

# MESSAGE ENERGITS:<sup>1</sup>

## Propellents and Stimulants of Communication

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Energy units in the communications stream, conforming with various principles of entropy as explicated by Wiener and others, explode, tremble, vibrate, shrink, and even disappear in a context of friction, expansion, and dissipation.<sup>2</sup> These units are not the same as "bits" or "binary units" as understood by the information theorist or communications engineer. Rather they are energized capsules placed in the "bloodstream" of a communications channel; they are the "life-or-energy-giving" ingredients of the message. In a sense, they are like corpuscles of the human bloodstream: some are strong and vibrant, some are bland and mediocre; others are thin and dying.

These energy units, or *energits* (pronounced in-ER-jits), constitute the atomic framework of a message, the fissionable protoplasm of the *corpus communicatis*, the bridge of message energy which spans the chasm of misunderstanding and disinterest. Without energits, the message would simply be a word-rack or rickety verbal framework. An energit-less message might also be compared to a static, murky sludge that drifts aimlessly and undynamically within itself

<sup>1</sup> Presented at the Universal Consortium of Unrecognized Specialists in Communications Activities and Assorted Pseudoscientific Investigators, meeting in Belivandi, Mongolia, in March, 1978. This version here is a brief summary of a much longer paper, containing 1,776 footnotes and 44 charts and tables.

<sup>2</sup> The author wishes to thank many of his graduate students who, if the truth were really known, actually wrote 99 percent of the original article. The author, of course, made the trip to Mongolia and presented the paper before the UCUSCAAPI assemblage.

and in the end is devoured by its own inertia.<sup>3</sup>

The higher the ratio of energits in a message, the more dynamic it is, the more explosive, the more impelling. The higher the ratio of energits, the more viable and the more versatile it is. The highly energized message has the potential of wider reception and projection. Explosive, viable and well-formed energits provide thrust, setting up a sort of chain-reaction with other energits, thereby carrying message meaning forward or downward (projection-inclination thrust) into areas where new chain-reactions continue the dynamic potentialities of the message. Energits, if they are full-blown and well-formed, split and splinter neatly and easily, thereby filling the channel (or message) with other or new-born energits (*subenergits*). It is this potential of exploding or splintering that gives the entire message its total thrust, vitality and viability.

Journalism educators in many parts of the world are beginning to sense the value of the study of this new science of *energitology*, for when applied to the tensions of the normal classroom situ-

<sup>3</sup> Journalists, a "sub-species" of communicator, should be aware of the murky sludge resulting from energit-less stories; at least a dozen studies (all listed in the original study) from 14 nations—a couple of nations collaborated on one of the studies—have shown that since 1948 journalistic "murky sludge" has increased to such an extent that 512 persons who were exclusive newspaper readers had by 1978 become exclusive TV viewers. Such studies as the Murky Sludge Study, just cited, tend to show the international need for increased emphasis on energits among practicing journalists. (In other words, this study is not simply an "Ivory tower" exercise without practical ramifications for the persons engaged in journalism.)

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ation it has the ability to reshape the whole student-teacher relationship and to rekindle intellectual fires which have all but died out. Teachers of journalism and communication are realizing that energits are in a way special kinds of information bits, kinds that are packed with human-interest "sparks" which set them off from the more static and trite elements of the message in which they find themselves. Energits, of course, are not all equal in size or impact-potential, but all have common denominators which are of the same or similar substance.<sup>4</sup>

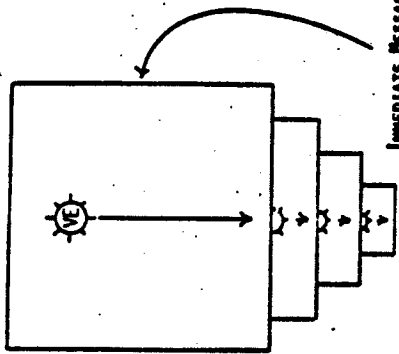
These energits are composed of what might be called "information energy," a characteristic element found in all messages which are spoken of in lay terminology as "interesting," "stimulating," "impelling," "imaginative," or "creative." Many journalists, for example, speak of their stories as having much or little "human interest" or "real significance" or "prolonged impact." In a way, they are talking about energits, for energits relate to all three of these qualities. They are the parts of the message which cause it to catch the attention of the reader, to impress itself on him relative to its importance to him, and to make its value felt not only temporarily but for a more prolonged period. Dr. Helmut Cuesortia, recently retired executive secretary of UCUSCAPI, dealt with this specific aspect of energetology in his 1973 book, *Energizing Effectivities and the Human Condition*.<sup>5</sup>

All messages, it must be assumed, have at least one energit, for it would be impossible to imagine any communicative activity through any channel without at least a solitary energit there to initially kick out symbols—however pale and in-

<sup>4</sup> Many scholars, especially in the Far East, insist on equality of impact-potential, but Western scholars tend to discount this egalitarian Eastern orientation. Several books and hundreds of journal articles are presently being written on energit impact orientalism.

