of interdependent variables such that a change in the status of one variable may have varying consequences for all other related variables. This kind of interaction would appear to be the essence of the view that we can never understand persons in isolation from situations or situations in isolation from persons.

5. Adding Pervin and Lewis' fifth way of understanding interaction, "reciprocal action-transaction," completes the list by contributing the concept of time or process and the idea that a causative variable may also be affected by the very process of having an effect.

Of these five ways of characterizing interaction, interdependent interaction and reciprocal action-transaction best capture the essence of the interactionist perspective. They suggest that the natural ebb and flow of people and settings are continually affected by each other, and that one-way causal inferences fail to adequately represent the reality of most work settings. These views of interaction also indicate that the internal-external, data collection, and data analysis issues, are inseparable from one another. Finally, even surface attention to the implications of these views of person situation interaction yield relatively dramatic insights into the kinds of research necessary to capture the richness of interdependence that obviously exists in the world of work.

Summary. By way of summarizing this exploration into the concerns and issues of interactional psychology, three principles of interactional

psychology are presented as answers to the three questions presented in Table 1. Each principle is followed by a brief note which will be useful in Part II of this paper, Application of the Principles to OB.

1. The Internal-External Question: Human behavior is both internally and externally controlled. The control is reciprocal in form because in the real world persons select themselves into and out of settings. Human behavior in natural settings is an outcome of the active perception of situations by relatively similar self-selected people rather than the result of the imposition of required situations; the emergent environment as perceived by active members is the important situation in person-situation research.

This first principle emphasizes the real-time nature of most real world human behavior thus denying the relevance of the typical laboratory experiment to issues concerned with an understanding of person-situation interaction. It also notes that people tend to select settings. This is a critical issue for understanding the psychology of situations and the inseparability of person from setting in the world of work. Thus, it follows from this principle that because people enact settings, people and settings are difficult to separate. Finally the principle specifies that behavior in settings is a function of the perceived setting, i.e., the psychological environment is the important element in understanding the relationships between settings, persons and behavior.

2. The Data Collection Question: Any data collection strategy which allows for documenting the natural process of interaction between person and setting and which includes data on person, setting, and their interaction is legitimate in interactional research. Long-term experiments, then, are certainly reasonable so long as they are conducted in the real world

employing reasonable interventions as the experimental manipulations (cf. Fairweather & Tornatzky, 1977 for a review of such efforts), include theoretically relevant data on persons, and function in a process evaluation (continuous monitoring of change) mode (Goldstein, 1979).

The importance of the first two conditions (realistic interventions and theoretically relevant data on persons) has been accurately documented recently by Locke and his colleagues (Locke, Shaw, Saari, & Latham, 1981, p. 142) in their review of individual differences in goal-setting research:

The only consistent thing about the studies of individual differences in goal setting is their inconsistency. A number of reasons for this can be offered. First, the studies were not specifically designed to look for individual differences effects. The very fact that most studies assigned goals to the subjects means that any individual differences that did exist were masked by the demand characteristics of the design. . . . The best design for revealing individual differences would be one in which there is free (or a considerable amount of) goal choice rather than assigned goals. . . .

Second, most of the individual difference variables included in the studies were not based on any clear theoretical rationale; thus, even when differences were found, they were hard to explain. . . .

The importance of reasonable interventions, process evaluation and theoretically relevant data is difficult to overemphasize. Natural interaction can probably only be observed if process, rather than only outcome,

evaluation is practiced. Thus how outcomes emerge after intervention or manipulation is as important as which outcomes and the levels of outcomes that are observed; the unfolding of behavior is important. On the principle of a reasonable intervention, most situationist studies present required situations (demand conditions) to research participants (called subjects) in ways which all but eliminate individual differences when they do exist and which deny the concept of coherence in behavior. Returning then to Bowers' position, it becomes quite obvious in reviewing much of the social psychological situationist-oriented literature that published research is replete with demonstrations rather than investigations; research is more of the "watch this" than "I wonder" sort (see Argyris, 1968; Orne, 1962; Weick, 1967 for varying perspectives on this point).

3. The Data Analysis Question: There is no such thing as the appropriate data analysis strategy. However, it is clear that the usual conceptualization of the word interaction as representing an algebraic term in ANOVA is quite narrow. The word interaction in interactional psychology connotes reciprocal causation of person and situation. The idea of reciprocal causation implies people interacting in naturalistic settings over extended periods of time. The central data analytic problem appears to be the analysis of data collected over many (observational) (survey) (experimental) periods and relating earlier observations to later behaviors of interest.

