

# THE FLOW OF CHOICE: THE CHOICE COROLLARY<sup>1</sup>

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**The Choice Corollary: A person chooses for himself that alternative in a dichotomised construct through which he anticipates the greater possibility for extension and definition of his system.**

The Fundamental Postulate is a construction of the individual as a “process in being”. Like a flowing stream, the individual's behaviour is construed as the dynamic choices implicit in his onward flow across the epigenetic landscape of his construing. The process of choice lies at the centre of the development of the individual's construction system, and it is this system that forms the landscape that channelises the onward flow of the individual's processes. Not only does the construction system construe its own extension and definition, thus setting itself apart as a self-referential system, but also the construction system produces alternatives, the experience of which varies the construction system itself: the construction system has the capability of being self-modifying. These two properties of the construction system have enormous implications (Varela, 1979) for the autonomy of the individual in relation to others that can only be touched on in this chapter. The individual also experiences himself as self-aware and conscious of the choices open to him within the context of that self-awareness. There is a duality in this consciousness in that the individual can both think about himself - the stream as seen from the point of view of the surrounding landscape - and he can also think as himself - the stream-in-being seen from the point of view of being the stream itself. This duality manifests itself to him on the one hand as a consciousness of choice and on the other hand as an awareness of choosing.

It is my intention to explore the Choice Corollary in this chapter from the point of view of choosing. The objective underlying this is to arrive at an understanding of what can go ‘wrong’ with this process as construed by the individual choosing.

My reason for exploring the process of choosing as distinct from the nature of choice is that the former leads toward autonomy as a choice itself for the individual as opposed to the latter, which leads only to a consideration of the products of construction systems.

Throughout the chapter, I use the masculine gender in referring to individuals. This is because of a limitation in my use of language, since the contents of the chapter are relevant to persons of either sex. This limitation raises an issue about the physical nature of the representational medium I am using: the printed word. When not referring to individuals in general, I also from time to time refer to managers and musicians. This is because of my particular experience in working with managers on

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 7 in “The Construing person”, edited by James C. Mancuso and Jack R. Adams-Webber. Praeger, 1982, pp113-129

problems of development management, and because I have some experience of being a musician. My use of these two different forms of experience, however, also reflects another issue: the relationship of the knower to that which is known.

If the physical nature of the representational medium I am using is examined, then it can be described as having a surface structure and a deep structure that can themselves be described in terms of syntactical rules and transformational grammar: laws governing the properties of the medium itself. As soon as the question of the meaning embodied in the use of the medium is raised, then another mode of description dealing with semantics can be used. The medium can be viewed as embodying syntagma forming syntagmatic structures: structures of meaning that have no necessary correspondence with the syntactical structures through which they can be represented. In addition these syntagmatic structures can themselves be viewed as being embedded in paradigmatic structures of meaning. Thus syntactical structure describes the medium itself, and syntagmatic and paradigmatic structure describes the use of the medium, but in both cases the description is from the point of view of someone describing someone else expressing meaning - my use of my experience with managers reflects this point of view. These forms of description refer particularly to language and its use as a form of representation. If all forms of action are viewed as representation, then one adopts the same point of view as does Kelly in his Personal Construct Psychology (Kelly, 1955). If one further adopts the view that not all that the knower experiences himself as knowing can necessarily be embodied in a form of representation observable as a whole by others, then one adopts the perspective of the knower as opposed to the observer - my use of my experience as a musician. It is from this point of view that I have elaborated the constructs of action structure, object structure, core structure, and implicate order in this chapter.

### ***DOES HE KNOW IT IS HIS SYSTEM?***

My work involves me with many managers who are concerned with their capabilities as managers. They desire to extract the greatest value possible from those activities for which they are responsible, although they rarely put it quite like that. I like to work alongside them in their own working habitat. They expect me to help them to be more capable. Naturally I ask them what they do, why they do it, and what it is about the anticipated consequences of their actions that leads them to do it that way rather than some other way. What I hear from a manager is his theory of action. What he tells me is self-referential, of course, and always has some form of coherence. Regardless of the theory's substance as reflected in its ability to predict, it is always possible to be critical of the theory's form of coherence. The manager can be pressed toward greater and greater coherence in what he says. Regardless of the degree of coherence to which he develops his theory, however, the manager can always make statements using it that do not make sense to him in its own terms. This follows from the theory's ability to be self-referential (Gödel, 1962), and it means that the manager can never wholly rely on his theory to decide his choice for him: there will always be times when he will be thrown back to choosing directly for himself. The first question then is what determines the consequent choice if he cannot decide in terms of his own theory?

