

Social Structure
and
Social Interaction
(Chapter 4)

1

When you think of
social structure, what
comes to mind?

What are the social
structures that exist
in primitive societies?
Modern societies?

2

Components of social
structure:

culture
social class
statuses/roles
institutions
groups

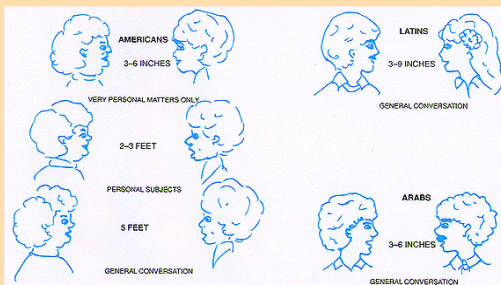
3

1. Culture —What is this?
What makes up culture?

refers to a group's language,
beliefs, values, behaviors,
material objects, and even
gestures.

4

► Cross-Cultural Conversation and Interaction Style



Copyright © 2009 Allyn and Bacon

6

2a. Social Status -What is this?

a position that an individual
occupies

6

2a. Social Status -What is this?

a position that an individual occupies

2b. Social roles -What is this?

behaviors attached to a particular status.

7

2a. Social Status -What is this?

a position that an individual occupies

2b. Social roles -What is this?

are the behaviors attached to a particular status.

Can you think of an example of a particular social status and its accompanying social roles?

(for example: status of student athlete and its social roles?)

A third component of social structure is:
Social Class

What is social class and how might social class be measured?

income, education, and prestige.

9

4. Social Institutions:

What are some social institutions?

Religion, family, education/school, military, political, economic

10

If you were going to talk about social institutions (e.g., religion, education, the family) from a functionalist perspective, how would you see them being related to one another?

What about from a conflict perspective?

11

What do you think originally caused people to develop a social structure?

Perhaps it was easier to live together with defined norms and values (culture), statuses and roles, etc.

12

Emile Durkheim believed that as people recognized the value of a "Division of Labor" they also saw a need for some kind of social structure to support it.

13

How has social structure changed over the centuries?

Is it more or less complex?

14

Social Structure (Chapter 4)

YouTube on health care, ranked 37

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yVgOl3cETb4>

15

Ferdinand Tonnies believed that community was being replaced by impersonal associations as a result of the industrial revolution

- o **Gemeinschaft** — intimate community where everyone knows everyone; that describes village life.
- o **Gesellschaft** — a society dominated by impersonal relationships and self-interests.

16



17

Emile Durkheim suggested that society is changing from Mechanical to Organic solidarity:

- **Mechanical solidarity** — a solidarity among people caused by a shared consciousness among persons with similar tasks (simple division of labor).
- **Organic solidarity** — a shared consciousness based on interdependence within a complex division of labor.

18

• • • | **Social interaction**
(Chapter 4)

When contrasting social structure and social interaction, what would you guess is a major difference in focus?

Macro vs Micro

19

• • • | Which social theorist that we have studied uses a social interactionist perspective?

(hint: he studied dramaturgy, front stage, back stage, etc.)

Erving Goffman

20

• • • | **Dramaturgy**

What are examples of the "back stage" and "front stage" areas of your life?

How do you keep people from entering your back stage area uninvited?

21

• • • | Impression management — efforts to manage the impressions that others receive of us.

Skilled Incompetence — leaving the impression of being skilled when in reality one is incompetent

22

• • • | Where is the Skilled Incompetence?

23

• • • | Everyday life brings with it many roles.

► **Role Set of a College Student**

Copyright © 2000 All rights reserved

Role Performance

- Role conflict —the inability to perform two roles at the same time—conflict between roles.
- Role strain —strain experienced when performing a role—conflict within a role.

25

Ethnomethodology

—the study of how people do things—
uncovering people's **background assumptions** that influence their behavior.

Background assumptions —a person's ideas about the way life is as well as the way life ought to be.

26

What's the background assumption?



28

The Social Construction of Reality

When you think of this idea of the "social construction of reality," what comes to your mind?

28

The Social Construction of Reality

Thomas Theorem —
"If people define situations as real, they are real in their consequences."

29

The Social Construction of Reality

—society and life experiences define what is real.

30



"I and Me- Symbolic Interactionism" at
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jwOTkj4cnU>

31



In sum, we have examined
characteristics of social
structure and social
interaction.

Do you feel one is more
important to study than
the other? Why?

32



oFini

33