Recently Epstein (1979, 1980) has been grappling with this problem and has argued forcefully for the utility of data aggregation over time for individuals. In contrast, then, to the usual procedure of aggregating across individuals at one point in time, he suggests that a way to study coherence in behavior is to aggregate over time both predictor and criterion

data for each individual in a data set. Indeed, Epstein (1979) showed that for the major studies supportive of stability in personality, all had taken steps to reduce errors of measurement (unreliability) in individual level data by obtaining relatively extensive samples of behavior and then aggregating prior to calculating correlations. He proceeded to support this idea in three of his own studies.

In conclusion, interactional psychology promotes a conceptualization of human behavior which is supportive of the idea that humans are proactive in perceiving situations into which they select themselves, that naturally occurring behavior is frequently the result of long-term reciprocal transaction between person and setting, that short-term laboratory experiments are futile as vehicles for understanding person-situation interaction, and that an interpretation of the work interaction need not include only an X (Terborg, 1981).

APPLICATIONS

In this section of the paper, some principles of interactional psychology will be used as vehicles for examining three different OB topics, namely job attitudes, socialization to work, and leadership. While no grand theoretical scheme led to selection of these particular topics for discussion, for each a reason existed. Job attitudes was selected because of the traditional implicit assumption in the literature that attitudes at and towards work are a function of what happens to and around people at work rather than correlates of attributes people bring with them. For example, there exist precious few studies predicting job satisfaction or other job attitudes using selection procedures (Schneider, Hall & Nygren, 1971).

Recently, the implicit assumption has been made explicit and theories about attitudes at work have become quite situationist in character; this will be the focus of the job attitudes section.

Socialization to work was chosen because it is a topic that requires a longitudinal perspective and, indeed, has frequently been studied with longitudinal methodologies. However, little work has been accomplished on conceptualizing or studying the role of person variables in socialization. This failure seems to be particularly acute when one notes that the way people in an organization behave is obviously a function of contextual factors which, predominately, are other people. Why most people become socialized to a setting has not been so frequently questioned as How they become socialized. A focus on persons provides some insight into the Why.

Finally the study of leadership is included because it is potentially the most exciting topic in OB. Yet we have managed to study this topic for 25 or more years now without saying much about the attributes of those who lead. There are, of course, exceptions to this conclusion and a focus on those exceptions provides some suggestions for research that may help clarify the nature of leadership, and management, at work.

Examination of these three topics will be based on the following set of assumptions derived from Part I:

1. People select themselves into and out of situations based on the general fit of themselves to the situation.
2. Self-selection of people into and out of settings results in relatively homogeneous settings, yielding people interacting with relatively similar people. Over time it is the interactions

of people with similar others that defines work settings as we find them; work settings emerge more than they are created (Schneider, in press).

3. While the general debate over the stability of personality vs. the effect of situations on behavior may be theoretically interesting, the interactionist position seems to best capture the world of work. This is so because of self-selection which mitigates against people encountering random situations. Thus, the oft-made observation that people appear more stable than Mischel's (1968) conclusions would suggest is probably true because we typically observe people in a relatively narrow range of situations and, then, over many observational periods (Epstein, 1979).

In terms of these principles, it is interesting to note that none of the prominent interactionists or even others who are interested in documenting the stability or coherency of personality (e.g., Epstein, 1980) have attended to the extensive literature in OB on the utility of trait measures for predicting long-term vocational behavior. For example the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory (Campbell & Hansen, 1981) has revealed quite remarkable stability in individuals' interest patterns over 30 or more years as well as good accuracy in predicting occupational choice (Anastasi, 1976). With respect to managerial behavior, Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler and Weick (1970), report on the validity of various trait approaches to the prediction of managerial effectiveness. For example, they noted how the Guilford-Zimmerman

Temperament Survey and various biographical information blanks were capable of making accurate predictions of managerial success as defined by such indices as job level achieved or relative salary level (correlations of .60 or so are not unusual). Thus, it appears to be true that, as Epstein (1979, 1980) would suggest, traits and predictions of behavior over the long run can be stable and valid. The secret here, as in Epstein's own work, appears to be the use of criteria which are, in fact, aggregates of individual samples of behavior (job or salary level) rather than point predictions of specific time-bounded behavior. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) call these aggregates "multiple-act" criteria; opportunity is provided for individuals to display a range of behaviors and, thus, for coherence to emerge.