The second issue arises from the degree of incongruency that exists between the manager's "espoused" theory and his "theory-in-use" (Argyris and Schon, 1976). If I agree to a representation, with the manager, of his espoused theory, and then set

about representing to him the coherence that I see implicit in how he acts, to the point at which he can recognise it for himself, we end up with two theories: one he espoused theory, and the other the theory he agrees as being implicit in his actions. As Argyris and Schon have shown, these two theories are frequently incongruent. For the manager this means that his own actions may become unmanageable from the point of view of his own consciousness. From the other's point of view, he will be construed as being unable to keep his word. The manager will be unable to identify those choices that extend and define his capabilities: he will experience himself as working in the dark. The second question then is what is it that leads to incongruency developing between the manager's espoused theory and theory-in-use?

Managers need to develop a kind of sixth sense about choosing - a form of awareness that enables them to make the "right shot in the dark". An awareness that Polanyi described as tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1958). Developing this form of awareness is a necessary condition if the manager is to pick his way through the plethora of possibilities open to him. Let us assume that the manager's espoused theory and his theory-in-use are congruent; that he is capable of facing himself with propositions, the truth of which he will be unable to determine in terms of his own theory; and that he has the capability to "take a shot in the dark" that he feels "right" in the sense that he anticipates that it gives him the best chance of extending and defining his construction system. Will he have the power to exercise that choice, or will others have the power to force him to make a choice he feels is not "right"?

The managers I work with frequently want to make things happen in areas over which they have no jurisdiction, and so they have to influence the choices of others, just as others will be trying to influence their own choices. There are a number of distinct "power styles" and corresponding "blocking responses" that govern this cross-flow of influencing. Some idea of the complexity of these cross-flows particularly at higher levels of an organisation can be gained from Mintzberg, Raisinghani, and Théorêt (1976). It is not appropriate to pursue the nature of these blocking responses in this chapter, but the power styles correspond to the different forms of directive that are manifestations of "force" in the use of language. Kelly talks about this force in more general terms as "aggressiveness" and the corresponding blocking response in terms of "hostility". I will be describing the nature of this force in greater detail later in the chapter, but even if the manager has a great deal of it, and he is well within his rights to make a particular choice, there is still one further problem he faces.

The manager will try to execute the choice he wishes to make through his ability to co-ordinate the development of resources to that end. If he has the appropriate resources within his control, then their deployment will "determine" the outcome. It may be, however, that there is no way within the current technology to secure the outcome he desires: it can't be done, and perhaps never can be done. He is thereby "over-determined", as he experiences it, in his ability to produce the outcomes he chooses, although he may be "under-determined" in other areas, in that he in fact has the ability to produce outcomes of which he has not yet dreamed. The experience of over- or under-determination will be a function of the structure of resources accessible to him relative to his capacity to choose: what is over-determining for one manager may be under-determining for another. For the purpose of this chapter I will assume that the manager is under-determined, but obviously the manager's ability to execute a choice he makes will affect the way in which his construction system develops.

## Who Is It Who Chooses for Himself?

Managers frequently have to take shots in the dark. They call it making a judgement. For a long time it has been fashionable to believe that the decision-making process could be explained as a rational analytic process by reference to phenomena external to the decision maker (Newell and Simon, 1972). It could be made more rigorous and consistent, and formalised into a decision science that could be subject to objectification, through the familiar process of consensual refutation (Popper, 1959), just as is done in the physical sciences. If there are statements the manager can make that do not make sense in terms of his own rational analytic process, then by defining the rational analytic process as object-referenced, it can be distinguished from the “subject-referenced” process whereby the manager uses his “feel” based on the quality of his own experience of choosing (Boxer, 1978). This is a very difficult distinction to support, because subject-referenced knowing can be treated as a form of object-referenced knowing that only the manager can object-reference because only he has experience of it. It is not accessible to consensual refutation, because it belongs to a non-consensual reality. A manager, however, is always working in a non-consensual reality, so for him the issue is not one of others knowing what he knows, but rather the accessibility of his own knowing to himself: his experience of what Kelly referred to as his own construing process. For him this experience has object-referenced as well as subject-referenced aspects, and it is the latter that is the “feel” that enables him to make judgements and to take shots in the dark.

The manager experiences subject-referenced knowing as emanating from “within”, and equally experiences object-referenced knowing as referring to “outside”. The two will have become distinct to him at a very early age when his experience of one ceased to be coincident with the other. We have already discussed the possibility of incongruity developing between his theory-in-use (his construction system) and the espoused theory that is his consciousness. His consciousness will be “focal”: it will represent to him that which he anticipates. The manager, however, will also be aware of himself as context to his consciousness, out of which context will emanate his “feel”. He will experience himself, therefore, as existing between his “focal consciousness” of the outside as object-referenceable, including himself as object, and his “contextual awareness” of “within” as subject-referenceable.

