COMMUNICATION PROCESSES
Stages of Negotiation

• **Beginning Stage:**
  - includes social exchanges, issue identification, agendas, & bargaining ranges.

• **Middle Stage:**
  - (dynamics) marked by movement, process, interaction, & exchange.

• **End Stage:**
  - decision making, avoiding decision “traps”, achieving closure
The Beginning Stage

- The point at which the negotiator balances what was (& is) and what might be; guided, at large by their perception of past situations, attitudes & behaviours.
Middle Stage

- Offer sequence: provide both direction and impetus,

- Evolution of framework and details:
  - Diagnosis: need for change
  - Formula: develop shared perception
  - Detail: work out fine points

- Linguistics: 2 levels
  - logical (proposals & offers),
  - pragmatics (semantics, syntax, style, etc.)

- Listening and questioning
End Stage

Achieving closure:

- Know when to be quiet
- Beware of “garbage”
- Beware of last-minute hitches
- The party who writes the contract controls the purpose.
Linguistics and the Role of Language

*What* a negotiator says and *how* he/she says it has an effect on the conduct of negotiation:

- “Negotiation is essentially linguistics”
- Negotiation “represents the exchange of information through language that coordinates and manages meaning”
  
  (Gibbons, Bradac, & Busch, 1992: 156)

- In negotiations, language operates at 2 levels: “logical” & “pragmatic”
5 Linguistic Dimensions of Making Threats

1. Use of polarized language – using positive words when speaking of one’s own position (e.g., ‘generous’, ‘reasonable’) & negative words when referring to the other party’s position (e.g., ‘tight-fisted’, ‘unreasonable’)

2. Conveyance of verbal immediacy – high & intended to engage or compel the other party (“Okay, here is the deal”, “I take great care to…”) OR low & intended (e.g., “Well, there it is”, “One should take care…”)
5 Linguistic Dimensions of Making Threats (cont’d)

3. Degree of *language intensity*
   
   *High*: to convey strong feelings in the recipient;  
   *Low*: to convey weak interest.

4. Degree of *lexical diversity*:
   
   *High* levels: competence & comfort;  
   *Low* levels: discomfort, anxiety or inexperience.
5 Linguistic Dimensions of Making Threats (cont’d)

• Extent of high-power language style:

  **Low power**
  - use of verbal hedges, hesitations, politeness to the point of deference & subordination

  **High power**
  - expressions of dominance, clarity, firmness & self-assurance.

  (Gibbons, Bradac, Busch, 1992)
5 Linguistic Dimensions of Making Threats (cont’d)

Whatever one’s intention is, i.e. whether to sell, persuade, gain commitment, middle-stage linguistics would seem to depend on adequate command of techniques by the speaker, as well as on clear understanding & decoding of the intended message(s) by the listener.