


Understanding Human Communication

Chapter 1
What and Why



2008

How Do You Define Communication?

- What examples come to mind when you think of the term “communication?”
- Official definition: The process of creating meaning through symbolic interaction.”

Considering Attributes of Communication

- Why is communication considered a process, not a discrete occurrence?
- What do the authors mean when they say “communication is symbolic?”
- Research: Should all communication behaviors “count” as being intentional?

Types of Communication

- Intrapersonal
- Interpersonal/Dyadic
- Small Group
- Public Communication
- Mass Communication



Functions of Communication

- Physical needs
- Identity needs
- Practical needs
- Social Needs

Social Needs



Transactional Definition of Communication

- Communication refers to the act of one or more persons...
- sending and receiving msgs simultaneously.....
- through a variety of channels.....
- that occur within an environment....
- are distorted by noise.....
- and lead to some effect.

Transactional MODEL of Communication



The elements of human communication, Unit 1, p. 10
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Communication Environment/Context

- Physical
- Cultural



Encoders(Responders)/Decoders

- We receive and send messages at the same time.
- Encoders can consciously send a new message or simply “respond” unconsciously.



Messages

- Verbal & Nonverbal
 - Feedback



Channels of Communication

- Vocal/Verbal
 - Face to Face
 - Mediated (telephone, e-mail, faxes, videoconference)
 - Writing
- Not in the book:
 - Visual
 - Olfactory
 - Tactile


– Note: More nonverbal than verbal channels

Noise

- Defined:
 - Forces that interfere with effective communication. Distorts the message so that the original message is distorted.
- External/physical (*outside the speaker*)
- Physiological
- Psychological

Effects – Not in the book

- Cognitive
- Affective
- Psychomotor



Communication involves Ethics

- Because communications have consequences and effects they involve decisions of right and wrong
- Consider:
 - What's your purpose?
 - What's your motive?
 - Is it harmful or hurtful?
 - Would you want everyone to do it?
 - Etc....



Competent Communicator

- Defined:
 - “Achieves one’s goals in a manner that ideally maintains or enhances the relationship in which communication occurs.”

8 Characteristics of Competent Communicator

1. Wide range of behaviors
2. Choose appropriate behavior
3. Skill @ performing behaviors
4. Empathy & Perspective taking
5. Cognitive complexity
6. Self-monitoring
7. Commitment to relationship
8. *******Communication is Inevitable, Irreversible & Unrepeatable.*******

Competence in Mediated Communication

- What does it mean to communicate in a mediated environment?
- Challenges:
 - Leaner messages
 - How does the absence of “richness” affect a mediated communication exchange?
 - Disinhibition
 - How does increased expressiveness impact non-face-to-face exchanges?
 - Permanence

Expanding Communication Competence Interculturally

- How do competent communicators function co-culturally?
- Characteristics of competent intercultural communicators
 - Motivation
 - Tolerance for ambiguity
 - Open-mindedness
 - Knowledge and skill

Competence in Mediated Communication

- What does it mean to communicate in a mediated environment?
- Challenges:
 - Disinhibition – transmit uncensored msgs
 - Volunteer personal information
 - Increased expressiveness
 - Permanence

Misconceptions about Communication

~ NOT ~