The extrovert manager will draw his sense of himself more from focal consciousness. He will tend to identify himself with focal consciousness so that in choosing for himself he will have difficulty in recognising any incongruity between himself and his construction system, but he will be very conscious of being over-determined. When he presents himself with a choice that is undecidable in his own terms, however, he will be at a disadvantage in comparison with the introvert, who will be able to identify himself more with his sense of himself within contextual awareness. The introvert will find it easier to explore his own feelings independently of the way in which the choice is presented: his difficulty will be in formulating a choice that is an expression of his sense of “feel”.

There is an underlying problem, then, in disentangling the manager's sense of himself in choosing from the choices he might think about making. Whence the manager draws his sense of himself will affect the form of self for which he chooses. Kelly construed the person as construing the replications of events: the form of knowing that is object referenced and experienced as focal consciousness. It is also possible to see the person as construing the replications of his experience of himself as

context to the construing of the replications of events: the form of knowing that is subject-referenced and experienced as contextual awareness. This construing by the construer of the replications of his own experience of himself as context itself can be construed as “propositional construing”. This is structurally distinct from constellatory and pre-emptive construing: Collectively the person's propositional construing forms a “core structure” within his construction system, while the constellatory and pre-emptive construing form an “object structure” (Boxer, 1980). Kelly made only a logical distinction between the different forms of construing. He also gave a different meaning to the word *context*. Before going on, therefore, to explore the implications of making a structural distinction between core structure and object structure, it is necessary to delve deeper into the meaning of contextual awareness.

## **The Nature of Contextual Awareness**

In order to understand the nature of contextual awareness it is necessary to leave being a manager for the moment and to become a musician. All musicians have to have an instrument, just as creative artists need to work in a medium. To be effective, the musician must practice his technique, so that when he tries to play a particular piece of music, he will experience his ability to play the instrument as under-determining. In this way he will be able to concentrate on his musical expression. By practising, the musician is developing the “existential articulation” of his ability to play: he is developing his physical ability to act in more and more complex patterns of action that produce patterns of sound on his instrument. Skill in any medium involves the development of existential articulation, and this applies as much to the pronunciation of long words as it does to the movements of a ballet dancer.

Existential articulation will not be enough, however, for the musician to establish mastery over his instrument. He will also have to learn to read music. Music is written in another medium that is existentially articulated and that has acquired the special status of a “representational system”. The existential articulation of the music will need to be at least as great as that of the musical actions he is to perform, and its purpose will be served if the choices of musical action he experiences from reading are those originally experienced and expressed by the music's composer. If you can imagine the composer writing down his own musical thoughts and then playing them, then the relationship between his thoughts and the consequent action will be one of “referential articulation”. I am therefore defining referential articulation as the process that results not only in a separation of the actor from the action, but also in the experience of focal consciousness. The musician's ability to read the music in one key and to transpose it as he plays it into another key reflects the degree to which he is musically conscious and is referentially articulated between his musical thoughts and his musical actions.

Language is our most highly developed representational system, and its existential articulation can be described in terms of its syntactical structure, which gives the articulate speaker enormous choice in how he expresses meaning. When the speaker speaks, he creates a syntagmatic structure. A syntagma is a unit of meaning as experienced by the listener. Its meaning will be complicated by the fact that language is a self-referential representational system, but nevertheless the syntagma will ultimately acquire some meaning to the listener who is sufficiently referentially articulated. Language is in fact doubly articulated (Guiraud, 1975). The syntagma can acquire meaning independently from the meaning acquired by the way in which they are

structured in relation to each other. The syntagma, therefore, represent the “substance” in the speaker's experience, and the syntagmatic structure represents the “form”. Metonymy in the use of language results, then, from playing with the referential nature of language's substance; and metaphor results from playing with the substance itself in relation to the form within which it is embedded. The form, however, can also be played with, resulting in analogy.

Expressing form in language results in the experience of “figure” being lifted into the listener's consciousness in relation to the “ground” of what he is not conscious of. His attention will be focused on the figure. When the listener experiences an analogy, the representation of form that he has heard will be distinct from the representation he would be conscious of arising from his own experience. The listener can only be conscious of one syntagmatic structure at a time, so he will experience the possibility of creating another form as an awareness at the time he hears the one syntagmatic structure of a sense of its inappropriateness. The appropriateness of form can be represented as the paradigmatic structure implicit in the speaker's use of language. The experience of paradigmatic structure is contextual awareness.

Kelly defines the context of a construct as comprising those elements among which the user ordinarily discriminates by means of the construct. Elements clearly correspond to syntagma in speech, so that a construct is a way of structuring syntagma. Syntagma are embedded in syntagmatic structure, and syntagmatic structure is itself embedded in paradigmatic structure. Focal consciousness focuses on syntagmatic structures within which the Kellian notion of context is embedded. Contextual awareness is on the other hand the experience of paradigmatic structure within which focal consciousness is embedded. It is in this sense that the two uses of the word “context” are quite different.

