2009

Use of Activity Theory in Written Communication Research

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Use of Activity Theory in Written Communication Research

Abstract
Documents largely organize the activity of the modern world and - a fortiori - the postmodern world, with its reliance on hypertextual networks. Writing is arguably the most powerful mediational means for organizations and institutions, and writing-in-use in organizations has become an object of research in the past 25 years in North America, with applications in a number of fields, primarily organizational (business, technical, and scientific) communication and education (Bazerman & Russell, 2003). In these fields, analysis of writing-in-use is often crucial for planning interventions to improve students' literacy, at all levels, or to improve organizations' communication, through document design and document management, or what has come to be called information design and information management.

Disciplines
Curriculum and Instruction | Curriculum and Social Inquiry

Comments
This chapter is published as Russell, David R. “Uses of activity theory in written communication research.” In Learning and Expanding with Activity Theory. Sannino, A., Daniels, H., & Gutierrez, K. (eds.): 40-52. Cambridge University Press, 2009. Posted with permission.
Documents largely organize the activity of the modern world and – a forteriori – the postmodern world, with its reliance on hypertextual networks. Writing is arguably the most powerful mediational means for organizations and institutions, and writing-in-use in organizations has become an object of research in the past 25 years in North America, with applications in a number of fields, primarily organizational (business, technical, and scientific) communication and education (Bazerman & Russell, 2003). In these fields, analysis of writing-in-use is often crucial for planning interventions to improve students’ literacy, at all levels, or to improve organizations’ communication, through document design and document management, or what has come to be called information design and information management.

This tradition is largely separate from literary or, indeed, applied linguistic research, though both have influenced it (Bazerman, 1997; Russell, 1997b). Instead, it grows out of a U.S. tradition of rhetorical analysis applied to texts, particularly the concept of genre as social action (Miller, 1984, 1994), with deep roots in Schutz’s phenomenological analysis of typification (Schutz & Luckmann, 1973). I will refer to it as writing, activity, and genre research (WAGR). Sociological studies of science and technology were the original impetus (Latour & Woolgar, 1979; Merton, 1968), along with studies of orality and literacy, particularly studies based on Vygotsky’s theory (most importantly, Scribner & Cole, 1981).

Empirical and historical research on written communication in this tradition has from its inception in the early 1980s found cultural-historical

\[ \text{I wish to thank the two anonymous reviewers of this chapter for their very helpful comments.} \]
activity theory (CHAT) useful. CHAT, in various versions, has been influential because other approaches to written communication (e.g., cognitive psychology, applied linguistics, and cultural studies) have deep theoretical and methodological limitations in studies on writing-in-use within – and among – organizations and institutions. In CHAT, broadly conceived, context is not separated from activity, or from texts, which are seen as tools for the mediation of activity. In this sense, CHAT allows for wider levels of analysis than the dyad, common in much conversation analysis research, or reader–writer interactions per se, as in reader response criticism and critical discourse analysis. And it eschews the Cartesian split between mind and world, texts and context, which is common in cognitive research on written communication (Russell, 1995, 1997a; Russell & Yañez, 2003). CHAT, in principle, does not privilege one medium over another, as all are viewed as mediational tools. Because of this, it is possible to discern the relationship among tools in various media within and among organizations and their subjects.

Finally, CHAT provides for a mesolevel of analysis between microlevel phenomena (including discourse) and macrolevel generalizations common in the ideological analysis of cultural studies and many forms of sociological analysis (e.g., Parsonian social forces). This allows for a more nuanced analysis of organizations and practical interventions to improve organizational communication or pedagogy. Many CHAT and WAGR studies do so through ethnographic and case study methods, as both are interested in looking at change over time rather than developing a theory of language-in-use.

CHAT-influenced WAGR goes on in a very wide range of areas, but in this chapter I will not try to represent that range of theorizing and research on writing, activity, and genre. Instead, I will focus on work closest to my own: that in higher education, workplace studies of organizational communication, and relations between the two. I will pass over a huge number of studies of elementary and secondary education, well represented, for example, by Lee and Smagorinsky (2000) and many who do workplace and higher-education studies that take other approaches to CHAT, many of whom are discussed in Bazerman and Russell (2003).

