

COMM 3620 Module 1 Exam Study Guide

Chapter 1

- **Communication:** the use of symbols to represent ideas so that meanings can be shared
 - Ex: street signs, magazines, podcasts, conversations, books, etc.
- **Symbols:** sounds, movements, or images to represent ideas (communication use symbols)
 - During IPC you use symbols in the form of talking, gesturing, or writing
- **Interpersonal Communication:** communication that occurs between people and creates a personal bond between them (unlike communication that includes any use of symbols to represent meanings)
 - Inter: connects people (computer won't get mad for shutting it off)
 - Personal: your unique qualities as a person matter during IPC
- **Impersonal Communication:** when your personal qualities are irrelevant to the interaction
 - Treated as a customer at a restaurant vs. your server showing interest in you as an individual
- **Dyad:** occurs between two people
 - Common setting for IPC
 - Can take place within a larger setting
- **Transactional Model of Communication:** reflects the fact that people involved in an interpersonal interaction participate together in the act of communicating
 - At least two participants, who bring personal qualities to the interaction, as well as their own thoughts and their impressions of their partner
 - Together these participants create and interpret symbols that represent ideas
 - The interaction unfolds in a context that includes everything from physical characteristics of the setting to the cultural environment
- **Channel:** the medium through which messages are exchanged between people
 - Allows partners to jointly participate in the continuous creation and interpretation of symbols that represent ideas
 - Connection that exists when face-to-face partners give each other their attention
 - Cell phone or Internet connection
- **Content Messages:** the literal or typical meanings of the symbols used to communicate
 - Direct and literal or indirect meanings of the symbols that are used
- **Relational Messages:** the meanings that symbols have for the relationship between communicators
 - A person's attempt to change the relationship?
 - Way to determine extent of relationship
 - Sources of Information about relational messages:
 - The symbols used → "Let's get together more often"
 - The relationship history → "I love you" spoken for first time
 - The situation → "I love you" after a fight/before separation
- **Computer-Mediated Communication:** the variety of ways in which computer technology allows people to exchange messages with each other
- **Interpersonal Communication Competence:** the ability to use well the symbols that represent ideas and create a personal connection with another person- Measured by 6 standards:

1. **Fidelity:** the clarity of a message—the extent to which meanings can be correctly inferred from the symbols (hear, understand, interpret)
 2. **Appropriateness:** communication is appropriate when the messages that people produce match the requirements of the situation
 - o **Social Rules:** guidelines that specify the actions that are expected, preferred, and off-limits in a given situation
 3. **Satisfaction:** competent communication is enjoyable (attentive, responsive, positive)
 4. **Effectiveness:** effective when you are able to produce the outcomes that you want
 5. **Efficiency:** efficient if you can produce the outcomes you seek with no more than a reasonable amount of effort (not having to beg)
 6. **Ethics:** a consideration of what constitutes right vs. wrong or good vs. evil
 - o **Ethical Communication:** involves using values as a moral guide when you interact with other people
- **Communication Skills:** the ability to create symbols and perform behaviors that are appropriate and effective in a given social situation (learned)
 - **Theory:** a description of the relationships among concepts that helps us to understand a phenomenon
 - Explanation for why something is the way that it is
 - You create informal theories every time you try to make sense of a situation
 - A theory highlights specific concepts
 - **Concepts:** the categories of phenomena that are believed to be relevant to understanding an event, situation, or experience (not getting the job)
 - A theory describes how concepts are related
 - **Positive Association:** when an increase in the amount, frequency, or intensity of one phenomenon corresponds with an increase in another phenomena—the more competence, the greater the likelihood of getting hired
 - **Negative Association:** when a decrease in the amount, frequency, or intensity of one phenomenon corresponds with an increase in another phenomena—the more nervous you seem, the less likely you are to get the job
 - **Curvilinear Association:** exists when two concepts are positively or negatively related, but only up to a point, and then reverses (friendliness helps you get the job, but too friendly might be unprofessional)
 - A theory is always incomplete—a theory emphasizes particular concepts that a communication scholar believes are *most important* to understanding an event, situation, or experience
 - A theory is tested against the experiences of people—focuses on trying to understand the experiences of people in general
 - **Interpersonal Communication Ethics:** involve a consideration of the moral responsibilities that you have to the other person and to your relationship when making communication decisions
 - Attend to the values that you want to promote or protect in your interpersonal interaction
 - Recognize the impact of your choices on other people, as well as your relationships with them
 - Learn how IPC works to make more informed communication decisions

Chapter 2

- **Culture:** the values, beliefs, and customs that you share with a group of people
- **Norms:** shared expectations for behavior
 - Cultural norms shape your communication experiences
- **Standpoint:** the position from which people see the world based on their status in society (gender, access to education, jobs, healthcare, Internet)
- **Speech Community:** a group of people who have similar ways of using and interpreting symbols – arises when people live, study, or work together and therefore have shared experiences, norms, and communication practices (Greek members)
- **Subcultures:** speech communities that share some unique practices within a broader cultural group (parishioners who attend a particular church follow the norms for their religion)
- **Socialization:** the process by which newcomers come to understand a culture's assumptions and guidelines
 - First, members transmit information about the culture to newcomers
- **Invention:** the development of new cultural practices (one way culture changes)
- **Diffusion:** occurs when a society adopts the cultural practices of another group (one way culture changes)
- **Speech Codes Theory:** theory that explains how people's culture influences their communication behaviors—people communicate based on their understanding of the meanings, norms, and values that are relevant in a particular context (context always affects communication)
- **Speech Code:** the system of symbols, rules, and assumptions that people create to accomplish communication (created through social interaction and within particular situations)
- **Boundary Markers:** messages that indicate when an action is appropriate within the cultural group (defining boundaries of acceptable behavior)
- **Myths:** sacred stories in which the characters and their actions embody core cultural themes
- **Rituals:** carefully scripted performances that mark culturally significant events (fireworks on 4th of July)
- **Intercultural Communication:** occurs when interaction is guided by the participants' memberships in different social groups, rather than their unique qualities as individuals
 - Occurs when you adjust your word choice and nonverbal behaviors because you are talking to a person who doesn't share the same meaning for words and actions
- **Communication Accommodation Theory:** a general model of interaction that describes how cultural group memberships influence interpersonal interactions
 - Characteristics of the participants' speech can become more similar to each other or they can become more distinct (over the course of a conversation)
- **Ethnocentrism:** refers to seeing one's own cultural beliefs and practices as more correct, appropriate, or moral than those of other cultures
- **Anxiety/Uncertainty Management Theory:** explains how anxiety and uncertainty affect intercultural interactions – a lack of knowledge and fear of consequences that can make people unable to predict or enjoy intercultural interactions (want between maximum and minimum thresholds)