Returning to our musician, therefore, he is existentially articulated: he has the ability to act in a variety of ways in the world, and those ways can be extended by the use of various devices - in his case an instrument. This is the “creatura” that Jung (1967) conceived of: the world of causes and effects, which can be wholly object-referenced and about which statements can be made that can be consensually validated. The musician can also be conscious of a musical thought independently of its expression in his actions: he is referentially articulated, and he is able to represent those thoughts within a representational system capable of carrying “meaning” for him. This domain of consciousness, representation, and meaning is the “pleroma” (Jung, 1967), which contrasts with the creatura, and which exists by virtue of the existence of the subject and within which statements represent a form of coherence embodying the subject's (non-consensual) experience of his reality. This view of representational systems in general, and language in particular, locates the representational system embodied in focal consciousness as the subject's consciousness of himself-in-the-world, but also embodies his awareness of the-world-in-himself (Coward and Ellis, 1977). The representational system thus becomes in focal consciousness “the Symbolic” through which the subject “knows” an “outer reality” (“the Real”), and which is itself embedded in contextual awareness through which the subject relates to an “inner reality” (“the Imaginary”) (Lemaire, 1977)<sup>i</sup>. The possibility of incongruency between the subject's Symbolic and his construction system reflects the possibility that there will be “inner realities” that may be expressed through his actions directly in an “outer reality” without his consciousness. Mastery for the musician will, therefore, be the ability to express his “inner reality” directly in a musical “outer reality” through the

Symbolic. The master will be under-determined in his actions, congruent in his thoughts, self-determining in his choices, and he can act with force.

## **LEVELS OF STRUCTURE**

This chapter is written using language as the representational system. In the act of writing it, I am subject to the same limitations described in relation to managers and musicians: I can be over-determined in my ability to express myself by my lack of skill in the medium itself; and there can be incongruency between the meaning I experience implicitly in my actions (theory-in-use) and the meaning I represent through language (espoused theory). There is another limitation, however, derived from language's double articulation: there is a limit to the number of levels of structure that can be represented explicitly in the medium at any one time. What are these levels of structure, and what evidence is there that there are more levels than can be explicitly represented?

The composer making marks on his musical manuscript is acting in a way that is existentially articulated: the marks he makes are traces left through time of his existence in the world as a particular structure of actions. The manuscript, therefore, represents a particular "action structure". For the composer, however, there was a choice in what he wrote down in relation to his thoughts in focal consciousness: this experience of choice was described as referential articulation. The particular action structure can, therefore, also be construed as a representation of focal consciousness. Thus, language is both an action structure that has syntactical structure and that can be construed as a representation of focal consciousness; its structure is also a representational system reflecting the syntagmatic structure of meaning experienced in focal consciousness.

The structure of language embodies reference to particulars and predicate expressions concerning those particulars. The double existential articulation of language's syntactical structure enables its user to represent two "levels" of referential articulation: he can choose what particulars to which to refer to (the first level of referential articulation between the individual and his experience of external "reality"), and he can choose the predicate expressions he uses to represent the relatedness he experiences between the particulars to which he has chosen to refer (the second level of referential articulation between the individual's contextual awareness of himself and his experience of focal consciousness). Thus, the double existential articulation of language allows particulars to be embedded in predicate expressions in which syntagma are embedded in syntagmatic structure, a way that represents the two levels of referential articulation resulting in the experience of focal consciousness. If congruency is assumed, therefore, the embeddedness of syntagma in syntagmatic structure reflects focal consciousness and can be represented by particulars embedded in predicate expressions in language; and it corresponds to action structures embedded in the object structure within the construction system.

If action structures are level 1 structures, and object structures experienced in focal consciousness as syntagmatic structures are level 2 structures, what then are level 3 structures? The double articulation of language makes it able to represent two levels of referential articulation, but to represent level 3 structures explicitly it would have to be trebly articulated. What evidence can there be, therefore, of level 3 structure?

In predicate expressions, there are two kinds of universals: categorising universals and characterising universals (Strawson, 1959). The particular represents the

syntagma, which corresponds to pre-emptive construing. The categorising universal is denotative in its use and represents a form of relatedness between syntagma that corresponds to constellatory construing. The characterising universal, however, is connotative in its use and represents a form of meaning that is paradigmatic. Is the characterising universal, therefore, the manifestation in a doubly articulated representational system of the third level of referential articulation?

The characterising universal takes the form of an adjective pair. The individual's use of this pair is asymmetric, the "unmarked" one being used more frequently than the "marked" one for characterising (Adams-Webber and Benjafield, 1973). Its use in language is such that it directs attention toward those phenomena that the individual experiences as unusual (Adams-Webber and Benjafield, 1976); judgements expressed in terms of the unmarked form show greater consistency with each other than those expressed in marked form (Adams-Webber, 1977); the individual is better able to remember comparative statements when made in unmarked as opposed to marked form (Clark and Card, 1969); and the individual is able to make deductions faster from unmarked as opposed to marked information (Clark, 1969). The individual's use of language is thus riddled with marking, and this marking also affects the way in which language is used; the explicit representation of this marking in language as adjective pairs enables their use to be made manifest in syntagmatic structures; and the way in which they occur as adjectives enables them to express propositional construing.