<sup>5</sup> Another good recent publication dealing with this subject is Hans H. Henderson's monograph, published by Ireland's Institute of Energit Research, entitled *Time Lapses and Successive Entropic Efficacies of Communication in the Case of Interspicuous Discourse in a Selected Salmon Population (1977)*. This monograph is popularly known as "Interspicuous Discourse."

FIGURE 1  
V - ENERGIT



spid they may be. A uni-energit message, however, has little impact and an extremely short life. Although in some cases it might trigger or set off sub-energits through brief time periods and over short spaces, it more than likely will dissipate quickly and be soon forgotten—if ever noticed at all.<sup>6</sup>

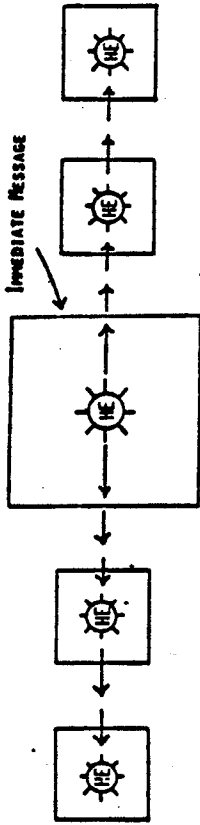
Energits, it should be noted, extend their influence or impact vertically (in depth down into the rest of the message), or horizontally (into side—or peripherally-related—issues), and into the *time-continuum* running from past to future. Energits, therefore, are three-dimensional at least; they elongate the immediate message or thrust its significance into laterally relevant areas, and they serve the Korzybskian "time-binding" function by connecting the present to the past or to the future—or to both.<sup>7</sup>

Of course, there are some types of energits which are chiefly one-dimensional; for example, a single energit might be of the vertical type (a V-energit).

<sup>6</sup> Several studies, actually, have shown conclusively that the uni-energit is seldom noticed at all. In fact, less than one-half of one percent of 50 million uni-energits projected into populations of Eskimos and Awa Indians were noticed.

<sup>7</sup> See E. P. A. Sutton's article, "Time-binding in Symbolized and Unsymbolized Messages," in *Time-Binding Journal* (X-1) August, 1970. Cf. Alfred Korzybski's classic book, *Science and Sanity*. Also relevant are the present author's monographs, *Same Science (1954)* and *The Science of Insanity (1974)*.

FIGURE 2  
H - ENERGIT



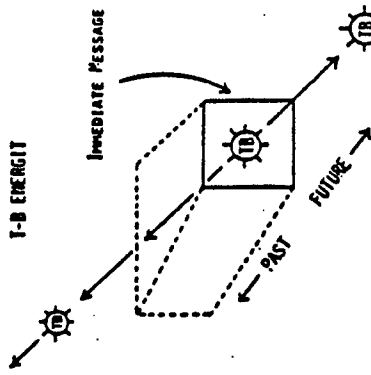
erving the message only internally by extending interest downward. (See Figure 1.) It would perpetuate the single message, thereby assuring a certain message unity and prologation; this energit would not "break out" of the particular message, although it would energize it and prolong it in a unified space-time sense only. It is the type of energit which is single-event in nature, a kind of slice-of-life energit.

Another energit type, the horizontal or side-thruster (an H-energit) is loaded with an explosive thrust toward lateral involvement. (See Figure 2.) It pushes the main line of the message into related fields simultaneously interesting and important. This is the energit which adds not only a breadth or scope to the message, but also gives peripheral insights which the V-energit ignores. The H-energit, then, explodes laterally and ejects its subparts through the sides or walls of the immediate message, thereby forming a horizontally constructed or broader message or a series of related messages running along side by side. (See Figure

2.) While having some normal downward thrust in it, the H-energit mainly slams its energy through the lateral walls of the message, thereby setting up a horizontal chain of commonly energized messages.

The third type of energit, the T-B-energit (time-binding-energit) forces the reader's attention and interest backward into the past or forward into the future by relating the present to kindred issues on a time continuum. (See Figure 3.) This is the bridging energit that gives historical and/or futuristic perspective.

FIGURE 3  
T-B ENERGIT



The accompanying article and diagrams, written and constructed by an internationally known journalism educator of numerous distinctions, are designed to make a very clear point, whatever the reader might construe the point to be. If any readers desire further elaborations on the article or its intent, they should address their queries directly to the author, making sure that they follow one of the structural forms suggested by the article, heavily charged with plenty of energits.

—The Editor.

Now that the general nature of energetology has been presented briefly, it is well that a fresh conclusion be stated: Much more research and theorizing are needed. But already the youthful field is blasting off into the rarified stratosphere where McLuhan, Wiener, Shannon and others have sent their intellectual rockets. It might be that, as a famous scholar once noted, "The mills of scholarship grind exceedingly slow, but they grind and grind..." So it is with energetology.