Personologists and interactionists have also ignored the findings in vocational and industrial psychology supporting the conclusions that relatively similar people select themselves into settings and, if they are dissimilar, select themselves out. On the former point, Holland's (1966, 1973, 1976) and Lofquist and Dawis' (1969) theories of vocational choice clearly support the idea of person-environment match. These scholars have marshalled an enormous arsenal of data to document self-choice tendencies. Similarly, the turnover literature reveals how self-selection, this time out of settings, works to narrow the range of people one would expect to find in a setting (cf. Mobley, 1982; Porter & Steers, 1973; Schneider, in press; Schneider & Mitchell, Note 1).

In the next three sections these ideas about self-selection, the natural emergence of settings, coherence in behavior, and the various ways of conceptualizing person-situation interaction are employed as lenses through which to examine the research on job attitudes, socialization to

work and leadership.

Attitudes At and Towards Work.

The major theme of this section will be an interactional interpretation of research on job attitudes. The focus of the interpretation will be the situationist-oriented papers of Salancik and Pfeffer (1977; 1978). These are convenient foci because of the care with which their arguments have been presented. The key point made by Salancik and Pfeffer (1978, p. 226) is that:

The social information processing approach proceeds from the fundamental premise that individuals, as adaptive organisms, adapt attitudes, behavior, and beliefs to their social context and to the reality of their own past and present behavior and situation. This premise leads inexorably to the conclusion that one can learn most about individual behavior by studying the informational and social environment within which that behavior occurs and to which it adapts.

In their first paper, Salancik and Pfeffer (1977) were concerned with the relevance of need theories for understanding job attitudes, especially job satisfaction. In that paper they presented a considerable amount of evidence regarding the inadequacy of need theories that is remarkably reminiscent of the Mischel (1968) treatise on trait theories of personality. Indeed, one of the central themes in the Salancik and Pfeffer (1977) essay was the instability or inconsistency of the need state of individuals. The later paper (1978) completes the conclusion of the first: The social environment of individuals, not their need states nor their need state/

environmental match, predicts job satisfaction. Job satisfaction, then, is a reaction to a socially constructed reality which in turn depends upon the cues and clues of the environment for data. This retort to need/dominated theories of job satisfaction is reminiscent (though not remarkably so) of Mischel's (1973) later position regarding a definition of personality grounded in individual differences in social construction competencies. Parenthetically it must be noted that research on need theories at work has been almost totally dominated by the field survey/correlational procedure while the studies used by Salancik and Pfeffer in support of their position have been almost exclusively laboratory experiments.

From an interactionist perspective, both need-theories and the social information processing approaches to understanding job attitudes suffer from theoretical, methodological and data analysis problems. Some of these flaws have been outlined by Calder and Schurr (1981) but their alternative, the cognitive psychological or information processing view, appears to yield little more than the idea that attitudes are the result of ". . . a constructive process in which incoming information is interpreted in terms of relevant stored information" (p. 290). Indeed, by emphasizing the role of organizational procedures (e.g., group inclusion) rather than individual characteristics (e.g., internal-external control) as the causes of particular attitudes, Calder and Schurr seem to place themselves squarely in the situationist camp.

Simply stated, no current conceptualization of job attitudes addresses the process by which individual attributes and organizational attributes in natural interaction yield job attitudes, nor does any theory specify which individual attributes when in interaction with which situational attributes

will, over time, yield which job attitudes. Finally, no theory addresses the fact that different kinds of people are typically found in different kinds of work situations. Thus, over time as people select themselves in and out of settings, the effect of homogenization of people types should yield relatively similar job attitudes among those remaining.

This latter thought suggests that the similarity of people in the way they construct reality rather than some "rationalization" or "attribution" accounts for many of the field-collected effects presented by Salancik and Pfeffer and others who have studied the relative contribution of individual and situational variables to job attitudes (e.g., Oldham & Hackman, 1981). Self-selection in and out of settings, rather than attribution, would also account for the finding that long-term employees have more positive job attitudes (Sheldon, 1971). Indeed self-selection and the tendency of settings to be defined similarly by relatively similar kinds of people leads to the interesting hypothesis that different organizations are likely to encounter different kinds of environmental pressures (e.g., a turbulent environment) and that they should have characteristic ways of responding to the environments they do encounter. Thus, as Lawrence and Lorsch (1969) and others have shown there is no one best way for an organization to respond to all environments. What is an appropriate response depends on many factors including, I would maintain, the kinds of people in the organization.