There is evidence, therefore, for a level 3 structure manifesting itself both within a doubly articulated representational system as characterising universals and implicitly in the use of that system through marking. In the construction system a level 3 structure would be "core structure", and object structures would be embedded in it in the same way as action structures were embedded in object structure. Core structure would enable the individual to direct his attention toward those phenomena he experienced as unusual. Again assuming congruency, he would be conscious of those phenomena as striking, and by drawing out of his "feel" in contextual awareness ways of characterising those phenomena, he could express what it was about them that was striking. Thus, contextual awareness would be the experience of core structure that would manifest itself in his actions as marked behaviour, and in his use of language would be described as paradigmatic structure.

Core structure serves to orient the individual in relation to his external "reality". In the terms used in stating the Choice Corollary, if object structure embodies "system" when choosing, then core structure embodies "his". Thus, from core structure would come the experience of "core" or "peripheral" construing. Why should not the individual be referentially articulated to three levels of construing? If this were the case, then he could choose how he was to value his experience of object structure in relation to himself. Not all of the structure at any level of construing need be articulated: the individual may never have developed referential articulation, or he may have chosen to "fix" his construing. Developing referential articulation at any level would, therefore, be "loosening", and fixing the articulation between levels would be "tightening". Thus, although much of an individual's level 3 structure might be permanently fixed for him, some areas might be articulated. In these areas he would become aware of a fourth-level structure. What evidence is there of a level 4 structure manifesting itself implicitly in language?

## **INTENTIONALITY AS SELF-DETERMINATION**

The orientation the individual has in relation to his external “reality” may be described as his value gestalt. If the individual is under-determined, congruent, and referentially articulated to three levels, then he will experience choice in the value gestalt that he can express through his actions. The choices will feel more or less peripheral within contextual awareness, and by “centring” himself within contextual awareness, he will make a choice that is least peripheral and, therefore, most likely to extend and define “his” system. The more centred his choice, the more inner “force” he will feel in its expression, and it is this sense of force that gives the clue to the nature of a fourth level of construing.

Austin (1962) first introduced the concept of illocutionary force. If language were viewed only as a propositional structure conveying sense and reference through some syntactical structure, then it could be treated as having only locutionary meaning that was object referenced, and could be judged consensually as to its truth or falsehood. If, however, it was viewed as an utterance made by a particular individual, then it could also be said to have an illocutionary force that was more or less “happy” in the circumstances in which it was made. Austin identified five classes of utterance in terms of illocutionary force: exercitives, being the exercising of powers, rights, or influence; verdictives, being the giving of a finding as to something that is for various reasons hard to be certain about; behabitives, being the expression of attitudes and social behaviour; commissives, being commitments to doing something or declarations or announcements of intention; and expositives, being expressions that make plain how the individual's utterances fit into the course of an argument or conversation or how he is using words in general. Examples might be voting, giving a verdict, congratulating, promising, and saying “I deduce that”, respectively. The last class of utterance is self-referential in that it refers to the act of utterance itself. The other four reflect the nature of the speaker's relationship to the utterance he is making. The perlocutionary effects of an illocutionary act were then the effects induced through the other of the illocutionary force of the speaker's utterance, and the “happiness” of the utterance reflected the appropriateness or “fit” of the utterance that affected its perlocutionary effects in the circumstances in which it was uttered. The illocutionary force not only had a perlocutionary effect, but also expressed the force in the speaker's own actions. The hearer of an utterance could nevertheless block the perlocutionary effects of a speaker's utterance if he felt its illocutionary force to be inappropriate.

How then does the concept of illocutionary force relate to the other aspects of language discussed earlier, and is it evidence of the existence of a fourth level of construing? Searle (1969) developed Austin's ideas within a theory of language that was part of a theory of action and, therefore, particularly a study of speech acts. In addition to the study of the syntactical structure of the words used in uttering, there were two distinct semantic studies: one a study of the meanings of structures and one a study of the performances of speech acts. From this point of view two elements could be distinguished in the syntactical structure: an indicator of the presence of a proposition and an illocutionary force indicator. Even if these elements were not apparent on the surface, they were present in the syntactical deep structure. Thus, all speech acts bore some form of illocutionary force, even if not explicitly represented.

Thus it would seem that implicit in all speech acts there is not only some degree of marking but also some form of force. The marking became explicit through the presence of characterising universals in the propositional content of speech acts, and

was evidence of the manifestation of level 3 core construing in language as a doubly articulated medium. It is now also apparent that the force becomes explicit in the form of exercitives, verdictives, behabitives, commissives, and expositives and thus provides evidence of the fourth level of construing. Why, though, are there five forms of illocutionary force?

