

Principles of Professional Communication 1

Summary – so what I have I learned then?

Communication is a complex process

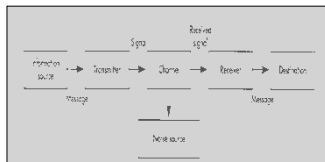
- It is not simply a matter of sending and receiving messages
- There are many things that influence how messages are sent and received
- These influences can relate to the nature of
 - the receiver/audience/decoder
 - the sender/encoder
 - the message itself
 - the context or situation in which the message is sent and received
 - the channel or medium of communication

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We looked at different ways of understanding communication

- Shannon & Weaver (1949) saw communication as a linear transmission of information
- Their model was the first to try and map the communication process
- It was the first to identify the concept of 'noise'



Source: Mohan et al., 1997, 26

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Berlo's model enhanced that of Shannon & Weaver

- David Berlo's 1960 model *humanised* the approach by Shannon & Weaver in 1949
- He identified many more variables of the process eg comm skills, culture, attitudes etc
- His model still saw communication as *linear*

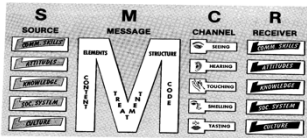
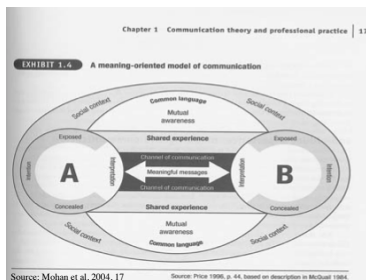


Figure 2.3 Berlo's model of the communication process

Source: Mohan et al, 1997, 30

A meaning-oriented model

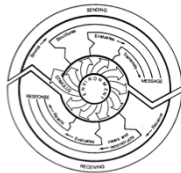


Source: Mohan et al, 2004, 17

- Meaning in individuals
- Meanings dependent on situations
- Shared experiences & common language important

Transaction models take a more holistic approach

- See communication as a the result of the *interaction* between a range of elements
- More focus on contextual, situational or environmental factors influencing the *evolution* of meaning
- See meaning not as fixed but as *negotiated*
- Meaning is an evolution not a *process*



Source: Mohan et al, 1997, 40

Other factors that influence meaning ... perception

- Perception refers to the way our brains select, organise and interpret information
- Everyone's perceptions, frame of reference or notion of reality is unique
- Perceptions are influenced by an individual's culture, learning, experiences, age, attitudes, motivations, personality plus the context in which the communication occurs

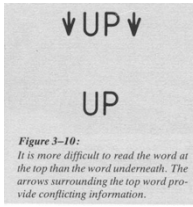


Figure 3-10:
It is more difficult to read the word at the top than the word underneath. The arrows surrounding the top word provide conflicting information.

Source: Avery & Baker, 1990, 99

Other factors that influence meaning ... non verbal communication

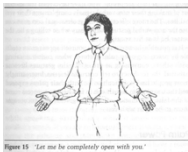


Figure 15: Let me be completely open with you.



Figure 16: A firm stand takes time.

Source: Pease, 1981, 92-95

- Research shows that non verbal cues have a major impact on the way people interpret communication
- Non verbal cues need to be interpreted in clusters and in context
- Culture plays a major influence on the meaning of non verbal cues
- Non verbal communication includes things such as gestures, voice, use of space, time, dress and so on

We explored the idea that language is not a one-dimensional, static, neutral medium

- Does language create reality or does reality create language?
- Why don't words mean the same to everyone?
- Is writing becoming outmoded in the age of new media?
- What is the relationship between writing and the visual act of reading?
- Is the concern over gender-neutral language an overreaction by feminists?



Controlling communication – the issue of censorship

- Whose interests does censorship serve – the community's, government's, business'?
- What do we censor as a society – film images or themes, language, news, ideas, music lyrics?
- Why do we censor visual images more than written material?
- Who are the censors and what are their motives – political, moral, economic, altruistic?
- Who has the right to make judgements “in the public interest”?

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Controlling communication – the issue of censorship

- Is editing a form of censorship – who decides what is “newsworthy”?
- Do people with particular viewpoints or moral positions have the right to decide what adults should be able to see or do in a democratic society?
- What proof is there that *seeing* influences *doing*? Are there other factors involved?
- Is it easy to blame things like video games and music lyrics for the wider ills of society?

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Issues in communication – the influence of culture

- In what ways does culture influence our “ways of seeing”?
- What are the differences between “high and low context” cultures?
- How does culture influence the way language is used?
- What do differences in non verbal behaviour say about how a culture interprets the world?
- What strategies can we adopt to ensure that we are culturally sensitive when communicating?

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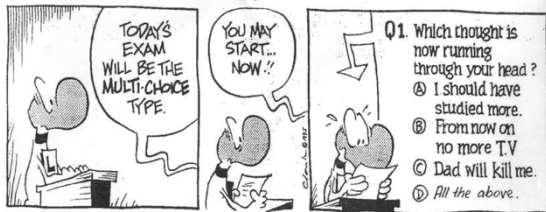
The impact of technologies on communication

- Do various forms of electronic communication, merely give us another way to communicate or do they alter the way that we communicate?
- How does electronic communication impact on interpersonal relationship? Does it make us communicate more or give us new ways to avoid others?
- How do new technologies alter notions of privacy and of public and private space?
- What are the implications of information overload or “data smog”?
- Are computers hazardous to literacy?

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Good luck ... and I hope you enjoyed the course



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