

Testing Craig's Metamodel: Shifting from Classification to Dimensional Analysis

Faizullah Jan

Department of Journalism & Mass Communication
University of Peshawar
Peshawar, Pakistan

Sayyad Fawad Ali Shah

Jacksonville State University
Alabama, USA

&

Amir Hamza Marwan

Department of Journalism & Mass Communication
University of Peshawar
Peshawar, Pakistan

Abstract

This paper looks at the Craig's seven traditions, their influence on the field of communication theories and the shortcomings of Craig's metatheory. This paper mainly answers six questions: why communication theory needs a metatheory? How many metatheories have been developed so far? What are the Craig's seven traditions of communication? What did Craig accomplish by developing this metamodel? Why Craig's metatheory failed to achieve its desired goals? And what is the future of Craig's seven traditions? First part of the paper answers the first four questions and the second part of the paper answers the fifth question by engaging the grammar of Craig's model and challenging it by exploring conflict theories that do not fit into Craig's seven traditions. The third part of this paper identifies future challenges for the Craig's seven traditions in the light of the conflict theories to provide a solution for those challenges.

Keywords: Communication, Metatheory, Craig's Model

Introduction

Communication theory is a relatively new field. Most of its literature has been borrowed from other disciplines of social sciences like psychology, sociology, and political science. Due to borrowing literature from other disciplines, communication theories remained an incoherent field and scholars were operating in different domains. Craig (1999) argued, the productivity of communication field was due to the import of fragments of literature from other disciplines, but those fragments could not become coherent. In the ways those parts were used as communication theory could not become self-sustainable. Craig (1999) came up with a metatheory to try the unification of the field of communication theory and to provide a platform to the communication scholars when they could debate and develop the field of communication. He divided

communication theories under seven traditions. Littlejohn and Foss (2011) argue that Craig's 'metamodel' gives a coherent framework that helps scholars examine the assumptions that guide their approaches to theory. Craig's metamodel offers a strong system for fashioning communication theory.

Craig's metamodel has been under discussion since its development. On the one hand, it has been appreciated by the communication scholars for unifying the field of communication and promoting dialogue within the field (Stephen Littlejohn & Foss, 2011; Bergman, 2012) and on the other hand, some scholars have criticized it describing it as exclusionary (Myers, 2001). This paper examines Craig's seven traditions and their influences on the field of communication. It also explores limitations of Craig's metatheory and suggests changes to the metatheory to address its limitations, so that the model could be used more productively in the future. A more powerful approach is to identify the various traditional influences of a given theory to place a theory within the intellectual history of our field.

Problems of Diverse Communication Theory

Craig (1999) claimed that communication theory does not exist as an identifiable field of study despite its historical roots and increase in the numbers. The communication theorists are operating in different domains even though they are addressing the same field. He claims that books and theories on communication theories seldom refer to the works done in the field by other scholars, except within the border of narrow (inter) disciplinary specialties or schools of thoughts.

The problem

The field of communication theory before the publication of Craig's seven traditions lacked a metatheory to which all the scholars could refer. There was no common ground on which all the communication scholars could agree or disagree. Whereas Bergen (1991) questioned why there were so few communication theories, Craig (1993) questioned the high number of communication theories.

Rosengren (1993) puts, "It is as if the field of communication research were punctuated by a number of isolated frog ponds—with no friendly croaking between the ponds, very little productive intercourse at all, few cases of successful cross-fertilization." As the number of communication and media studies departments and schools increase across the globe, more and more literature about communication theories is getting published. Majority of the schools with communication scholars offer textbooks. However, there is little coherence among (text)books published and the syllabus of communication theories in different schools. Anderson (1996) investigated different textbooks and tried to find out coherence or incoherence among the theories presented in those books. He analyzed seven textbooks of communication theories. Those books contained 249 distinct communication theories. Out of those 195 were part of just one out of the seven books. He found that only 22% theories appeared in more than one book and only 18 out of 249 (7%) were part more than three books. He claimed that

communication theory does not exist as a coherent field. Anderson's findings and conclusions speak for itself. The field of communication theories needs a metatheory that could bind this interdisciplinary field together and provide a platform where scholars could debate.