While it is not yet clear how organizations should be typed with respect to people attributes, some preliminary work in this direction has been accomplished by Holland (1966, 1973). He has categorized careers into six types and shown, over hundreds of studies, that people tend to enter career

environments that fit their career interests. A most interesting feature of Holland's work is the manner in which he defines a career environment: Career environments are determined by the kinds of people in them.

If career environments are defined by the kinds of people in them, and if people select themselves in and out of organizations and jobs, for any one person and any one organization one would expect, over time, a settling out or stabilizing effect. In fact we find that most turnover in organizations at the individual level is early (Wanous, 1980) and, at least theoretically, turnover rates will be higher in less stable (i.e., younger) organizations than in more stable or older ones (Schneider, in press).

These conclusions suggest that the job attitudes of people in an organization are a function of the kinds of people attracted to, selected by and retained there. The problem is that research designs, especially of the short-term laboratory experiment type and of the single organization sort would fail to illuminate this hypothesis.

For example, research on higher-order need strengths (HNS) as a moderator of the job characteristic-job satisfaction relationship has been plagued by inconsistent findings (Roberts & Glick, 1981; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977). One hypothesis not presented for these inconsistencies concerns the single-organization problem. Briefly stated, field research conducted in single organizations which attempts to use person variables as moderators of any relationship are doomed to lack generalizability and to reflect inconsistency across settings. This is true because of the homogeneity of people within settings, also known as the restriction of range problem. As noted earlier, homogeneity vitiates the probability of finding significant algebraic interaction terms and those are precisely what moderators

are (Zedeck, 1971). Indeed, not only are moderators unlikely but individual differences as direct correlates of attitudes should also not be expected, again because of restriction of range.

Thus, while it should be obvious now why laboratory experiments are a poor source for hypotheses about what yields particular job attitudes at work, it should also be clear why single organization studies also cannot be depended upon as a source for generalizable findings. What is clear is that job attitude research needs to be field-oriented, longitudinal, multi-situational (with respect to industry, job-type, etc.), and include psychologically relevant data on persons (career interests, need for achievement, etc.) before we will begin to have an understanding of how job attitudes come to be what they are.

Finally, some mention of the correlates of job attitude research needs to be made. That is, in research using job attitudes as predictors of some other form of behavior, consideration of the issue posed by Epstein (1979, 1980) as data aggregation in the criterion and by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) as multiple act criteria is required. It is of interest to note that both personality (Epstein) and attitude theorists (Fishbein & Ajzen) have reached a similar conclusion with respect to the prediction of behavior -- use cumulative data or multiple instances of the behavior as the criterion or dependent variable. As noted earlier, industrial psychologists have employed this dictum with considerable success by utilizing such cumulative data as managerial level or salary as criteria in the prediction of managerial effectiveness.

Multiple act or aggregate behaviors are useful as criteria because they are reliable and because they, in fact, represent the typical behavior

of people. What is critical here is that personality and attitude measures are frequently called "typical behavior" measures (cf. Anastasi, 1976) yet evaluations of their utility in predicting behavior have been based on the prediction of single instances of behavior. The assumption of coherency in behavior introduced earlier suggests that the appropriate data for evaluating the validity of attitude measures are of the multiple act kind.

In summary, job attitude researchers have tended to ignore a number of the key assumptions of interactional psychology; namely that people select situations (both on the entry and exit side), that situational variance in research is a function of the people in the situation, that single organization studies and laboratory experiments each make generalizability very difficult if not impossible, and that coherence in behavior dictates the use of multiple act or aggregate data as criteria in predictive studies (see also Fisher, 1980).

Socialization to Work

Socialization to the world, i.e., to becoming an adult member of a society, has been studied by all kinds of behavioral scientists, including sociologists, anthropologists and psychologists. Except for developmental psychologists, however, socialization has been the study of how humans come to take on the behavioral and spiritual norms and values of their society. Indeed the study of socialization might be called the study of passage rites, the careful documentation of how societies mold their members to the status quo of the society.