While CHAT approaches have in general been highly influential, Engeström's systems version of CHAT, using an expanded version of Vygotsky's mediational triangle as a unit of analysis, has not been widely taken up by WAGR research, and where it has, it has usually been as another way of theorizing the social dimensions of activity, along with distributed cognition, community of practice, and so on (Dias, Freedman,
Medway, & Paré, 1999). This perhaps springs from the importance of genre in WAGR. Genre in WAGR is an overarching theoretical concept, a unit of analysis in its own right, conceived as genre as social action. By looking at genres as intertextual and hypertextual systems, WAGR constructs a concrete analysis of writing-in-use not only as tools and rules, in actions and operations that stabilize-for-now (Schryer, 1993) behavior in far-flung organizations and help explain institutional change and collective learning, but also as systems, at the level of activity. And particularly in its theory of genre, WAGR has over the past 25 years made a contribution to CHAT approaches to studying organizations (Bazerman & Russell, 2003; Russell & Bazerman, 1997).

My own work, like that of others whom I’ll refer to, has used Engeström’s expanded version of Vygotsky’s mediational triangle as a unit of analysis alongside genre as social action to put the two in productive tension, to seek a synthesis – certainly not yet achieved, perhaps not possible, but nevertheless useful. I offer this chapter not as a resolution but as a way to identify influences, clarify issues, and continue to engage in dialogue.

Beginning in the mid-1990s, Engeström’s (1987) elaboration of Leont’ev’s (1978) activity system gave some of us doing WAGR a way to articulate the social systematics of textual circulation networks and their contributing role in accomplishing communal work – as well as impeding or transforming work through dialectical contradictions. Indeed, in the concept of dialectical contradictions, Engeström’s approach to CHAT also offered fresh elaborations of Marxian notions of work and learning. Engeström’s developmental approach suggested ways to trace how people and their writing practices change, individually and collectively, as they move within and among various social practices, theorized in terms of activity systems. Perhaps most importantly, this unit of analysis has been developed recently in terms of multiple and interpenetrating contexts, polycontextual systems of activity – the “third generation” of activity theory research, as Engeström (2001) has called it. This has proved helpful for understanding written communication in modern organizations, because they are so often linked intertextually in interdisciplinary and interorganizational networks or, more recently, “knotworks” (Engeström, Engeström, & Vähäaho, 1999).

I have found that Engeström’s systems version of activity theory offers insight into the central problematic of my research: how university students learn to write specialized discourse and write to learn specialized knowledge. This involves several disciplines and requires a theory that will cross disciplinary lines to answer a fundamental question: How can one analyze
in a principled and systematic way the macrolevel social and political structures (cultural studies) that affect the microlevel actions of the teaching and learning (educational psychology) that students and teachers do with texts (applied linguistics) in education systems — and vice versa? The activity system offers a useful heuristic for explaining how doing school, doing work, and doing the other things (political, familial, recreational, etc.) our lives are made of are woven together through genre as social action.

GENRE AS A UNIT OF ANALYSIS

Since the mid-1980s, WAGR has developed the concept of genre as social action in order to analyze the role of documents and artifacts in various media in organizational change and learning. The WAGR concept of genre as social action began not with Bakhtin’s notion of genre, though this has proved very influential, but with Alfred Schutz’s phenomenological concept of typification (Schutz & Luckmann, 1973). Carolyn Miller (1984, 1994) introduced the concept of genre as “typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations” (1994, p. 31). Genre is seen not as formal features or as packeted speech (Wertsch, 1994), but as typified actions that over time have been routinized, “stabilized-for-now” (Schryer, 1993) in ways that have proved useful in the activity system. Put simply, a genre is the ongoing use of certain material tools (marks, in the case of written genres) in certain ways that worked once and might work again, a typified, tool-mediated response to conditions recognized by participants as recurring. Discursive actions are not seen, in Bakhtin’s metaphor, as voices ventriloquized from and contributing to social languages, but rather as speech acts (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969), utterances that perform actions in practical activity (Bazerman, 2004).

Thus, genres are more than categories of tools classified according to formal features. They are traditions of using a tool or tools, “forms of life, ways of being, frames for social action” (Bazerman, 1994, p. 79). A genre conveys a worldview — not explicitly, but by “developing concrete examples” that allow participants “to experience the world in the genre’s way” (Morson & Emerson, 1990, p. 282; Spinuzzi, 2003, p. 42). Genres allow subjects to recognize the activity and the appropriate actions in the presence of certain constellations of tools — marks on surfaces and other material phenomena. And genres make it possible to act with others over time in more or less but never entirely predictable ways, individually, collectively, and institutionally. Thus, the theoretical concept has proved useful in written communication studies at the level of the
activity system(s), as well as the levels of actions and operations, to use Leont’ev’s (1978) terms.

