

**CLA 104**  
**Introduction to Human Communication**  
**System**

PROPERTY OF DISTANCE LEARNING CENTRE, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

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## **Ibadan Distance Learning Centre Series**

**CLA 104**

### **Introduction to Human Communication System**

**By**

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*Published by*  
Distance Learning Centre  
University of Ibadan

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First published 2002

**ISBN 978-021-194-2**

*General Editor:* Prof. Abiola Odejide  
*Series Editor:* Mr. C.O. Adejuwon

Typeset @ Distance Learning Centre, University of Ibadan

Printed by

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## **General Introduction and Course Objectives**

One major advantage, which university education offers the student is the ability and the desire to read far and wide to discover independently, more on the subject, above what the lecturer offers.

This places a university student at a higher advantage over other categories of students. Hence, at the end of this course and other subsequent ones, you will be provided with reference materials that should provide a basis for more inquiry.

Consequently, on completing this course, you should:

1. Be in a position to appreciate the whole essence of human communication;
2. Understand the role of communication in relationship building;
3. Understand the nature of human communication system;
4. Be exposed to the challenges of dynamics of human communication;
5. Know the role of diversity, culture and gender in human communication systems in today's world.

## LECTURE ONE

# The Nature of Human Communication

### Introduction

Communication is a central activity to human existence; nevertheless, we spend little or no time to understand its working. This lecture provides the basic knowledge on human communication, which you are expected to be equipped with in readiness for a more advanced study in communication. The lecture discusses the concept; from its definition, through its nature, characteristics, components and types to assumptions.

### Objectives

On completing this lecture, you should be able to:

1. appreciate the whole essence of human communication system;
2. understand the nature, elements and components of communication; and
3. differentiate between human communication system and other forms of communication.

### Pre-Test

Before going further, attempt to answer the following questions:

1. Why is communication important to his man?
2. Communication is a slippery term to define? Why? Give five reasons.
3. Define the term communication.
4. What do you understand by the assumptions about communication?

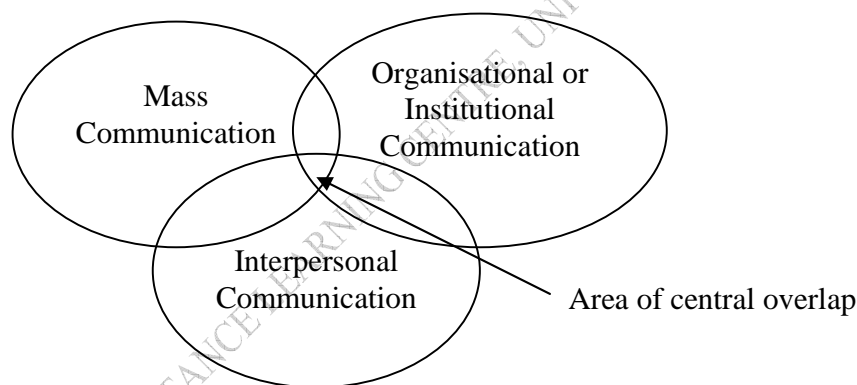
## CONTENT

### The Nature of Human Communication

Human communication involves people who are either engaged at interpersonal, small group and public encounter levels. Communication

by virtue of these, exists or takes place between and among all types of “senders” and “receivers”. These two classes of communicators are simply those who *give out* and *take in* messages. While it is easy to assume that communication occurs at the interpersonal, small-group and public levels, communication starts with the sender and ends with the receiver, yet, it is important to understand that the role of a sender or receiver as the case may be does not exclusively belong to an individual person. There is constantly, role inter-changeability in any communication encounter; a source becomes a receiver at one instance and the receiver becomes a source at the same instance.

It is important to note that mass communication is a major facet of human communication. Balle (1985) in “Social Communication Triad” cited in Williams (1989) identifies the other two facets as: Interpersonal and Organisational and/or Institutional Communication.