For the most part this situationist orientation to the study of socialization has dominated studies of socialization to work. Indeed, scholars have been so enamored of the societal metaphor when studying socialization

to work that the classic studies have tended to be accomplished in highly structured settings -- settings which are almost "total organization" (Etzioni, 1975) in form. That is, many of the concepts that pervade the socialization literature derive from observations of relatively rigid and formalized, uniformed, people processing programs [e.g., police (Van Maanen, 1976), priests (Potvin & Suziedelis, 1969), military recruits (Janowitz, 1960), physicians (Becker, Geer, Hughes & Strauss, 1961), forest rangers (Kaufman, 1960)]. The relevance of this observation is that the uniformed professions (Becker, et al., who studied physicians, called their book Boys in White) represent only a small proportion of all workers and even then, are representative of more extreme and, perhaps, homogeneous work cultures.

It follows that socialization to work in less rigidly defined roles should take more forms and, indeed this seems to be true. For example, early research by Berlew and Hall (1966) on the socialization of managers and by Schein (1964) on the early experiences of M.B.A.'s illuminated the differences in newcomer experiences, especially as regards early job challenge. The long-term study of AT&T managers (Bray, Campbell, & Grant, 1974) has continued this tradition by examining the joint influences of personal attributes (assessed via the assessment center method) and job challenge on the outcomes of socialization. As the role/organization becomes less rigid, then, more types of people and more types of socialization experiences emerge requiring the scholar to note them.

There are surprisingly few studies which attempt to integrate theories about the various ways in which different individuals encounter different situations with theories about the ways situations may influence people. Interestingly, much of the work that has been accomplished has been done by

occupational sociologists and it has been summarized by Mortimer and Lorence (1979).

Mortimer and Lorence cite a number of longitudinal studies revealing the kind of reciprocal person-situation relationships between individual and occupational attributes that interactional psychologists might predict: (a) Kohn and Schooner (1978) showed how people's intellectual flexibility predicted job complexity ten years later and the reciprocal effect was also observed; (b) Andrisani and Nestel (1976) noted how upward occupational mobility seems to lead to increased self-efficacy and that different levels of perceived self-efficacy predict later success in work (as indicated by annual salary); (c) Mortimer and Lorence themselves showed how, over a ten year period, rewarding occupational experiences tend to reinforce the same values that constituted the basis of earlier work selection. As would be predicted on the basis of earlier discussions regarding self-selection into environments of a type similar to one's own, Mortimer and Lorence show both selection and socialization factors affecting worker values, present and future. Indeed they are explicit in their treatment of these effects as being reciprocal in nature (p. 138): ". . . work satisfaction should also increase as a result of this continuing reciprocal process." Further, consistent with hypotheses noted earlier with respect to job attitudes, Mortimer and Lorence hypothesize that the positive relationships between age and work satisfaction and the relatively high level of job satisfaction expressed in all occupational groups (even under objectively poor working conditions) are attributable to the same continuing reciprocal process.

Yet, VanMaanen and Schein (1979, p. 216) in their very comprehensive view of the socialization literature take the following position:

. . . [W]e assume here that a theory of organizational socialization must not allow itself to become too preoccupied with individual characteristics (age, background, personality characteristics, etc), specific organizations (public, private, voluntary, coercive, etc.) or particular occupational roles (doctor, lawyer, crook, banker, etc.). . . . Our concern is therefore with "people processing" devices. The frequency and substantive outcome of the use of these devices across particular types of people, organizations, and occupations are then peripheral to our analytic concern . . .

The central conceptual problem with this theoretical stance is the implicit assumption that individual characteristics, specific types of organizations, and particular occupational roles are somehow independent of each other and of the specific form of people processing devices observed in a particular setting. The interactionist perspective developed here suggests that specific types of organizations and occupational roles are likely to be characterized by individuals with particular characteristics yielding characteristic people-processing or socialization devices. Only when one entertains this natural selectivity of individuals for roles and organizations with concomitant differences in socialization programs will findings across studies be understandable.

Thus, one of the perplexing problems in the socialization literature has been the lack of consistency in findings across studies. All studies find that some socialization processes are at work and that there seem to be stages of the socialization experience (cf. Wanous, 1980) but what the

processes are and how they are experienced varies and the role of the individual in the process is ignored. As Jones (Note 2, p. 5) has recently stated:

[Socialization research] . . . is predicated on the notion of the naive newcomer, and there is a paucity of research which deals with the socialization process from the newcomers' perspective. Even at the processual, cognitive level, accounts of newcomers 'making sense' of their new situation frequently emphasize the primary effect of the organizational context on newcomer perception, rather than what newcomers, themselves, add to the process or situation.