Roots of Incoherence

Communication theories have borrowed majority of the theories from other fields like sociology, linguistics, psychology and engineering. Its roots are multidisciplinary. Littlejohn (1982) credited fields as diverse as engineering, mathematics, sociology and psychology for the development of communication theories. He argued that the foundations of communication theories were provided by other fields. Scholars in different disciplines looked at the role of communication with their own perspective and developed theories accordingly which were later on borrowed by the field of communication. Budd and Rubin (1972) also developed an anthology of communication theory. The anthology consisted of sections representing 24 multi-disciplinary approaches from anthropology to zoology. However, Craig (1999) argued that the incorporation of different disciplinary approaches within one field has made it difficult to look at communication theory as one coherent field. The productivity of communication research imports many theories from different disciplines, and the fragments are used in an incoherent manner that they fail to produce a self-sustaining whole. Therefore, he stresses, the need to develop a metatheory that could decrease the gap between different theories.

Attempts to Create Metamodels

Different communication scholars have tried to unify the communication theory as a field. Prominent among them are Robert T. Craig, Stephen Littlejohn and James A. Anderson. Craig (1999) came up with a constitutive model of communication with the aim of providing a dialogical-dialectical coherence to the field of communication theory. Craig (1999) divided the field into seven distinct categories, which he called "traditions." He argued that communication theories were relevant to a common practical life world in which communication was a heavily meaningful term. He looked at communication theory as a meta-discursive practice. Craig (1999) argued, communication was a field of discourse about discourse. Craig's seven traditions are: rhetorical, semiotics, cybernetics, phenomenological, socio-psychological, sociocultural and critical. Littlejohn and Foss (2011) based their metatheory on Craig's seven traditions and organized theories within those seven traditions based on the primary interests of those theories like: communicator, message, conversation, relationship, groups, organizations, media, culture and society. The process of communication and its role in the society at large was central to the metatheory presented by Littlejohn and Foss (2011). They argued that each aspect of communication was affected by the larger context and each level of communication affects in turn the larger context in which they take place. Anderson and Baym (2004) created a metamodel based on the philosophical assumptions of different communication theories. They distinguished four types of metatheoretical

assumptions: ontology, epistemology, praxeology and axiology. They argued that a distinguished metatheory consists of a coherent set of all the above-mentioned philosophical assumptions.

Craig's Metamodel and Goals

Craig (1999) wanted to develop a metatheory that could both produce coherence within the field of communication theory and provide a theoretical diversity in the field and ignite a debate among scholars. An ideally unified and coherent field could have negative impact on the field instead of helping it. Craig says:

The goal in short should be dialogical-dialectical coherence: a common awareness of certain complementarities and tensions among different types of communication theory, so it is commonly understood that these different types of theory cannot legitimately develop in total isolation from each other but must engage each other in argument (23).

Craig (1999) used the constitutive model of communication as a metamodel. The constitutive model is presented as a solution and reaction contemporary issues that arises from destruction of the cultural and traditional basis and ideas that increases cultural diversity. He used the constitutive model as a metamodel to create space where other communication models can interact. Constitutive model does not explain the process of communication but tells that communication can be constituted symbolically. He looked at communication theory as a meta discourse. Craig (1999) described the field of communication theory as an open space of discourse where the issues and problems of communication can be discussed as social practices. Craig's seven traditions aim at creating theoretical diversity and a debate.

The Seven Traditions

Based on his two principles: (a) a constitutive metamodel of communication and (b) a conception of communication theory as a meta discursive field operating within a practical discipline, Craig (1999) presented his seven reconstructed traditions of communication theory. The seven traditions were 'instrumental constructions', instead of essential categories. These traditions are: rhetorical, semiotic, phenomenological, cybernetic, sociopsychological, sociocultural, and critical. These traditions provide us a robust framework through which we can help define different issues in the communication theory. Littlejohn and Foss (2011) contend that these traditions on one hand overlap with each other and on the other contradict one another helping us look at the communication theories in a holistic way; at the same time generating a debate among communication scholars.