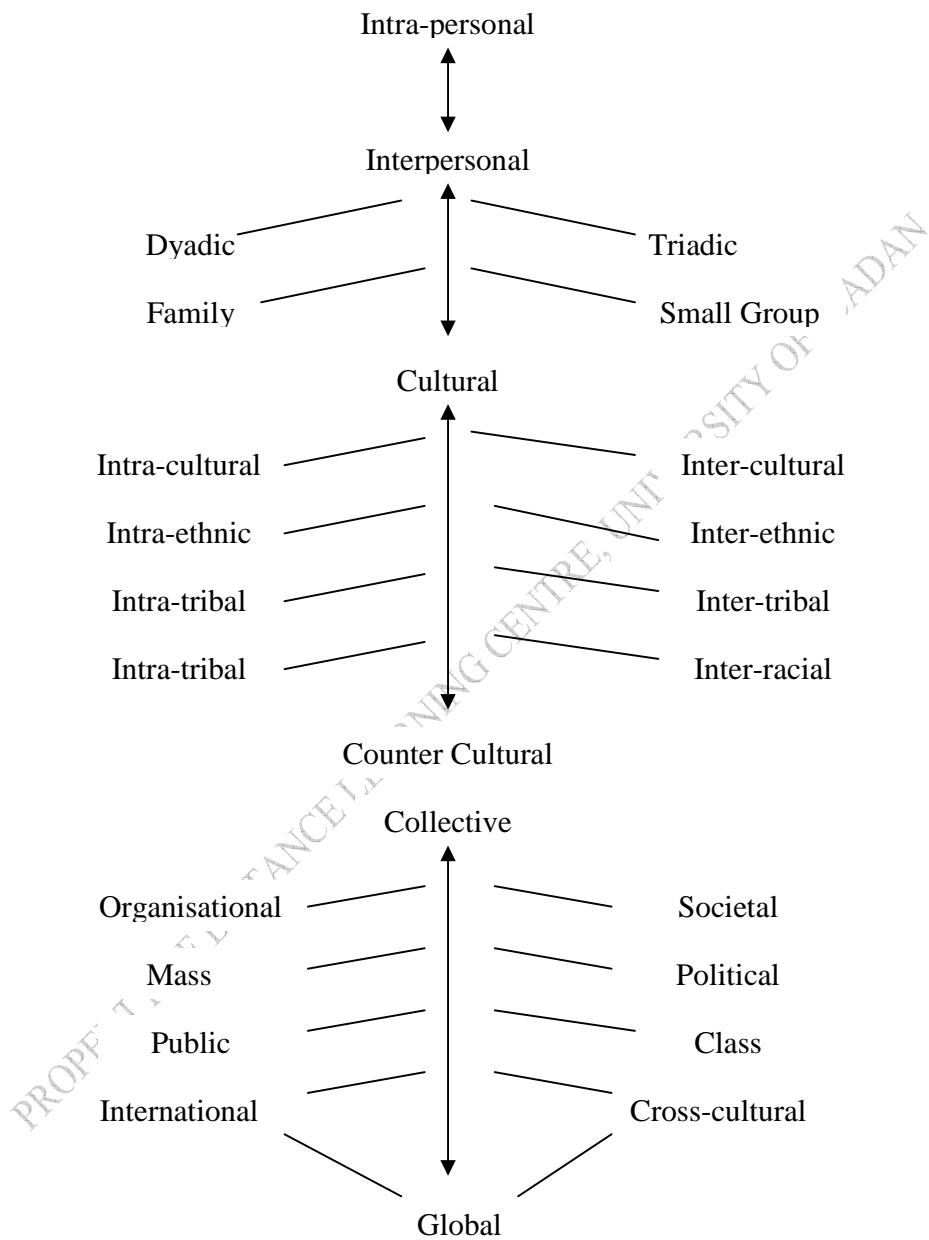
**Fig 1: Francis Balle’s “Social Communication Triad”**

However, Michael Prosser (1978: 46 to 61) cited in Burgoon and Ruffner (1978) offers an elaborate typology of human communication based on the objectives of the communication and the number of participants involved. These are arranged in hierarchical order as indicated below:

1. Intra-personal;
2. Interpersonal;
3. Cultural;
4. Collective; and
5. Global.

His typology is graphically illustrated thus:





**Fig 2:** Michael Prosser's "Hierarchical Comm. Sets" (1978: 46-61)

### **Definition**

Research has shown that communication is a slippery term to define. From the classical time to the modern, communication has been defined from diverse points of view.

Sociologists have defined communication from the points of view of social planning and interaction, as a social lubricant and mechanism through which human relations evolves, exists and develops. This definition emphasises how individuals tell others what they expect and how they discover what others expect of them. Psychologists tend to define communication based on the theories which relate to Stimulus-Response Paradigm on the one hand and the Cognitive-Personality Theory on the other hand, with particular emphasis on those aspects which stress the importance of certain personality variables for conceptual ability.