Jones goes on to show how past experience, self-efficacy and individual differences in attributional tendencies (i.e., to self or others) may all affect the power of organizational devices to effect individual behavior and socialization experiences.

But even Jones fails to entertain the idea that different organizations and/or roles will, themselves, have different kinds of people processing devices as a function of the kinds of people who occupy those organizations and/or roles. That is, should it be surprising when one discovers that a para-military organization like a police department employs military tactics in socializing recruits who, in any case, have frequently had prior military experience? Or, is it surprising to find that scholars studying the socialization of newcomers to different kinds of organizations require specification of a different number of stages with different names in order to capture the socialization experience of the people they studied (Louis, 1980)?

The point here is not to deny the contributions of a situationist orientation to socialization but to note that single organization or single role studies have built in self-selection bias especially when the people studied are entering a relatively rigid and formally defined role. Such roles are almost guaranteed to require careful preselection by self and organization and, when studied, will appear to leave little room for individual initiative. These kinds of situations, in other words, fulfill all of the reasons for not using laboratory experiments as data for generalizing to the world of natural interaction. Parenthetically, it should be noted that all theoretical perspectives (e.g., Louis, 1980) which implicitly make the assumption of random assignment of person types to roles/organizations will similarly suffer from lack of generalizability.

Conversely, the AT&T studies of managerial lives (Bray, et al., 1974) reveal how different kinds of socialization experiences linearly contribute to managerial success over and above individual attributes. Such studies are indeed rare (Schneider, 1978b), probably because personologists have tended to only look at traits while situationists have concentrated on various job variables. Hopefully we will in the future gain some clarity on what the important individual variables are for a more complete understanding of the effective socialization of different kinds of people in different kinds of roles and organizations (Reichers, Note 3).

Leadership at Work

For about 25 years organizational researchers and social psychologists have perpetuated the myth that traits fail to predict leadership accession and effectiveness. This is of course a myth because many early studies of leaders showed that traits were useful predictors of leadership acquisition

and effectiveness. The confusion in interpretation of findings arose because the same traits were not particularly useful in distinguishing a collection of leaders from a collection of non-leaders and because different traits were accurate at identifying leaders in different situations. Yukl (1981) hypothesizes that it was Stogdill's (1948) accurate report of the contingency nature of trait correlates of leadership which suppressed leadership trait research in the following decades.

For whatever the reason, the study of the personal traits of leaders has received scant attention when judged against the probably thousands of studies using just the LBDQ (Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire; cf. Fleishman, 1957). As Stogdill (1974, p. 72) noted in his Handbook of Leadership:

. . . [R]eviews . . . have been cited as evidence in support of the view that leadership is entirely situational in origin and that no personal characteristics are predictive of leadership. This view seems to overemphasize the situational, and underemphasize the personal, nature of leadership.

Recent reviews of the relevance of trait approaches to the understanding and prediction of leadership effectiveness in managerial roles has been impressive, with different traits apparently useful in different kinds of settings. For example, Yukl (1981, p. 77) notes that studies of Miner's (1978) six motives to manage reveal stronger predictive power for managers in larger more bureaucratically structured settings, than for managers in less hierarchical organizations. Similarly, one can compare Bentz's (1967) description of the successful Sears executive to the one provided by Bray,

et al. (1974) for AT&T. The former has an emphasis on power, competitive drive for eminence and authority and the need to be recognized while the latter appears to emphasize the more general success-at-work theme, success in a monetary/financial sense and an interest in self-development (especially towards innovation and adaptation). The power and influence theme at AT&T, when it appears is focused not only on work but also externally to the community.

In the same contingency vein, McClelland's work with the three needs for achievement (nAch), power (nPow) and affiliation (nAff) can be cited. For example, nAch predicts success positively in innovative firms but negatively in bureaucratic firms while, with nPow, the reverse is true (Andrews, 1967). Similar findings regarding the role of nAch in smaller, more entrepreneurial firms has been reported (Hundal, 1971) and the role of nPow in more traditional bureaucracies is well documented (McClelland, 1975). Some laboratory experiments (albeit relatively long ones in which people in working groups had to interact) have also revealed these kinds of contingency effects. Here reference is made to the innovative studies of nAch, nPow and nAff conducted by Litwin and Stringer (1968).