Rhetorical Tradition

The origins of rhetorical tradition are traced back to ancient Greek scholars and sophists. Communication has been theorized in this tradition as an art of discourse. This tradition looks at social exigencies as the problems of communication and argues

that those problems can be resolved through artful use of discourse by persuading audiences. Five canons of rhetoric— invention, arrangement, style, delivery and speech are pivotal for this tradition. Littlejohn and Foss (2011) say that irrespective of the choice of symbol and medium, a rhetor is involved in rhetoric, who creates text or message for targeted audiences, keeping in mind situational constraints. The rhetorical tradition includes theories that deal with the basic elements of the rhetorical process— rhetor, message and audience.

The Semiotic Tradition

Semiotics means the study of signs. The semiotic tradition conceptualizes communication as inter-subjective mediation by signs. The theories that form this tradition help explain the use of language and other signs and symbols to mediate between different perspectives. The pivotal concept of this tradition is sign. Littlejohn (2011) notes that most semiotic argument revolves around the idea of the triad of meaning, asserting that meaning arises as the result of a relationship among the object (referent), the person (interpreter) and the sign. The semiotics are usually divided into three categories— semantics, syntactics and pragmatics. The three categories of semiotics are interrelated and help understand different dimensions of meaning. Semiotics teaches that signs (outside ourselves) represent objects through internal perceptions.

The Phenomenological Tradition

The 20th-century tradition hosts scholars like Husserl and other existential and hermeneutic phenomenologists. This tradition theorizes communication as a dialogue or experience of otherness. Theories in this tradition assume that humans are active and interpret what happened around them and thus experiences the world. The conscious experience of self is the central concept of this tradition. The phenomenological tradition consists of three general schools of thought. First, classical phenomenology. Second, the phenomenology of perception. Third, hermeneutic phenomenology. This tradition links experience with language and social interaction, which is relevant to the field of communication.

The Cybernetic Tradition

The Cybernetics Tradition theorizes communication as information processing. This explains the functionality of different kinds of living and nonliving complex systems. Cybernetics only distinguishes between mind and matter functionally. For the theorists in this tradition, thought is information processing. Cybernetics tradition involves complex systems in which elements interact and influence one another. Littlejohn and Foss (2011) explain that theories incorporated in the cybernetic tradition describe how physical, biological and social processes work. Within this tradition, cybernetics is considered as a system of parts. System theories form the core of the cybernetic tradition.

Sociopsychological Tradition

This tradition theorizes communication as a process of expression, interaction and influence. In this process the humans and other complex organisms articulate psychological traits and produce cognitive and emotional effect through interaction with expression of other individuals. Theories that are associated with this tradition study individual as a social being. The focus of the theories is individual social behavior and cognition. The origins of this tradition can be traced back to the field of social psychology. Littlejohn and Foss (2011) argue that psychological explanations are crucial in this tradition. Majority of the theorists in this tradition assumes that human information processing mechanism is beyond human awareness.

Sociocultural Tradition

Theories in the sociocultural tradition theorize communication as a symbolic process of producing and reproducing common or shared sociocultural patterns. The theorists in this tradition describe sociocultural diversity and relativity as the problems of communication. When shared meanings in rituals, customs and tradition decreases, conflict arises in such sociocultural setups. The gaps across time (sociocultural change) is also taken as a problem that decreases and disables interaction by reducing the stock of shared values and patterns that provide basis for social interactions. As opposed to sociopsychological tradition, this tradition focuses on relations and communication among individuals rather than focusing on intrapersonal communication and cognition. Theories from different fields have contributed to the sociocultural tradition. These include fields as diverse as social interactionism, constructionism, and sociolinguistics, philosophy of language, ethnography and ethnomethodology.