This formulation of genre as social action differs in important ways from the concept of genre that Engeström’s group developed in the mid-1990s. Engeström takes issue with the fact that major linguistic approaches to discourse-in-use separate discourse from object-oriented productive activity (a critique that WAGR largely shares). He and his group developed a framework for analyzing discourse-in-use (Engeström, 1999b). R. Engeström (1995) in particular has synthesized Bakhtin’s (1987) language theory and Leont’ev’s (1978) three-level analysis of joint activity. Bakhtin’s concept of “social languages” corresponds to the level of collective activity, analyzed in terms of activity systems. Bakhtin’s “voice” corresponds to the level of specific action. Bakhtin’s “speech genre” corresponds to the level of unconscious operations.

In WAGR research, by contrast, genre can be analyzed historically at the level of the activity system, as well as at the level of operations. Bazerman’s (1988) study of the “genre and activity of the experimental article in science” over two centuries is perhaps the most obvious example. He shows how the activity of science shaped and was shaped by the primary genre that scientists evolved, through their discursive and practical actions, for sharing and verifying their findings. Similarly, Bazerman’s (1999) study of written communication in Edison’s long career and beyond analyzes the development of institutions to create and extend worldwide the technology of the electric light. Other relevant examples include Russell’s (2002) study of the evolution of genres of student writing in U.S. higher education, Yates’s (1989) study of industrial communication in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and Spinuzzi’s (2003) study of 30 years of traffic mapping.

Genre as social action can be analyzed not only at the level of unconscious operations or activity system(s), but also at the level of conscious action, as an array of strategies or tactics from which participants may “consciously select, interpret, produce and use” in goal-directed actions (Spinuzzi, 2003, p. 46). Studies of tools-in-use show actors consciously selecting, rejecting, and abandoning genres in the course of their work, individual and collective (Schryer, 1993; Spinuzzi, 2003). Moreover, genres must be learned, potentially passing from the level of action to operation and back. Newcomers to an activity must come to perceive how others are using the tools and use them in similar ways in order to perform actions that coordinate with others’ actions. In time newcomers may – or may
not – operationalize those actions. The ways of writing of experienced insiders in a profession, for example, may become so routine that they come to seem natural. In this sense, genre helps account for social-psychological stability, identity, and predictability in organizations or, indeed, broader social formations as unconscious operationalized actions.

Genres are also central to object formation, transformation, and maintenance of activity systems. As Engeström (1999b) says, “The object is an enduring, constantly reproduced purpose of a collective activity system that motivates and defines the horizon of possible goals and actions” (p. 170). But the object of activity can be seen to attain its stability, reproduction, and continuity through genres, the mutual recognition necessary for joint action to occur over time. And when the object is contested (offering potential for change), it is against the landscape of existing genres.

Genres are also deeply involved in the construction of motives. Genres are, in a sense, classifications of artifacts-plus-intentions. They enact social intentions, offering ways of using tools to accomplish collective activity. As Miller (1984) argues, “What we learn when we learn a genre is not just a pattern of forms or a means of achieving our own ends. We learn, more importantly, what ends we may have” (p. 165) in collective activity. A genre offers not only a landscape of possible action, but also a horizon of potential motives or direction (Bazerman, 1994; Bazerman, Little, & Chavkin, 2003). In this sense, genre provides a way of including motives in the analysis of activity. As such, genres are crucial links between subjects, tools, and objects. In this way, WAGR addresses motive directly, where it is only implied in Engeström’s unit of analysis, though it is central to Wertsch’s (1994) version of activity theory.

To take a contemporary example, when one recognizes a document as a U.S. Internal Revenue Service tax form (Bazerman, 2000), it is clear that one is defined within a bureaucratic identity of financial calculations, obligations, specific deadlines, and places for submission – and ultimately complex regulations, legal sanctions, and enforcement procedures. It is also clear what actions and tools are salient and irrelevant within the time-space landscape the genre invokes. Yet “no matter how constrained by forms, conventions, regulations and sanctions, the tax form becomes the scene of struggle between compliance and each individual’s desire to protect personal financial interests,” a way of aligning or contesting motives in relation to the activity system of U.S. government tax collections (Bazerman et al., 2003, p. 459). A genre, particularly a written genre, crystallizes the motives of participants and makes possible certain kinds of interactions
while making others more difficult, though never impossible. A genre calls forth certain actions or, for some participants, operations with certain tools at certain times and places.