Following hypotheses presented earlier, it is appropriate to suggest that the kinds of people in different kinds of organizations will yield attraction-selection-socialization-attrition cycles appropriate for those kinds of settings. This will yield people with more or less appropriate trait or motive patterns, and those with the most appropriate managerial or leadership motive pattern for that setting will become leaders.

It was precisely this line of thinking which lead Fiedler (cf. 1967) to his contingency theory. This theory postulates that people are

predominantly either task or relationship oriented. Fiedler found that his measure of task or relationship orientation failed to produce consistent predictive results and that prediction effectiveness seemed to depend on three situational variables: Leader-member relations (most important), position power and task structure.

Years of research indeed suggest considerable merit and robustness to the conceptualization, with most criticisms of the theory being attacks of the Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC) measure of task achievement or affiliation orientation (see Strube & Garcia, 1981, for support of the theory and Yukl, 1981, p. 139 for a full listing of the critiques). If it is true that some of the weak support for Fiedler is attributable to the LPC, it might prove worthwhile to employ McClelland's use of the T.A.T. projective measure of nAch, nAff and nPow or Miner's Sentence Completion Blank in research using Fiedler's tripartite index of situational favorability.

An interactional interpretation, however, would focus not only on the trait measure but on the natural interaction of person and setting as a basis for cues to inconsistent results even when the results come out of an obviously interactionist position. One clue here is Fiedler's consistent success in accounting for military leadership with more inconsistency in the industrial sector. Perhaps one can trace this to the model's origins which were based on inconsistent findings from military teams (bomber, tank, and artillery crew commanders) or other formally organized teams (basketball) with designated leaders: Is it possible that in accounting for the inconsistencies in predictive results amongst these small formal groups that Fiedler chose the attributes he did to serve as contingency effects?

Such questioning suggests the conclusion that even Fiedler's theory

may not be complex enough to account for who may become a leader in a specific setting for a relatively narrowly defined point in time. This conclusion is meant to suggest that the more micro the prediction desired, i.e., the more narrowly defined the situation is, the more detailed the conceptualization needs to be. In brief, predicting and understanding who will be an effective tank commander in the next 6-12 months is a much more difficult problem than predicting who will achieve the high level in an organization 8 or 10 years in the future. Three factors enhance prediction in the latter case: (1) the micro features of the various mini-settings of natural and reciprocal interaction have a chance to cancel each other out and/or accumulate; (2) the dependent variable is an aggregate which capitalizes on behavioral coherence and is thus more reliable, and (3) the passage of time serves to both make the setting more homogeneous and reify the personal attributes of those who remain.

Predicting leadership in more time-bounded situations fails to consider the coherence of behavior and the fact that people tend to move in and out of differentially favorable situations so far as leadership possibilities are concerned. In fact, attempting to predict leadership through trait measures in a time-bounded situation is almost the equivalent of trying to employ trait measures as predictors in laboratory experiments especially when the situation may not be one the (potential) leader has chosen.

It is important to note that other conceptualizations of leadership sometimes called contingency or situational theories are, in fact, the latter. Thus, they typically specify what a leader should do if they have particular types of subordinates (e.g., House & Mitchell, 1974), if they encounter different kinds of group situations (e.g., Yukl, 1981), or when they need to

make a decision about subordinate participation in decisions (Vroom & Yetton, 1973). No attention is paid to the personal attributes of the leader in these theories.

From an interactionist perspective a potentially very interesting conceptualization of leadership is the Vertical Dyadic Linkage Theory (VDL) proposed by Graen and his colleagues (Graen & Cashman, 1975; Dansereau, Graen & Haga, 1975). This theory explains leadership in dyadic terms, i.e., in terms of the pair-wise relationships existing between people in leadership roles and each of their subordinates. The micro levels of analysis used in this research include data on actual dyadic interaction patterns. If Graen and his coworkers could illuminate the personal attributes of leaders and the various attributes of situations that converge to be reflected in particular leader-subordinate interaction patterns, we would have the opportunity to conduct true interactionist research on leadership. Hollander's (1978) transactional theory and Hersey and Blanchard's (1982) situationist theory, if they included relevant data on the attributes of the leader (e.g., self-perceived competence or own maturity), could also yield important information about the conceptualization and prediction of leader behavior.