Critical Tradition

The origins of this tradition are traced back to Plato's conception of Socrates' dialectic as a method for attaining truth. The critical tradition tries to deconstruct and understand the already established and taken for granted, social, political, religious and ideological structures. The critical scholars are particularly interested in studying how messages are used to maintain status quo and help resolve conflicts in the favor of bourgeoisie. Karl Marx laid the foundations of the modern critical theory. His works were followed later by Frankfurt school of thought scholars. The Frankfurt school is considered the second branch of communication theory. Cultural studies are also associated with critical tradition. Critical theorists rely on arguments, reason and science to prove their point.

What Did Craig Accomplish?

Craig's reconstructed constitutive model is useful in many ways. By introducing this constitutive model, Craig helped explain the process of communication in a pragmatic way. Craig (2001) posits that the primary justification for positing a constitutive metamodel is that it renders a large body of communication theory possible, as some ground of comparison between positions that may seem to be wholly incommensurable is identified. The constitutive model provides a common ground to the vast field of

communication theories to enrich the everyday ways of talking about communication problems and practices. Craig reconstructed communication theory in the form of a meta-discourse which is in a continuous dialogue with the meta-discourse of everyday life. The most important aspect of Craig's metamodel is that all the seven traditions are in a continuous dialogue. It provides communication scholar a very good platform to look at communication theories with a totally different lens.

Challenging Craig's Seven Traditions

Through his seven traditions, Craig (1999) claimed to have provided a platform for the communication scholars where they could initiate a debate about different theories. Craig (1999) claimed that his seven traditions have not only provided a meta-constitutive model about communication theories, but also the different traditions are engaged in a debate within themselves. This is the reason why Craig called his seven traditions dialogical-dialectical. By dialogical-dialectical, Craig (1999) meant a certain common awareness of complementarities among different types of communication theory to understand that these theories cannot grow in seclusion but must involve each other in argument or dialogue. However, the model has been criticized by Myers (2001), who argued that instead of creating a debate on communication theories, the constitutive nature of Craig's seven traditions has worked the opposite. Myers (2001) notes, "Craig's is hardly a neutral standpoint, because the constitutive perspective is clearly employed in the very construction of the metatheory. One could therefore argue that such a metamodel is woefully incapable of providing a level playing field, as critics of constructionism are hardly likely to accept the constitutive sup-position and join the discussion."

Besides Myers criticism on theoretical assumptions of Craig's seven traditions, the metamodel also show other weaknesses due to which it failed to achieve the desired goals. The basic purpose behind the establishment of this metamodel was to categorize communication theories in a way that communication scholars could easily classify different theories. In other words, to give a metatheory to the field of communication to bring coherence among communication theories borrowed from different fields. However, the seven traditions have failed to bring the coherence. Rather, these traditions create further confusions due to the incoherence among these traditions and the open boundaries of these traditions. Whereas, it is easy to categorize some of the communication theories among one of these traditions, it gets difficult to categorize others. To illustrate this problem, I am going to present "moral conflict theory," by Barnett Pearce and Stephen Littlejohn (1997) that fits into at least four of the seven traditions.

Moral Conflict Theory

Pearce and Littlejohn (1997) argue

When individuals with incommensurate moral orders interact, intractable conflict can result from mutual frustration and entrenchment. Conflict rooted in

the worldviews of the opponents is difficult to manage; the logics of the paradigms do not permit cross-translation. Parties become locked into a dispute, perceiving no other choice. Their language differs; even similar terms have disparate meanings. Neither side understands the other, and both fail to see why the other rejects their case. These dynamics lead each to describe the other as misguided, ignorant, evil, or sick (in Littlejohn & Foss 306).

