

Unification of Communication and Money

Scientists since Einstein have searched for a single formula that will show how the world works. Whether or not the day will come when so-called “unification” can be expressed by numbers, there is a need for us to learn the common characteristics of how people deal with each other. We talk to each other through words written and spoken, and we deal with each other through financial transactions. How are these means of communication alike?

A person alone can be lost in his thoughts and incapacitated by loneliness. Nevertheless, people living alone have been known to work out means for sustaining life. However, as social contacts increase, we find we are only satisfied when we meet the needs of other people. In meeting others’ needs we find our own needs are met to the extent of our success in serving others. This social interrelationship is studied academically as Social Sciences, embracing economics, government and Language Arts. Economics and language have more in common than being parts of the study of society. Understood and applied by the leaders of the world, these common workings would increase our possibility of developing prosperous communities and nations.

People meeting people find themselves talking and/or listening and reading and/or writing. If we can find the underlying elements in this aspect of language arts and apply it to our observations about commerce, we may discover how people can improve all manner of transactions between each other.

Notice the simplicity of verbal and written commerce. We relate to other people either by speaking to a listener or listening to a speaker. Or we find ourselves writing something for others to read or reading what someone has written. There is a hinge relationship in this activity we call communication. We connect socially as we use words, spoken or written, as the symbols connecting our minds. The symbols are ethereal, having histories of use and meaning, but no substance in and of themselves. The words we use to communicate are the connections linking an outgoing concept to an incoming understanding. The science of semantics is dedicated to clarifying this process.

In the same manner as words spoken or written provide the hinges of human information-sharing, money has become the hinge that brings people together as they share goods and services. Historically, as grunts became words, and sign languages developed into spoken sentences: written carvings in stone, developing into sophisticated writing on parchment and paper, money began to develop from “my horse for your grain,” to the designation of symbols to be used as trading instruments. Those symbols had three characteristics. They were numbered so that people could keep track of their wealth, they had value in themselves and they were an accepted medium of exchange. As sign language was necessary to man’s first verbal dealings, so gold, silver, sea shells and tally sticks were necessary to the development of a method to assure fairness in trading. That method was called money. In recent decades money experts have developed money that has no value in itself. Just as words constantly change meaning, money with no substance changes value. Where money formerly was in stored gold and silver, with a fixed value, money today is double entry posting on computer drives. This means money now shares with words the need for careful definition.

Just as words are links between minds, symbols with no substance apart from the meaning they designate, so money has become the insubstantial link between buyer and seller, having no value in substance, only symbolizing what it will buy on any particular day. Verbal communication requires a sender and a receiver, each dealing in difficult to define semantically indistinct symbols. Commercial communications require a buyer and a seller, each dealing in a difficult to define currency, whose value is as subjective as any exercise in semantics. Yet, the verbal symbol and the monetary symbol are the hinges upon which all social activity is held together.

The concern we should share is that our words are tested, tortured if necessary until they yield accurate meaning. In the same way, money should be created with such thoughtful concern that its duty to convey value is not compromised. These hinges hold social traversal in harmony or they will fail the essential tests of unity of meaning and value, causing society to suffer.

The hinge concept is the common denominator of commerce and sociology. What are the characteristics of a hinge? How can we find in our study of words-as-hinges and money-as-hinge a unification of these concepts? A hinge has two faces connected to separate entities. A hinge has a meshing connection bringing together those two faces, normally a strong metal pin. A hinge has the characteristic that each half is in a fixed relationship to a separate entity. Those two entities, normally a door jam and a door, or a gate post and a gate, illustrate the opposing, yet related, parties to verbal and economic exchange.

What must the speaker-listener, the writer-reader and the buyer and seller have in common? First, they must possess a clear self identity and self consciousness. A hinge plate left to the weather while attached to porous unpainted wood will tear away from its connection and become ineffectual. In verbal communication time weathers the meanings of words. Knowing this, both speaker and listener, writer and reader must test the meanings by studying the context and being certain the understanding is the result, just as the carpenter will test the integrity of the wood attached to the door hinge.

Buyers and sellers must also be aware of the tendency of time to weather and diminish the value of the money used when they transact business with each other. Money today is not a symbol of value. Like words change meaning, money changes purchasing power. To ascertain the meaning of a word, a careful communicator will use a feedback mechanism. The writer uses the word “let.” Is the writer a modern writer using the word to mean “allow?” Or is the writer an ancient writer using the word to mean “hinder.” You must answer questions like this if your understanding of words is to be accurate.

Knowing the value of money will change even more quickly than the meanings of words, you must view the money you have only in terms of what it might someday purchase for you: its ability to meet a future need. For that reason, your surplus should be invested in substantial property that will objectify your wealth in the same way language feedback creates understanding. You want to determine the meaning of a sentence? You make sure you understand the current meaning of each word. You want to look back on the financial transactions of your life with satisfaction? You will use the feedback mechanism of moving the currency you gain today into something that will purchase for you tomorrow the same products you could have purchased today.

When money was a symbol of gold and silver this care was not necessary, or not as necessary. Today, our cash is the trash that facilitates trading. Because it does not hold value, it must be traded as soon as possible for something that will protect your wealth. The word “let” once meant “hinder.” Today, it means “allow.” The twenty dollars you receive today that will allow you to purchase a satisfying restaurant meal will a few months from now hinder your purchase of a cup of Starbucks coffee. However, yesterday, an ounce of gold would purchase a fine quality suit of clothing. Today, an ounce of gold will purchase a fine quality suit of clothing.

Thus, in commerce individuals must possess social independence under a cooperative governmental structure, fostering individual liberty, allowing people to develop a well-defined concept of purpose for life, within a framework of moral and ethical values that harmonize with the purposes of the Creator of the Universe. That self identity must be self-protective, learning the basic needs of survival against sometimes hostile influences That self-concept will prosper most when centered upon self-improvement and the desire for self gain.

To make the point clear, the person who is more interested in receiving money than in understanding its true nature is like the speaker who is more interested in speaking — in hearing his own voice — than in dialoguing with his listener to be certain his words are understood. The person who receives money must understand that its value will soon decay.

The well-defined person will recognize that the most efficient way to satisfy greed-for-gain is to develop methods to serve the needs of others. To the extent that a selfish person learns to empathize with others, to that extent self-interest will be fulfilled. The more service given, the more money will be received. The more money received, the more it must quickly be changed in form from money to property. Only this completion of the financial communication will bring complete meaning, correct definition and economic reality to your private commercial life. You will have come to understand money as a careful reader understands what is written.

A community encouraging free and selfish verbal and economic connections will be a community well-hinged, growing in peace, harmony and prosperity.

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