Anthropologists define communication from the viewpoint of culture as statements intricately tied to culture. At the semantic level, communication is defined from the analogy, which exists between language behaviours and other communication behaviours. In fact, this approach tends to see other behaviours in terms of language behaviour.

At the techno-cultural level, communication is defined from the interaction that exists between technology and the technological culture of modern communication. It is, therefore, defined in terms of the medium/channel through which it is transmitted. This perspective becomes important with man's development from the oral-aural stage to a combination of that stage with the linear-visual stage, a development which has turned the world into a global communication/information village. At the vocational level, communication is largely observed in terms of competence and skills involved. This places emphasis on the efficiency with which codes, signs and symbols of communication are manipulated to achieve desired meanings.

In this respect, we reiterate that there is no universally acceptable definition of communication; rather there exists a plethora of definitions which border on the profession or academic discipline of the one who defines. We shall, however, examine a few of these definitions and then present a working definition.

1. Gamble and Gamble (1996) defines communication as a deliberate or accidental transfer of meaning.
2. Trenholm and Jensen (1996: 4) define communication as:

- a. An “effort after meaning”, a creative act initiated by a person in which one seeks to discriminate and organise ones so as to orient herself in her environment and satisfy her changing needs.
  - b. The transmission of information, ideas, emotions, skills etc by the use of symbols.
  - c. A process by which a source transmits a message to a receiver through some channels.
  - d. The discriminatory response of an organism to a stimulus
3. Lustig and Koester (1999) say that communication is: a symbolic process in which people create shared meanings.
  4. Ruffner and Burgoon (1978) define communication as the transmission of intentional symbolic transactions, in which at least one of the partners transmits a message to another with the purpose of modifying the others behaviour.
  5. McShanne S.L and Von Glinow M.A (2000) define communication as the process by which information is transmitted and understood between two or more people.

*From the definitions examined, it becomes obvious that communication:*

- a. is a process of sending and receiving information;
- b. is the exchange of meaningful symbols;
- c. requires a medium/channel; and
- d. is transactional.

Taking all these into cognisance, we can evolve a working definition of communication as:

*The process of transmitting and acting upon messages/information, thoughts, ideas, attitudes, emotions and feelings through mentally agreed understandable/determined codes/symbols.*

### **Summary**

Though not consciously appreciated, communication is multi faceted and interdisciplinary in nature and an attempt to offer an all embracing definition must take into account certain assumptions basic to human process. However, we wish to reiterate that the purpose of this lecture is

to introduce the reader to a systematic and analytic understanding of the human communication. This will make the reader to become more scientific in his/her productions about how he/she communicates with others.

We would, therefore, begin the second chapter by examining the fundamental characteristics of communication.

### **Post-Test**

1. Give two definitions as cited in this lecture.
2. Attempt a definition (of your own) of communication.
3. State five reasons why communication is not easy to define as a concept.
  - a. What is human communication?
  - b. Why is it significant?

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## LECTURE TWO

# Characteristics of Human Communication

### Introduction

This lecture will discuss the peculiar features that make human communication distinguishable from other forms of communication. Certain misconceptions otherwise, regarded as the assumptions about communication will also be discussed. All these will present human communication as a complex human phenomenon.

### Objectives

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

1. explain the characteristics of communication;
2. explain the assumptions about communication and how these affect the definition of this phenomenon; and
3. identify and explain why the characteristics of communication make it distinct from other human phenomena.

### Pre-Test

1. In what ways would you say that communication is symbolic? Why?
2. Why is meaning important in communication?
3. What assumptions do you hold about the term communication?