Littlejohn and Foss (2009) explain that the theory addresses the roots of incoherence among different worldviews and human attitudes. The moral conflict theory is a result of a series of descriptive case studies. The studies include the analysis of U.S. religious right movement and the debate around abortion legislation. The moral conflict theory argues that in the present scenario conflict cannot be resolved through traditional conflict resolution measures. Rather, the theory insists the most constructive way to manage conflict (moral conflicts) is to initiate a dialogue between the conflicting parties.

Littlejohn and Cole (2013) add that this theory has been guided by four academic traditions. These include: 1) systemic theory; 2) social constructionist theory; 3) practical theory 4) action research theory. This theory conceptualized the discourse of conflict in three ways: 1) the discourse of advocacy: It is a response to the challenge of confrontation. On matters of public policy, persuasion and debate are the primary means through which differences are settled; 2) the discourse of negotiation: The term negotiation captures here many discursive forms associated with the challenge of peacemaking. It can help reduce tension; 3) the discourse of redefinition: Search for ways to transform the conversation from encapsulating contradiction to productive dialogue. “This theory treats dialogue as a communication practice, which aims to redefine issues, conflicts, and relationships, thereby, enabling participants to transcend hopeless patterns of interaction,” (Littlejohn & Cole, 2013, p.597).

Key Concepts

The four basic concepts of the theory are: moral order, public discourse, incommensurability and transcendent discourse. The theory conceptualizes moral order as a set of assumptions, a grammar of rules about what is reality or what is right or wrong. This theory borrows the term incommensurability from Kuhn (1970), who used the term for conflicting scientific paradigms “the logics of which cannot be mapped onto each other.” The theory argued that moral conflicts arise due to incommensurability between different moral orders. The authors argued that when moral orders conflict with each other it gets difficult to manage the conflict through traditional methods of communication, because more likely the language of the two sides will differ and even if the language is the same they will probably have different meanings for both the groups. This is where the authors conceptualized the discourse of conflict. The authors conceptualized three types of discourses to manage conflict: the discourse of advocacy, the discourse of negotiation and the discourse of redefinition. The discourse of advocacy is conceptualized as a response to the

challenge of confrontation. In the discourse of advocacy, the aim is usually to achieve goals by having others move towards one's desired goals. However, in the advocacy of negotiations, the conflict is managed by moving one or both parties towards an agreeable solution. The discourse of redefinition is looking for ways to direct dialogue or conversation from contradiction to productive dialogue. The transcendent communication is conceptualized in theory as "moving above or beyond typical patterns of communication found in difficult conflict situations." Transcendent communication focuses on personal stories and new context of meaning. The theorists argued that complex moral conflicts could be resolved through unconventional ways and methods of communication.

Testing the Seven Traditions with Moral Conflict Theory

The theory of moral conflict fits into several of Craig's traditions based on its theoretical and methodological foundations and conceptualization of issues. The link of moral conflict theory to some of the Craig's traditions is discussed in detail below.

Rhetorical Aspects

There is a strong case for placing moral conflict theory into the rhetorical tradition. This tradition conceptualizes communication as the practical art of discourse. Since moral conflict theory involves use of rhetoric for the management of conflict we can place this theory, in this tradition. The concepts of public discourse, transcendence and moral order are strongly influenced by rhetoric.

Semiotics Aspects

The moral conflict theory stresses dialogue for the resolution of different conflicts that can include group communication, interpersonal communication etc. All these communication processes involve, understanding the language and its proper usage, and the meanings of signs understandable for different groups. The misunderstanding of signs can lead to conflict between groups having two different moral orders. And that is what exactly the pragmatic branch of semiotics does; evaluating the practical use of signs and symbols and their impact on social order. Hence, we have a strong case of putting moral conflict theory into the semiotic tradition.

Cybernetic Aspects

Craig (1999) places the theories that deal with complex systems within which interacting elements influence one another through signs and symbols within Cybernetics. Littlejohn and Cole (2013) argued that the foundation of moral theory lies in the second order of cybernetics, a part of systems inquiry. The moral conflicts in a society are resolved through discourses involving complex social values and different world views. The discourses create further conflict and the circular system continues. If we look at the above arguments that the cybernetics tradition also has influence on moral conflict theory and there is a case for placing this theory within the cybernetics tradition.