"In short genre recognition attunes us in deep and complex ways as to what to make of the utterance" (Bazerman et al., 2003, p. 456). In this sense, WAGR differs from other theories of genre in emphasizing the positive valence of genre, as a landscape for action, rather than its limitations or regulation of actions, and calls attention to the strategic agency of participants, who further their interests through mutually recognized, genred action within moments of utterance, though always constrained by the degree of congruence in their understandings and always open to difference. Indeed, genres facilitate improvisation and innovation, marking out the expectations against which innovation is perceived as such and not as meaningless nonsense, in much the way the chordal and melodic structure of a tune facilitates jazz improvisation (Schryer, Lingard, & Spatford, 2003). And even when, or perhaps especially when, participants are at odds, they must have or develop a socially shared repertoire of genred actions to achieve understanding, coordination, and cooperation – to meaningfully disagree over time. As Bazerman (2006) puts it, genres are

ways of seeing what acts are available that are appropriate to the moment as you see it – what you can do, what you might want to do. For example, you may perceive a moment in a disagreement as offering possibilities of either a rejoinder or an apology. Your motives, goals, plans will take shape within those two constructions of potential action. You would not even consider appropriate filing a legal brief – and if somehow you found a motive and means to pursue that path, that would radically change the nature of the situation and your counterpart’s set of genred options. (p. 221)

Organizational change – as distinct from organizational drift or chaos – involves the construction and mutual construal of new routines, norms, interactional rules, and the operationalizing of actions in new genres or old genres appropriated for new purposes. Organizational learning does as well, and it might be thought of as the development by participants of genre knowledge (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995). Genres provide mutual recognition of the object in both its concrete and abstract manifestations and orient participants to it. As such, genre can be an important unit of analysis for understanding how organizations change or remain stable. Voices arise more immediately from genres than from the broader social languages; and genres are what structure the cooperation/co-construction of communication through mutual recognition.
ACTIVITY SYSTEMS AND GENRE SYSTEMS

In complex activity systems, there are typically many written genres, which participants use together to structure and change their interactions. WAGR has developed the concept of genre systems, or, in Spunuzzi’s (2003) formulation, genre ecologies, to understand how genres, particularly written ones, work in and between complex organizations. Bazerman (1994) defines a genre system as “interrelated genres that interact with each other in specific settings” (p. 80). In a genre system, “only a limited range of genres may appropriately follow upon another,” because the conditions for successful coordinated action are conditioned – but never finally determined – by their history of previous actions (p. 80). For participants, these written genre systems are more salient than social languages or particular voices, because they are more permanent over time and mobile through space. Beyond a particular moment analyzed, multivoicedness is more than voices; it depends on texts that mobilize actors across activity systems in mutually recognized and acted-upon genres. For example, IRS tax form 1040 is intertextually linked to other documents in other genres, in a taxpayer’s files, employers’ files, bank records, government regulations, tax laws, accounting standards, addresses, calendars, and so on, and to material property (real estate, factories, farms, etc.) and concrete actions (buying, selling, renting, theft, gambling losses, etc.) that those documents in various genres represent.

What Engeström’s unit of analysis has done for WAGR is offer, first of all, a heuristic for describing the social systematics of textual circulation networks and their contributing role in accomplishing communal work. His seven-part triangle diagram of the activity system allows for an analysis of fundamental elements of interaction among people and their tools that organize the joint activity.

Because of the division of labor within and particularly among activity systems, not all of the participants must appropriate (learn to read/write) all of the written genres. Participants at some more or less stable positions within the systems interact in ways that make it more likely they will use certain genres and not others at certain times. Participants from different activity systems or different locations within the division of labor do not have to learn one another’s social languages to achieve coordination when the interactions are mediated by tools in genres that they come to mutually recognize. Indeed, participants are not typically aware of social languages, as R. Engeström (1995) points out. But to achieve coordination across boundaries, participants must recognize the genres that shape the co-construction
of meaning. Again, in research on interactions among activity systems, it is not the social languages through which either moment-to-moment coordination or historical development goes on. It is through the genre systems.