### CONTENT

In Lecture One, you were introduced to the different viewpoints about communication. Thereafter, a working definition was evolved, however in this lecture, we shall endeavour to talk about the characteristics which make communication distinct from other human phenomena. These characteristics if properly examined and understood, will assist us in adequately evaluating various stimuli in terms of their communication

value, as well as in determining why some utterances prove to be more effective than others. These characteristics which at times are culturally determined, also help in removing any ambiguity which might make it difficult for interactants to properly receive the message intended or determine whether the message was ever intended. Our definitions assert that communication is symbolic, that, it is a process, and that it involves shared meanings. Let us examine the following characteristics more closely:

1. *Communication is a symbolic behaviour.* Symbols are central to the communication process, because they represent the shared meanings that are communicated. A symbol is a word, an action or an object that stands for or represents a unit of meaning. Meaning on the other hand, is a perception, thought, or feeling that a person experiences and might want to communicate to others. These meaningful experiences could include sensations from room temperature, thoughts about a teacher or a particular course and feelings of happiness or anger. These can become shared and understood only when they are interpreted as a *message*. A message refers to the *package* of symbols used to create shared meanings. For example, people's behaviours are often interpreted symbolically as an external representation of feelings, emotions and inner beings. Flags symbolise countries, while most of the world's religions have symbols that are associated with their beliefs.
2. *Communication is a shared code.* For communication to take place, participants must share a code used to construct the message. Speaking the same language is the commonest example of sharing a common communication code. Each culture also shares specific meanings for gestures and other facial expressions. This aspect of culture cuts across cultural boundaries and it is a powerful vehicle of communication. Because, the term culture refers to the shared beliefs, values and practices of a group of people, then individuals within the same cultural environment enjoy a shared code which also aids communication.
3. *Communication is a dynamic activity:* By this, we mean that all the elements in the communication process are in constant interaction with

each other. This follows from the fact that since all people are interconnected, whatever happens to one person determines in proof what happens to others. Nothing about communication is static. Human beings communicate as long as he/she is alive and every interaction, which he/she engages in, is part of the connected happenings.

4. *Communication is uniquely human:* Human beings communicate uniquely and powerfully in many ways different from those used by other animals. Although, there have been several attempts to teach higher animals to use human communication codes, results of these have been inconclusive. Mostly, everyone will agree that only people use language naturally and spontaneously, availing humans the flexibility and creativity in which other creatures are deficient.
5. *Communication is a collective activity:* This follows from the fact that human communication is circular. One cannot exist without the other as the relationship which exists between human society and human communication is circular. On the other hand, what holds a society together lies in the ability of its members to act as a coordinated whole. This could be impossible without communication. From another perspective, communication presupposes social cooperation, interpersonal communication, which cannot occur without two or more people being mutually engaged in creating meaning.
6. *Communication requires a medium:* Communication requires a medium to transmit the symbols. In a face-to-face interaction, the medium is the air. Other forms of communication also require some other media to transmit a piece of information in view of the advent of information superhighway.
7. *Communication is a regulator of action:* This follows from the fact that, communication allows us not only to create the world around us but to take possession of it as well. Through communication, one can persuade, soothe, entertain or bore one another. We can further use communication to control our actions, talking to others before taking risks or comforting ourselves when we are afraid.

8. *Communication is a transactional process:* Communication is transactional because two or more people are needed in the symbolic exchange. The two or more people exchange speakers' and listeners' roles. Simultaneously, the behaviour of one is dependent on and influenced by the behaviour of the other.

### **Assumptions about Communication**

Individuals hold certain assumptions about communication. These assumptions have influenced how individuals perceive the concept. These perceptions have tended to affect various individual approaches to communication. Against this background, Bourgoon and Ruffner (1978) posit six basic assumptions, which are discussed in this section.

1. All problems of this world are communication based. This assumption reveals that all problems in the world can be traced to human's inability or failure to communicate adequately and appropriately. It suggests that as long as individuals differ in behaviour, attitudes, beliefs and values, problems are bound to manifest. For example, as long as Israel could trace its heritage to the Holy Bible, there will always be conflicts in the Middle East. This is a problem of belief rather than that of communication.
2. All problems can be solved by more and better communication, because human problems are not basically tied to man's communication incompetence, in the same vein, all the problems cannot be solved by better and more effective/improved communication. Bourgoon and Ruffner (1978) assert that, "...more communication does not necessarily solve problem". According to them, "Educators must know that all of the problems between teacher and student cannot and will not be solved by just improving communication". The fact remains, therefore, that as long as human beings exhibit differences in every endeavour and behaviour, problems emanating as a result cannot be solved simply by more and better communication.
3. Communication is without cost interactants often assume that, it does not really cost anything to communicate. This assumption is not true because any attempt to communicate effectively costs something in terms of time, efforts and money. Consequently, organisations and corporate bodies must quantify such costs in terms of money, while



individuals must consider “how much time they are willing to invest on any given situation to improve their communication” (Burgoon and Ruffner 1978).