Sociocultural Aspects

The sociocultural tradition of the Craig's metatheory theorizes communication as the production or reproduction of social orders. Theories on families, communities, groups and cultures and the interaction between different elements operating within these social orders can be classified under the sociocultural traditions. Moral conflict theory also deals with communities and social orders. We can argue that moral conflict theory can be placed within this tradition.

Before Craig's (1999) metatheory, communication theories were spread across different fields and there was no identifiable field of communication theory, despite the historical roots of the field and increase in the literature of communication theory in the last decades of the twentieth century. Craig (1993) for the first time in the field of communication theory asked the question why there were so many communication theories? The communication theorists before Craig's metatheory had limited themselves to their disciplinary boundaries and communication theory had not emerged as a coherent field. Craig's seven tradition provided a platform to these scholars to involve in a dialogue within the ambit of communication theory and bring coherence into the field. Craig's (1997) metamodel introduced communication theory as a meta-discursive field, an area of discourse about discourse. He provided communication scholars a platform where they could unite and discuss different communication theory, as scholar of the field of communication. However, the metamodel, has its limitations. The model has been criticized by Myers (2001), who argued that instead of creating a debate on communication theories, the constitutive nature of Craig's seven traditions has worked the opposite. He opined that Craig's metamodel did not provide an equal opportunity to all the communication scholars to get involved in the debate, due to its communicative nature.

Another limitation of Craig's metamodel is that it cannot be used to categorize all the communication theories. As we noted, the moral conflict theory could be placed into any of four traditions. At times it gets difficult to place some communication theories into any one of the categories or traditions of Craig's metatheory. Therefore, we can conclude that the Craig's metamodel is open to an extent where the researchers cannot draw boundaries among different tradition and this is the reason why this model adds to the confusion. Due to the lack of clear demarcation of boundaries and open nature, the Craig's metamodel loses its utility. Instead of adding to the coherence of the field of communication at some point it does the opposite i.e. causes incoherence.

From the above discussion we can conclude that Craig's metamodel is a good effort to categorize communication theories under seven traditions and provide a platform to communication scholars for dialogue. However, it has failed to achieve its desired goals due to openness, incoherence among the traditions and lack of clear boundaries among different traditions. These shortcomings have decreased the utility of the metamodel. The metamodel can be revised and improved to make it more coherent and useful.

Imagining a Better Way

In the first two parts of this paper, we discussed the strengths and weaknesses of Craig's metamodel. Craig's metamodel provides a platform to the communication scholars spread across multiple disciplines to get involved in a productive dialogue with in the realm of communication theory. It brings coherence to the field of communication theory. The model is helpful for the teachers and students of communication theories. Both teachers and students can easily track developments in the field of communication theories within the seven traditions laid out by Craig. However, the model also has some limitations. Myers (1999) described this model as an exclusionary model. He claimed that it did not provide an equal playing field to all the communication scholars. Bergman (2009) identified three weaknesses of Craig's seven traditions: "its neglect of relevant intra-tradition distinctions and debates, its straightforward association of pragmatism with a strongly constitutive approach to communication, and its tendency to disconnect pragmatism from other communication-theoretical positions in ways that are not conducive to his objectives." He argued that Craig's compartmentalization of different traditions has reduced scope of dialogue.

In the previous section we also found that due to the open nature of the model at times it gets difficult to put some theories in to a tradition, which creates further confusions. In this paper I will come up with adaptation of the Craig's metamodel and try to come up with a solution that could address some of the limitations of the Craig's metamodel. Craig himself was aware of some of the limitations of his metamodel. He himself said that there was a room for further traditions to be added to his metatheory. The recommendation to add pragmatism came from Bergman (2009). Bergman argued that "in this model, pragmatism is principally understood by contrast to other alternatives, such as phenomenology, semiotics, and rhetoric. As a communication-theoretical tradition in Craig's sense, the pragmatist approach is expected to provide distinctive articulations of the nature of communication and communication problems, expressed in a particular vocabulary."