A level 3 core structure could manifest itself in four ways: directly as a characterising universal alone, as an adjective qualifying a predicate expression, as an adjective qualifying a particular, and as an adjective qualifying the statement as a whole. Examples would be “I feel happy”, “that dog is running fast”, “this is a red table”, and “this is a stupid thing to say”, respectively. Equivalently, therefore, level 4 structure manifests itself in five ways: directly as a commissive (“I will...”), as a behabitive, verdictive, or exercitive qualifying the content of a speech act (“I am sorry that...”, “It is my diagnosis that...”, and “I vote that...”), and as an expositive qualifying a speech act as a whole (“I repeat that...”). Thus, while the double articulation of language makes it possible to represent the first two levels of construing explicitly in the medium itself, the third and fourth levels of construing manifest themselves implicitly both in how the medium is used and also in parts of the medium itself.

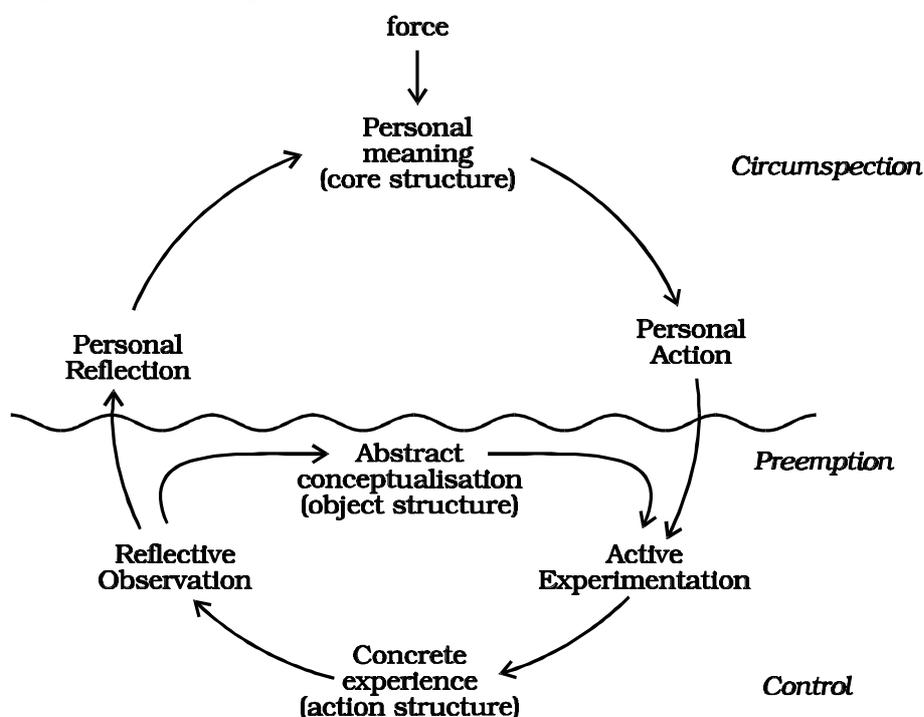
The congruent individual who is under-determined and aware enough to centre himself will be aware of his own force as the manifestation in his own contextual awareness of his fourth level of construing. In focal consciousness this will become “intentionality”. When expressed in language this will be classifiable as the illocutionary force of his utterance. Thus the self-determining individual is the individual who is capable of centring himself so that he can act directly from his own inner sense of force in extending and defining his construction system.

Is there a way of construing the fourth level of structure more clearly? Bohm (1980) argues that the explicate and manifest order of consciousness is not ultimately distinct from that of matter in general. Fundamentally these are essentially different aspects of the one overall order, so that the explicate order of matter in general is also in essence the sensuous explicate order in ordinary experience that is represented in focal consciousness. He develops the idea of a higher-dimensional reality that projects into lower-dimensional elements that have a non-local and non-causal relationship. This is the same idea as the concept of embeddedness of a lower-dimensional element in a higher dimensional reality, which he calls enfoldment. The distinction between first- and second-level structure in the construction system follows from referential articulation between focal consciousness and the experience of action structures in the existentially articulated body. The distinction between the second and third levels of structure, however, follows from the identification of focal consciousness with the space-time bounded dimensionality of the individual's sensuous experience: the third level of structure is, therefore, the reality of higher-order dimensionality resulting from the individual's experience of himself as context to his experience of space-time bounded reality<sup>ii</sup>. This higher-dimensional reality is, however, limited by his experience of himself as context and still part of his explicate order. The fourth level is qualitatively distinct because it lies beyond the individual's experience of his explicate order, and it corresponds to Bohm's “implicate order”. The projection of the implicate order into his contextual awareness is, therefore, a value gestalt, and he experiences as force the implicate order that lies beyond his contextual awareness. Can a fifth level be construed? My own sense of it is as the void.