4. Communication breaks down: The popularly held notion/belief is that communication breaks down. It is better to perceive that rather than communication breaking down, it is the mechanisms, the facilitators of effective communication that do break down. Communication attempts should be regarded as being successful, or unsuccessful, effective or ineffective.
5. Communication is good or bad: Communication does not possess inherent good or bad qualities, rather it is a tool, an instrument that could be employed to achieve a good or a bad end. As human beings, we can employ communication to incite riots, and initiate mob actions. Similarly, we can also use it to serve humanity and to enrich or develop ourselves.
6. The study of communication is about producing more effective messages. It is not just aimed at producing more effective messages, rather it includes the skill of consuming what is produced, that is, listening. A somewhat eloquent speaker who hardly listens to others speak could be regarded as an ineffective communicator. Hence, a good/effective/successful communicator needs to develop her message production and consumption skills.

### **Summary**

Much of what human-kind thinks as real is actually the product of communication. This implies that there is no single reality in communication process. Instead, through communication we can create our own reality. People with different communication experiences will perceive the world differently. We have succeeded in bringing together the basic characteristics and assumptions people hold about communication. These have often coloured individual perceptions of this phenomenon.

In the next lecture, we shall examine the various aspects of human communication. These explain reasons individuals engage in this act.

### **Pre-Test**

1. Honestly and critically assess the assumptions you held about communication before reading this lecture. Have you been influenced by this lecture? In what ways?
2. Are you really convinced that communication is with some costs? To what extent?
3. In what ways have the characteristics of communication affected your perception?

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## LECTURE THREE

# Aspects of Human Communication

### Introduction

In this lecture, you will be introduced to the various aspects of human communication systems. These focus on what happens in the course of communication. It also reveals reasons which propel us to communicate with others.

### Objectives

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

1. identify the different aspects of and to communication.
2. discuss the varying aspects of communication.
3. determine which aspect of communication best suits the concept of human communication.

### Pre-Test

1. What is peculiar about the transactional nature of human communication?
2. Would you consider empathy as a significant factor in the affective aspect of communication? How?
3. The instrumental factor of communication is similar to manipulation. Apply this to a political campaign.

### CONTENT

#### Aspects of Communication

In the last lecture, we discussed the basic characteristics and assumptions about human communication. At this point, we shall discuss the various aspects of human communication. These are:

1. transactional;
2. affective;
3. personal;
4. instrumental, and
5. consumatory.

1. *The Transactional Aspect:* Communication should not be regarded as one-way, sender-receiver process, rather it should be seen as a two-way interactive, transactional enterprise. Therefore, in an interactive and transactional enterprise, there must be a relaying or sharing of meaning between the source and the receiver. This is referred to as *Isomorphism*. This relay could engender within the receiver, a response in the form of a feedback, a transactional potential of most communication process. However, any change in one of the elements can alter the overall communication process. Williams (1989) notes that the most effective personal conversations are transactional, as the individuals involved in the exchange participate equally. They also interchange roles.
2. *The Affective Aspect:* In this respect, communication is said to have occurred if it exerts an impact on someone else. Cronkite cited in Burgoon and Ruffner (1978) believes that communication has taken place, when only a human being responds to a given message or stimulus. This simply means that there is someone to receive the signals. For instance, a situation where a preacher preaches to empty pews is not communication. In the same vein, Burgoon and Ruffner (1978) express that much of the response to communication is affective and involves people's emotions. According to them, individuals often make subjective evaluations of other peoples communication and respond to such on the basis of how such communication affects them.
3. *The Personal Aspect:* Communication is said to be personal to those who use it. This is so because, language through which we communicate assume essentially different meanings as a result of differences in individual perception, experiences, culture, expectations, moods and motivations. Hence, because meaning is said to be within an individual, communication is assumed to be as personal as the

individual who uses it. Thus, it is impossible to detach *the self* from the overall communication process, because experiences, attitudes and emotions affect an individual's perception and interpretation of messages.