However, addition of more traditions into Craig's metamodel would not resolve the issues. Craig's seven traditions need to get rid of compartmentalization. To get rid of compartmentalization and fitting theories into axiomatic boxes, I propose we look at the influence of different traditions on the develop of communication theories. Instead of categorizing communication theories into one of the traditions, we should track the influences of these traditions on theories. This will help us overcome the boundary issues and we would be able to look at communication theories within these seven traditions in a more productive way.

Let's explain this point by using a hypothetical theory "A". We assume that the theory "A" deals with communication between small groups, the way messages are shaped in the communicative processes and the way these messages for character of individuals within the groups. First, we would recommend doing conceptual analysis of all the

basic concepts of the theory on ordinal scale, to measure influence of different traditions on individual concepts of the theory. For measurement purposes we use “S” which denote strong influence. “M” shows “moderate” influence and “N” shows little or no influence.

Table 2: Hypothetical conceptual analysis, measuring influence of Craig’s seven traditions on concepts in hypothetical theory “A”

Concept2	n	m	n	n	s	n	n
Concept 1	n	m	n	n	s	n	n
	Rhetoric	Semiotic	Cybernetic	Phenomenological	Socio-Psycho	Sociocultural	Critical

Analyzing the above data, we can conclude that Sociopsychological tradition has strong influence on the basic concept of the theory “A” and hence on the theory. We can also say that semiotic has medium influence on the theory and no other tradition influence this theory.

Looking at the influences of seven traditions on moral conflict theory

The theory presented by Pearce and Littlejohn (1997) argues:

When individuals with incommensurate moral orders interact, intractable conflict can result from mutual frustration and entrenchment. Conflict rooted in the worldviews of the opponents is difficult to manage; the logics of the paradigms do not permit cross-translation. Parties become locked into a dispute, perceiving no other choice. Their language differs; even similar terms have disparate meanings. Neither side understands the other, and both fail to see why the other rejects their case. These dynamics lead each to describe the other as misguided, ignorant, evil, or sick (in Littlejohn & Foss 306).

The moral conflict theory discusses four basic concepts: 1. moral order; 2. Incommensurability; 3. public discourse; 4. transcendent communication discourse. Now, using the above-mentioned model first we would analyze the influence of Craig’s seven traditions on each concept and try to map a comprehensive picture of the influences through a chart.

Influences of Seven Traditions on Moral Order, Public Discourse, Incommensurability and Transcendent Discourse

Rhetorical Tradition

Communication is conceptualized in the rhetoric tradition as the practical art of discourse. Rhetoric is concerned with persuasion and the art of developing argument. Moral order is the set of assumptions people have about reality or what they think is true. Rhetoric plays role in the development of moral order, but that role is not strong. Therefore, we can say that it has medium influence on the concept of moral order, strong influence on public discourse and medium influence both on incommensurability and transcendent discourse.

Semiotics

Semiotics is concerned with the use of sign and symbols in communication. For example, the use of language. Therefore, it also has medium influence on the concept of moral order. However, it has strong influence on public discourse no influence on incommensurability and medium influence on transcendent discourse.

Cybernetics

Craig places the theories that deal with complex systems within which interacting elements influence one another, through signs and symbols, within Cybernetics. Littlejohn and Cole (2013) argues that the foundation of moral theory lies in the second order of cybernetics, a part of systems inquiry. Therefore, we can argue that this tradition also has medium influence on moral order, public discourse, incommensurability and transcendent discourses.

Phenomenological

The phenomenological tradition deals with individual experiences and its focus is more on individual interpreter than the use of signs and symbols. Therefore, we can say that this tradition has no influence on the concepts of moral order, however, it has medium influences on public discourse and incommensurability and no influence on transcendent discourse.