Second, Engeström’s (1987) intermediate theoretical tool of dialectical contradictions has been useful in understanding genre systems. It provides a fresh elaboration of Marxian notions of work and learning, connecting alienation produced by contradictions to psychological double binds. Moreover, it provides a way to connect immediate microlevel disturbances, breakdowns, and conflicts with macrolevel, historically developed contradictions and the potential of such disturbances to produce new forms of activity. It is in relation to genres that disturbances and breakdowns in communication are manifest: Someone has violated or bent the communicative norms; some condition has exposed the genres as needing attention – promoted them to the level of action, in Leont’ev’s (1978) terms. Indeed, what is most interesting and important about genres always only stabilized-for-now is this positive, agentive aspect: that subjects recognize disturbance and change in relation to them. Genres’ potential for change is as crucial to understanding organizations as is their structuring of actions and activity systems over time.

Systems of typified written communication allow participants in one or more activity systems to coordinate activity through mutual recognition of the possibilities for action. Through these stabilized-for-now genres, the boundaries and interactions between social practices – social structures – are in part maintained and power exerted. But genre systems also reveal loci of discoordinations, breakdowns, power asymmetries, and sharing, and so on, within and among activity systems.

Third, what Engeström (2001) calls the “third generation” of activity-theoretical research theorizes multiple interacting activity systems and boundary crossing and the related concepts of polycontextuality and knotworking. This notion of interlocking activity systems suggests the particular importance of textually mediated interactions, as these tend to be crucial to coordinating disparate activity systems over time and space (Engeström, Engeström, & Kärkkäinen, 1995). Organizations that interact over time and at a distance are ordinarily accomplished in large part through interlocking systems of written communication: printed forms, records, genres of e-mail, and so on. Boundary crossing occurs in more than isolated moments; it tends toward systematicity, toward mutually intelligible communication at a distance in longer timescales, where boundary crossing is more than a foray. By understanding the systematicity of written communication, we can make sense of communication
across boundaries, not only how boundaries emerge in zones of proximal development, but also how they are sustained, evolve, or collapse. WAGR has grappled particularly with this problem, and Engeström's theory of multiple, interacting activity systems has often been useful.

Fourth, Engeström's concept of learning by expanding (1987) can be seen in terms of expanding involvement in a system of genres. Students or newcomers to an organization learn new genres as they widen their communicative interactions. In my reading of the literature on writing-to-learn in higher education (Russell, 1997a), for example, I chart the genre system of university cell biology as it intersects with other activity systems and then trace the developmental pathways of students in the activity systems of specific courses in cell biology discussed in the literature on writing-to-learn. Similarly, Spinuzzi (2003) traces genres through organizations to understand organizational learning. Engeström's notions of polycontextuality lie behind both analyses.

These four influences of Engeström's activity system are evident in some recent WAGR studies of genre systems of higher education, which connect the work of formal schooling to the work of researchers and practitioners in the disciplines and professions toward which students are at least officially headed. In a series of studies (Russell & Yañez, 2003; Yañez & Russell, in press) we traced how students in a history course came to recognize and appropriate, or not, genres of academic history in relation to genres of other activity systems, such as journalism and popular history. These studies draw not only on classroom discourse, interviews with students, and teachers and the written documents that mediate classroom interactions, but also on genres of other activity systems -- departmental and institutional discourse within formal schooling and genres of historical writing beyond it, scholarly and popular. These studies aim at understanding the contradictions within and between the activity systems of professional history and higher education, as well as the ways students experience these as double binds within the activity system of the specific classroom. Genre systems analysis traces the historical origins of the contradictions between schooling and professional work and between disciplines, and the dis coordinations and disturbances in specific classroom learning owing to them. Genre systems shape the motives and identities of participants, as well as their texts, and mark out the dimensions of expansive learning, for both students and teachers, showing possibilities for re- mediating teaching and learning.

