

## **Verbal Communication**

- I. Role of Verbal Communication in Communicating Effectively and Strategic Flexibility**
    - a. Communicating Effectively**
      - i. How you acquired ability to use words depends on three factors**
        - 1. Native architecture**
          - a. Genetic ability to formulate language
          - b. Inborn language transmission
          - c. Language acquisition device
        - 2. Cognitive development**
          - a. Involves mental imagery
          - b. Ability to organize and store information
        - 3. Environmental Influences**
          - a. You growing up
          - b. How things were explained to you and what things meant
    - b. Strategic Flexibility**
      - i. Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis**
        1. Language allows us to better understand the world and articulate what it is we are thinking or feeling
          - a. Think about explaining how you feel using words you know
        2. The better understanding you have of verbal communication and the more words you have at your disposal the more complete will be your ability to think about and view world around you
- II. How Words Work**
  - a. When you say a word you are representing something**
    - i. Either a concrete object**
      1. a tree
    - ii. Or an idea**
      1. peace
  - b. Denotative meaning**
    - i. A word that stands for concrete and emotionally neutral thing**
      1. such as mailbox
    - ii. Means the dictionary definition**
  - c. Connotative meaning**
    - i. Words that stand for abstract concept that evoke strong feelings**
      1. peace and love
    - ii. Has feeling or associations each individual carries with the word**
  - d. Ladder of abstraction**
    - i. Continuum categorizing words from completely abstract to concrete**
    - ii. Useful for communicating effectively**

1. removes abstractions and allows you to better reveal abstract language

**e. Words influence are way of seeing the world**

- i. Example of author writing about family member dying in electric chair

**III. People Determine Meanings**

- a. Meaning are determined by people not words
- b. Connotative meanings of words can change with our life and experience
  - i. Connotation of love as you establish new relationships

**IV. The Language Environment**

- a. Language must be environmentally appropriate or it will not make sense

**b. People, Purposes, and Rules**

**i. Language environment made up of four elements**

1. People
2. Purpose
3. Rules of communication
4. Actual talk used in situation

**ii. Ritual languages**

1. takes place in environments where a conventionalized response is expected of you
2. Greetings are a ritual
  - a. You briefly respond to someone
3. rituals determined by culture and society

**c. Appropriate Language**

**i. We have knowledge or learned notions about what is inappropriate to use in conversation**

1. racial slurs
2. insulting appearance or behavior
3. blasphemous words
4. aggressive words (shut up)

**ii. Euphemism**

1. an inoffensive word or phrase that is substituted for other words that might be perceived as unpleasant
  - a. When someone dies you say "passed away"
  - b. Politically correct
2. substitutions for unpleasant words

**iii. Double speak**

1. words deliberately constructed for political purposes
2. exact same as euphemism except two things
  - a. double speak does not always relate with unpleasant words
  - b. double speak always relates to a political agenda
3. Example: collateral damage is double speak for casualties of war

**d. Specialization**

- i. Specialized language

1. language particular to field, setting or occupation
- ii. **Roles determine are language specialization (How we talk)**
  1. we are constantly shifting roles
    - a. the way we talk to mom
    - b. slang with our friends

V. **Style Roles and Group Memberships**

a. **Neither language or thought can be viewed in isolation**

- i. You are what you say, because language is the method of conveying thought

b. **Style**

- i. Is the result of the way you select and arrange words and sentences
- ii. Roles can influence are style
- iii. We have preferences in the way we talk

c. **Gender and Language**

- i. Men respond to more scientific, mathematical, informative straight to the point approaches
- ii. Women respond to more anecdotes, metaphors and story telling

iii. **Rapport talk**

1. generally used by women
2. designed to lead to intimacy with others, match experiences, and establish relationships

iv. **Report Talk**

1. generally used by men
2. speaks goal is to maintain status, demonstrate knowledge, keep center stage

- v. Different gender styles leads to difficult communication among genders

vi. **Example: Woman tells husband a man insulted her**

1. man would want to find a solution, beating him up
2. women want empathy, the man to console her

- vii. Women use more questions and justifiers

- viii. Men more likely to interrupt or be demanding

d. **Powerful talk**

- i. Talk that comes directly to the point
- ii. Does not use hesitation or qualification

iii. **Non existence of certain communication behaviors**

1. **Hedges and qualifiers**

- a. I guess, and kind of

2. **Hesitation**

- a. Uh and you know

3. **Tag questions**

- a. Comments that start as statements but end as questions
- b. It would be nice to go on a picnic, wouldn't it?

iv. **Use active rather than passive language**

1. The boy hit the ball (Active)