Sociopsychological

This tradition focuses on the theories dealing with individual social behavior and cognition etc. Therefore, we can argue that this tradition has no influence on either of the concepts of the moral conflict theory.

Sociocultural

The sociocultural tradition of the Craig's metatheory theorizes communication as the production or reproduction of social orders. So, theories on families, communities, groups and cultures and the interaction between different elements operating within these social orders can be classified under the sociocultural traditions. Moral conflict

theory also deals with communities and social orders. We can argue that moral conflict theory can be placed within this tradition.

Critical Tradition

Scholars working within this tradition try to understand and theorize the taken for granted social structures and ideologies and try to find out whose interests are these serving. They are particularly interested in finding out how oppression is reinforced through structures. This tradition has no influence on moral order. However, it has medium influences on public discourse, incommensurability and transcendent discourse.

Table 3. Shows the influence of different traditions on concepts of moral conflict theory

Transcendent Communication	m	m	m	n	s	n	m
Incommensurability	m	n	m	n	s	n	m
Public Discourse	s	s	m	m	s	n	m
Moral Order	m	m	m	n	s	n	n
	Rhetoric	Semiotic	Cybernetic	Phenomenological	Sociopsychological	Sociocultural	Critical

From the above table we can see that Rhetoric and Semiotic have medium to strong influences on moral conflict theory. Whereas Sociocultural tradition has the strongest influence on the theory. Cybernetic has medium influence, whereas phenomenological and Sociopsychological traditions have no influences on the theory at all. The critical traditions also have medium influence on most of the concepts. Now we can draw the influences of all these seven traditions on a chart to see how much relative influence each tradition has on moral conflict theory.

Conclusion

The field of communication theory before Craig’s metatheory was incoherent. Before appearance of Craig’s metamodel majority of the communication theorists were operating in separate domains within narrow disciplinary schools of thought. However, Craig’s model provided coherence to the field of communication theory. The communicative nature of metamodel provided a platform to the communication theorists operating within different domains to engage in a productive dialogue. The dialogical-dialectical nature of Craig’s metamodel helps in promoting a healthy debate

within the field of communication theory. However, there are certain limitations of the metamodel. Due to its communicative nature and compartmentalization of the seven traditions, it cannot accommodate all the communication theories; it gets exclusionary. Craig (1999) looking at heuristic value of his model, welcomes more traditions. However, the metamodel can serve best if we instead of adding more traditions to the model and further compartmentalizing it, look at this model as open field, without boxes or compartments. We should look at the influence of each tradition on communication theories. This way the model can help us better understand the field of communication theory. Looking at the influences of different traditions on communication theories will promote debate and dialogue within the communication fraternity. It will also help teachers and students of communication to better understand the field of communication

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**Appendix
Table 1**

	Rhetorical	Semiotic	Phenomenologi-cal	Cybernetic	Sociopsychological	Sociocultural	Critical
Communication theorized as:	The practical art of discourse	Inter-subjective mediation by signs	Experience of otherness; dialogue	Procession of information	Expression, Interaction and influence	(re)production	Discursive reflection
Problems of communication theorized as:	Social exigency requiring collective deliberation and judgment	Misunderstanding or gap between subjective viewpoints	Absence of or failure to sustain authentic human relationship	Noise; overload; underload; a malfunction or bug in a system	Situation requiring manipulation of cause of behavior to achieve specified outcomes	Conflict; alienation; misalignment	Hegemonic ideology; systematically distorted speech
Metadiscursive vocabulary such as:	Art, method, communicator audience, strategy, commonplace, logic, emotion	Sign, symbol, icon, index, meaning, referent, code, language, medium	Experience, self and other, dialogue, genuineness, openness	Source, receiver, signal, information, noise, feedback, redundancy network, function	Behavior, variable, effect, personality, emotion, perception, cognition, attitude	Society, structure, Ritual, rule, socialization , culture, identity	Ideology, dialectic, oppression