## **CIRCUMSPECTION, PREEMPTION, AND CONTROL**

The Choice Corollary is problematic because it introduces the idea that the construction system is “self-referential”: unlike the other corollaries it necessitates construing the construer's own consciousness and self-awareness. All of the other corollaries can be understood solely in terms of the consequences of the construer's anticipations in his actions. From the self-referential nature of the corollary, therefore, flows the introduction of levels of embedded structure within the construction system: action structure, object structure, core structure, and the implicate order. The qualitative distinctions between these levels is not made in terms of the constructs’ functioning at any level, but in terms of the nature of the construer's experience of his own construction system. The axis of distinction between levels is of increasing orders of “dimensionality” so that the here-and-now moment of experience is embedded in the space-time dimensionality in the quality of that experience of object structure that is itself embedded in the higher order dimensionality of the construer's experience of himself as context to his cumulative experience. Super- and sub-ordinacy of constructs, therefore, vary along an axis that is orthogonal to the axis of levels: the constructs belong to the same order of dimensionality as the elements they construe, although their range, focus, and context (in the Kellian sense) will vary in terms of that to which they refer. Thought in focal consciousness moves between constructs along this axis of super-ordinacy and sub-ordinacy, thus functioning at a level of construing in a way that is quite distinct from moving between levels through reflection (Boxer, 1979; Boxer and Boot, 1980).

The cycle of circumspection, preemption, and control, leading to a choice that precipitates the individual into a particular situation, is, therefore, not really a cycle at all, but rather a shifting of the focus of construing between levels. It is more useful to construe a cycle as occurring between each level as below:



The cycle at the level of object structure results in preemption. Kolb and Fry (1975) have described this cycle as an experiential learning cycle. Starting with reflective observation, depending on how referentially articulated or fixed object

structure is in relation to action structure, the construer will be more or less able to loosen his construing of the situation as he experiences it. Construction in terms of more or less super-ordinate constructs within object structure will be experienced in focal consciousness as abstract conceptualisation in some form. The choice to tighten construing in order to fix the relationship between object structure and action structure is, therefore, preemption resulting in active experimentation. From this particular active experimentation will flow action within action structure experienced as concrete experience, that is, as control. From this experience, the same cycle of reflective observation, and so on, can follow.

In the diagram, the wavy line indicates the distinction between focal consciousness below and contextual awareness above. The process of abstract conceptualisation will not only be in terms of constellatory constructs embodied in object structure; it will also be in terms of propositional constructs “projected” into focal consciousness from core structure and construed as if they were part of object structure. Constructions from object structure can be represented as a point of view, so that if the construer is able to be referentially articulated to three levels, then personal reflection becomes possible: the construing of a point of view as a particular value gestalt. Again there is the possibility of loosening or tightening the construction of a value gestalt, but again construction in terms of more or less super-ordinate constructs within core structure will be experienced in contextual awareness as personal meaning of some form. Any personal meaning felt in contextual awareness will project itself into focal consciousness as a point of view, although it will not necessarily follow that it can be expressed as an action structure. This process of exploring personal meaning is circumspection, and naturally, therefore, it is expressed in terms of propositional constructs.

The personal meanings explored will vary in how peripheral they feel. By being able to engage in circumspection, the individual can centre himself by choosing that form of personal meaning that has the greatest force: personal action. It is this personal action that is self-determination and expresses intentionality. An individual who is either fixed or very tight in the referential articulation between his third and second levels of construing will be unable to centre himself as effectively because his explorations of personal meaning will be foreshortened: he will tend to be impulsive. The ability to loosen or tighten construing at will is, therefore, essential at all levels if the individual is to construct alternatives between which he can choose. It is appropriate, therefore, that the loosening and tightening process is referred to as the creativity cycle.

## **SO WHAT IS THE BIG PROBLEM ABOUT CHOOSING?**

It is said that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. I agree with this statement, not because of what is known but because knowing implies consciousness, and it is from consciousness that the problems arise in choosing. Without consciousness, who is to say whether or not a person is choosing that alternative through which he anticipates the greater possibility for extension and definition of his system? For another person to say would be academic, because of his position as an outside observer, but for the person as knower to say it, he must be conscious. With consciousness comes perception, and it was this that led Kelly to say that “if one wished to state negatively the new position of the psychology of personal constructs regarding motivation, he might say that human behaviour is directed away from

ultimate anxiety. One would have to go further and say it is directed away from the 'perception' of ultimate anxiety" (Kelly, 1955, p. 894). Along with consciousness, then, enters anxiety with fear, guilt, and attachment. No wonder that eating of the Tree of Knowledge was seen as leading to the Fall.

