

Chapter One: Thinking About Communication

Communication: a social process in which individuals employ symbols to establish and interpret meaning in their environment

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Main thing researchers agreed on

- Communication is **always changing and always evolving**
- Socially: There are **no definite beginnings or endings**
- Meaning is **created** ←

Concrete Symbols: objects, things you can see, touch

- Ex. Cup, chair

Abstract: things we know exist but are not concrete

- ex. Love, hate, harmony

Nonverbal communication = 63-97% of most communication

* point: we can disagree even on concrete symbols

VS.

Original communications model is linear: sender receiver

Transactional understanding of communication:

- Sender ↔ receiver
- Nonverbal and verbal components
- Message
- **Channel** – all of the senses and technology
- **Noise** – things that interfere with the message
 - **Semantic**: words ex. Another language, connotations with another meaning (i.e. abortion, fuck)
 - **Physical**: ex. Fire alarm goes off
 - **Physiological**: ex. Nauseas, broken ankle
 - **Psychological**: thoughts inhibiting communication
- **Feedback**: responses to communication
- Field of experience: everything you have gone through affects how you receive the message

.....the process now becomes more circular No consideration given to who speaks and who listens

Powloauto Group study at Stanford: intention does not have to be in place to create communication of some sort

Transaction of Comm.:

- There are **no definite beginnings and endings**
- Communication is **continuous and simultaneous**
- All communicators play roles

All messages influence each other
Even when you are not there you are communicating.

Theory fosters critical thinking

No one theory will explain a particular thing

You will use all different theories to gain a better understanding of things/phenomena

Ethics: create a framework in which to make decisions about ethical behaviors

National Comm. Association's *Principles of Ethical Comm:*

- Advocate truthfulness, accuracy, honesty and reason
- Endorse freedom of expression, diversity of perspective and tolerance of dissent
- Understand and respect other communicators
- Promote access to communication resources and opportunities
- Communication climates of caring and mutual understanding
- Condemn communication that degrades
- Committed to courageous expression of convictions
- Advocate sharing info, opinions, and feelings while respecting privacy and confidentiality
- Accept responsibility for short and long term consequences of our own communication

Why do we study theory?

- Fosters **critical thinking skills**
- Aids in **understand the scope of research**
- Helps us **understand life experiences**
- **Essential to becoming aware of who we are and how we function** in the world

Chapter Two: Thinking About the Field (Tradition and Context)

Robert Craig believed separating the study of theory into different traditions would help us understand the complex nature of theory development

Rhetorical Tradition: focuses on most types of public speaking or public address and their roles in society

- Include any elements that **relate to language and the audience**
- Ex. studying the speeches of George Bush in 1988 political campaign
- Ex. Persuasion in public address
- Ex. The effects of emotions on audiences

Semiotic Tradition: deals with the study of signs and their role in society as the primary focus of meaning creation

- **Common language is created and shared among people**
- **CMM is operating from the semiotic tradition**
- How words change as people using them change
- Ex. Dork □ penis changed meaning
- **Multiple meanings of words and how they come about**

Phenomenological Tradition: looks at a message or communicative situation from a personal perspective

- Works to eliminate biases
- Ex. How people from different backgrounds interpret message
- Ex. How gender impacts communicative style
- Ex. Taking a type of music and having two types of people listen to it... recording their interpretations * DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS

Cybernetic Tradition: communication as an information science

- Information flow
- How information is relayed through various channels
- How noise interferes with message understanding/processing
- Ex. How technical ability influences communication in computer-mediated situations
- Ex. People in the 70's using Match.com vs. people in their 20's using the same site

Socio-Psychological Tradition: seeks to understand the causes of behavior as a result of some aspect of comm.

- Focuses mainly on the underlying relationships between variables that exist and how those variables differ depending on the individual situation
- Ex. Trying to understand how people are affected in certain situations
 - "You made the football team, well your dad was the captain."
- Ex. How message construction influences recall of message
- Ex. How entertainment choices influences mood

Socio-Cultural Tradition: how existing shared culture and social structures which are already in place influence communication

- Advocate for the co-creation of social reality to encourage individual points of view
- Breaking through the established patterns of comm. to highlight individual experience in the comm. process
- Ex. Studying the development of "cliques" in schools
- Ex. How FSU orientation leaders influence a sense of spirit among the new freshman students

Critical Tradition: focuses on the current social order in society and how it negatively impacts society

- Seeks to expose the underlying beliefs and values within a society that impact decision-making and actions
- Looks at everything as "power"
- Challenges what is perceived as "negative balances of power"
- Finding the underlying beliefs that impact decision making
- Ex. how consolidation of media ownership impacts entertainment choices
- Ex. Finding examples in everyday life that are anti-feminist... he vs. she... and challenging them

Contexts: the environment in which some type of communication takes place and is limited by