Another problem in WAGR and in many of Engeström's developmental work research studies involves the breakdowns and dis coordinations
within or among participants in different organizational locations acting in different timescales. Engeström, Puonti, and Seppänen (2003), for example, in their study of the spatial and temporal expansion of the object in postmodern work in organic farming, white-collar crime, and medical care systems, examine “subjects moving in space from one space to another and establishing trails that could be followed again, both by those subjects and others. Trails make an emergent knowable terrain” and call for “looking closely at the formation of such terrains” (p. 184). What Engeström, Puonti, and Seppänen call for is very much like what WAGR does, though WAGR theorizes those “trails” as stabilized-for-now written genre systems, intertextually linked. This genre system marks out the landscape of action and links the nodes of the knotworking. Such genre analysis looks not only at the formation of these trails but at their development or degeneration over time. It charts horizons into which the object has expanded already though existing genres and the territory into which it may expand. For literate organizations, the expansive reach of the actual or potential object can be traced by following the written genres. Genre systems provide the skeleton of the structure of modern activity systems, visible through genre systems analysis.

For example, Spinuzzi (2003) develops the concept of genre systems as genre ecologies to understand the activity of traffic workers using a database of accident records over 30 years, as it changed from paper maps to web-based GPS databases, and involved a range of stakeholders from different activity systems. He traces breakdowns and coordinations using the activity system as a top-level unit of analysis, but then uses genre systems or ecologies to analyze the meso- and microlevel interactions. By tracing connections among genres, Spinuzzi shows how differences in the parent activities “manifest themselves through destabilizations at all levels” (p. 50). Macrolevel contradictions (and the activities in which they evolved) “engendered mesolevel coordinations between specific genres originating in different activities. Since the genres retained their orientation to their originating activities, [workers] conflicted in their problem-solving strategies, cultural assumptions, and ideologies. Workers thus encountered micro-level breakdowns as they attempted to use these dislocated genres to meditate their work” (p. 50). Similarly, a reciprocal coordination from micro- to macrolevels is possible, putting activity systems in a constant state of flux or disequilibrium “as systematic destabilizations at each level reverberate across the other levels” (p. 50). Other examples include Winsor’s (2003) study of engineers, technicians, machinists, and managers writing in a heavy-machinery engineering center over 5 years,
and Smart's (2006) study of the genre systems coordinating work in a central bank over a decade.

CONCLUSION

Engeström's unit of analysis, the activity system, then, has been useful in some research in WAGR—not surprising, perhaps, as much of Engeström's research, like WAGR, takes organizations as its primary research object and attempts to explain change and stability in these dynamic contexts historically and developmentally. Moreover, both traditions of research share the motive of producing well-running organizations (and ethical, socially responsible, and humane ones), where effective learning occurs. But Engeström’s activity system plays out rather differently when it is used with the unit of analysis of genre as social action to trace how documents come to be and come to be used in organizations. This theoretical difference is perhaps not unrelated to the difference between Vygotsky’s recommendation of the word—discourse—as a unit of analysis and Leont’ev’s (1978) use of activity as a unit of analysis. Engeström’s theory and methods continue to poses challenges and possibilities. Writing research in professional communication and education often resembles developmental work research in that a consultant-researcher takes an active role and includes a range of stakeholders in developing re-mediated activity. User testing has moved from a cognitive theoretical set and laboratory methods to new, more collaborative versions of user-centered design, with analysis of problems in situ over a more extended time frame. The goal is to avoid the “victimhood trope” of much user-centered research and to empower a wider range of participants by providing useful theoretical tools and developing them for re-mediating work practices and organizations (Spinuzzi, 2003).

Similarly, in educational research, interventions to improve student writing and learning in the disciplines increasingly involve teachers and departments collaborating with writing researchers to change pedagogical practice by re-mediating instruction and curriculum (Russell, 2007). For example, in the field of chemistry, Carter (2004) and his collaborators used activity theory to develop Labwrite, an online tool to help students understand scientific method by connecting laboratory practice and lab report writing. In addition, Engeström’s activity systems analysis is being taught directly as a theoretical tool for helping students understand the circulation of discourse in genres of professional communication (Kain & Wardle, 2005).
Engeström has for nearly two decades provided a number of us doing WAGR with a robust, flexible, and ever-evolving theory of social-psychological and cultural activity. His vision of research that is responsive to the complexities of human life – practical and ethical – in its immense diversity has driven written communication research to seek new solutions to problems that were not addressed previously. That vision is not of a magic formula for decoding behavior but a challenge to engage theory with human problems over time, to mark out expansive possibilities, to test them, and to critically evaluate them in ways that cannot be generalized in neat ways but that generate new theories and new solutions.