Anxiety is the consciousness of events that lie outside the range of convenience of the individual's construction system: his referential articulation has no way of covering the situation. The creative response for the individual would be to construct through circumspection a point of view that felt centred, and then aggressively to set about personal action and active experimentation that extended and defined his construction system in such a way that the anxiety evaporated in the face of new experience. That would be self-determination. This does not always happen, however, for the reasons that follow.

First, the individual may be over-determined, so that he cannot actively experiment in the ways he would choose. Without a physical action space in which to exercise the control he chooses, he will be unable to experiment actively. Some individuals appear to be more inventive than others, however, so that what might be over-determining for one might be under-determining for another. In circumstances where an individual can be over-determined, however, it is not surprising that the anxiety can easily become threat or fear if, in addition to being unable to control the situation, the individual can himself be controlled in such a way that he is threatened or his own core structure is changed against his will.

When faced with anxiety, another response might be to form a dependent relationship with another individual. The whole education process is founded on the usefulness of this response. It too has a danger, however, which is less obvious than being over-determined, but no less restrictive: disablement (Illich, 1971). For the knowledge the individual needs to be communicated in a way that is independent of the person communicating it, it needs to be expressible in object-referenceable form, and, therefore, in terms of object structure. A particular object structure, however, represents a point of view that reflects the value gestalt of the person who created it. This value gestalt may not be appropriate for the learner. No harm would be done if the learner carried on doing what he did anyway within his theory-in-use: He would only have developed an incongruency between his theory-in-use and his espoused theory as learned. If, however, he learned to control his actions from the espoused theory, he would be disabled in the sense that he would have learned a way of doing that was not an expression of his own core structure. He might, therefore, be unable to experience being centred. Knowledge learned in this way that was disabling would at least have the merit of being useful. If the knowledge learned was instead ritual, developed as part of a religious movement, to enable the experience of a value gestalt that reflected force identified with religious process, then the ritual might become disabling, insofar as it continued to be used after it had ceased to be appropriate in enabling the same experience of religious process in the worshipper (Reed, 1978). Such ritual could not only be disabling but also be bad ritual if it also induced guilt, which reinforced its disabling influence.

After over-determination, therefore, comes disablement as the major source of restriction on self-determination. It is doubly effective in that it operates on consciousness itself, instead of through restricting experience. Both of these ways enable others to influence the choice the individual makes. There is, however, a third process restricting choice, namely attachment. If the individual is not over-determined

and is not disabled, he may have developed ways of acting that worked for him and even enabled him to feel centred. Thus, where he was originally very articulated in his ability to choose, success may have led him to become very attached to particular ways of acting to the point where he had lost his need for articulation and thus had chosen to become effectively fixed. Such a choice would follow from identifying the value with the action, and the resulting attachment would prevent the individual from considering a point of view as a whole value gestalt. The resulting impulsivity would also be a restriction on self-determination even more insidious than either over-determination or disablement because of its being self-inflicted.

## **CONCLUSION**

Society gives the individual no choice as to whether or not he has choice: it gives it to him. Even in the most totalitarian of societies the individual acquires a consciousness of choice. Finding the way from a consciousness of choice to self-determination is, however, a way strewn with the hazards of over-determination, disablement, and attachment (Boxer, 1980). As the history of the religious movement has shown, even having found a form of self-determination, there is no guarantee that it is an appropriate way for the individual.

The Choice Corollary is primarily about consciousness gained through experienced choice. The elaboration of the corollary presented in this chapter is a way of construing the nature of that experience of choice. If the individual is more than a reaction to his physical situation, then he will at least develop a “head” way within focal consciousness to anticipate the greater possibilities for himself. The construing of core structure as distinct and the possibility of contextual awareness lead to a deeper way, however: the way of “heart”, in which the individual anticipates the greater possibilities for himself through construing them in relation to his own experience of a value gestalt. Construing the implicate order as lying beyond core structure provides a still deeper way for the individual to anticipate the greater possibilities for himself: an anticipation based on an awareness of centredness in his choice of value gestalt. This chapter is, however, my construction, so to conclude, it is only appropriate for me to suggest that you find your own way.

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## **END NOTES**

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<sup>i</sup> This early attempt to begin to make the links to the Lacanian *oeuvre* is not wholly wrong – this ‘inner reality’ is imaginary in the sense that it is captive to the likeness of the image; and the structuring of focal consciousness as having a logic of distinctions places it under the effects of the Lacanian Symbolic. Where it goes a bit wrong is in equating ‘outer reality’ with the Real – if this ‘outer’ is that which is not already anticipated by the inner, so that it is a kind of impossible to anticipate, then it could be said to be ‘Real’ in the Lacanian sense, but this meaning is not clear here.

<sup>ii</sup> This is a formulation that is later articulated in terms of the Lacanian ‘phantasy’.