All three theories present an opportunity to understand the coherence of behavior, i.e., a chance to discover the characteristically different ways different leaders behave when confronted by different subordinates/situations. Such documentation, it can be hypothesized, would reveal that different leaders have profiles of behavior and it is those profiles which distinguish them from other leaders and non-leaders. The challenge is to specify the personal and situational correlates of these varying profiles of behavior.

The message in this section on leadership is simply one of revealing

how an interactionist position can help illuminate potentially interesting questions. Two such questions are posed: (1) Given the established effectiveness of trait predictions of leadership ascension and effectiveness at work, why do almost all theories of leadership fail to consider the personal attributes of leaders as part of their conceptualization; and (2) Would thinking about leadership effectiveness in different situations as being characterized by different profiles of behavior enhance the probability that scholars could identify the personal and situational correlates of those profiles?

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The goal of this essay was to introduce the central issues in interactional psychology. Two paths to this goal were used: A summary of the recent history and thinking in interactionism; and, the application of interactional thinking to studies of job attitudes, socialization to work, and leadership.

The review of recent history and thinking revealed a number of major themes that characterize interactional psychology. These themes can be characterized as the causal, methodological and data analytic. Briefly, it was shown that interactionists believe in the primacy of interaction between persons and setting as the cause of behavior, that short-term laboratory experiments which fail to capture person-situation reciprocity are ineffective as sources of information about real-time behavior, and that the ANOVA concept of algebraic interaction is but one way to conceptualize the meaning of interaction.

More specifically, the focus on person and setting as relatively inseparable due to continual reciprocal interaction was instrumental in

dismantling the oft-assumed superiority of the short-term laboratory experiment as a method. In addition, the idea that people actively choose settings effectively eliminated the belief that random assignment to treatments was the sure path to the experimentum crucis.

The arguments against the superiority of the lab experiment were shown to be critical for supporting the interactionist position. This was so because only if it can be shown that situationists (experimentalists) essentially insure desired behavior by eliminating the possibility of individual differences, can their attacks on the trait and dynamic positions be rebuked. Of special importance were situationist attacks on the stability of traits and trait-based predictions of behavior.

The major ideas derived from this review concerned: Self-selection into (and out of) situations yielding relatively homogeneous settings; coherence in human behavior, meaning that different people have different profiles of behavior, i.e., that a person's typical behavior may have variability as s/he moves from setting to setting; that point predictions of behavior (behavior in one setting at one time) are very difficult but aggregate or multiple act criteria are predictable; and, that settings are characterized by the people in them.

These major ideas were then applied to current thinking in O.B. about job attitudes, socialization to work, and leadership. In all three the major insight offered by the interactional psychology perspective was self-selection into and out of situations. This insight was useful as an alternative explanation for the Salancik and Pfeffer (1977, 1978) critiques of need theories and job attitudes; it served as a vehicle for specifying the absence of thinking about how different kinds of people get socialized in

different kinds of work settings; and, it revealed an almost slavish concern for the leader's situation as a determinant of leader behavior to the exclusion of traits and/or trait-situation reciprocation.

Additional insights were gained from consideration of the laboratory experiment as the source of most data supporting a social constructionist view of job attitudes. But perhaps equally important was the finding that in socialization, job attitude and leadership research, single organization studies might suffer from external validity problems as much as laboratory experiments. Thus it was shown that failure to take person type into account in research also leads to ignoring the role of organization type. By ignoring person and organization variability in research (let alone their interaction) one is forced to be cautious about the generalizability and utility of O.B. theories and applications. Indeed single organization studies may suffer from lack of internal validity as well as external validity.

Methodologically, the perspective presented here would encourage long-term studies of the growth and development of people and their organizations where both person and organization attributes are known prior to their interaction. How people and settings unfold and emerge is the great mystery and we sorely need such research (Kimberly & Miles, 1980). In a more practical vein, documentation of the methodological benefits of accumulating criterion data for individuals as suggested by Epstein (1979) and Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), [and demonstrated so well by industrial psychologists in predicting managerial success (Campbell, et al., 1970)] supports both the concept of coherence in behavior and traditional concern for personality and attitude measures as indicants of typical behavior.

Finally, interactional psychology opens a new window on old problems

and yields a host of interesting questions about the emergence of settings. In contrast, then, to "creationists", interactionism questions how settings come to evolve as they do. It's a really interesting question!

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