4. *The Instrumental Aspect:* Communication is said to have occurred when individuals are manipulated or influenced to achieve certain objectives. Researchers emphasise that communication serves as an instrument through which individuals can exert control over others. It is expressed that through diverse means of persuasion, certain individuals have attempted to change or modify the attitudes and or behaviours of others. Berlo cited in Burgoon and Ruffner (1978) posits that communication should be seen as being persuasive in nature. According to him, most political speeches, propaganda and rumours aim at persuading individuals to alter their behaviour towards an issue or an individual. However, there exists certain communication situations in which an overt intent to persuade is lacking, yet it is expedient to note that communication is a tool to gain compliance in certain communication contexts.
5. *The Consumatory Aspect:* Communication is said to exist as a means through which any communication activity engaged in has the goal of satisfying the communicator without any intent to affect others. This means that individuals might engage in talking/writing simply because they find it convenient, enjoyable and fashionable to do so.

#### **Summary**

In a nutshell, the purpose of any communication encounter is to ensure shared meaning, however the symbolic nature of communication may sometimes make this impossible to attain. Burgoon and Ruffner (1978) summarise that, "not only is language symbolic, each word carries varied connotations for different people, but language too is a process that is constantly changing". Hence, communication is dynamic in nature, always changing.

We shall discuss the communication chains in the next lecture.

#### **Post-Test**

What have you gained? Systematically analyse it.

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## LECTURE FOUR

# Communication Chain and Components of Human Communication

### Introduction

In this lecture, you will be introduced to the elements involved in the human communication process. It also discusses the various components of this human phenomenon. It proceeds from the consideration that human communication consists of a series of actions, reactions and interactions.

### Objectives

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

1. understand the elements and components in the communication process;
2. understand the sequence of action, reaction and interaction in the communication process; and
3. understand the message, the medium, the channel, the receiver, the feedback and the noise.

### Pre-Test

1. Define the following terms:
  - (a) Action
  - (b) Interaction
  - (c) Reaction
2. Briefly explain:
  - (a) Stimulus
  - (b) Noise
  - (c) Source

- (d) Medium
- (e) Channel

3. What are the primary components in the communication network?

### CONTENT

Communication as a process involves a sequence of action, reaction and interaction. An *action* is always propelled by the need in the *source/initiator* of the message to share a thought, a feeling, an attitude and so on, while an *interaction* is the exchange of the message with role interchange. *Reaction* on the other hand, is the response feed back from the receivers to the source or vice-versal. All these could manifest as verbal or non-verbal, depending on a number of variables, which include the situational context and purpose of communication. Within the communication process, the source, the message, and the receiver are regarded as the primary components essential to the communication network. Along with these three are; stimulus, medium, channel, feedback and noise.

- (i) *Stimulus*: This is regarded as the motivation or the need for the initiation of the communication process. It could also be regarded as the trigger stage at which an idea is stirred-up within the sender.
- (ii) *Source-sender of the Message*: The source is the initiator, the sender, the encoder of the message. Communication naturally begins with the sender. He/she conceives an idea, or a thought, which he then encodes in a symbol/code/language understandable to both the sender and the receiver.
- (iii) *Message*: The message is the content of the communicative act. It is the core of any communication process. Message could be the words you use to express thoughts and feelings, the sounds you make, the way you sit and gesture, your facial expression and even your touch or your smell could communicate information. It could also be words used to describe the collection of symbols. Often, messages are conveyed by sounds in a spoken conversation, by images in photographs, printed materials, or on television screen, and the tone of human voice.



- (iv) *Medium*: This is the form in which the message is transmitted. It could be oral, written and or non-verbal. In the same vein, Williams (1989) observes that medium is the physical basis for the exchange of message, which could be for speech, the sound patterns in the molecular vibration of air, while in vision, it is the light waves reflected from the surface or coming directly from a light source. In writing, the medium is the physical basis for conveying a pattern of symbol.
- (v) *Channel*: Channel is anything which helps in carrying/amplifying the message. The channel helps not only in transmitting information but in linking the sender with the receiver. The message according to Weirich and Koontz (1993) may be spoken or written, transmitted through a telephone, a television, a computer, a telegram, a memorandum, a letter, a drawing, a sculpture, etc.
- (vi) *Receiver*: The receiver is the person for whom the message is intended, or the target of the communication. Within any communication act, the receiver must demonstrate the willingness to receive the message, so that he could convert the codes into thoughts. However, effective communication could be said to have taken place, when both the sender and the receiver attach same meaning to symbols that make up the message.
- (vii) *Feedback*: This is the response to a given message. It tells us how we react to messages that come across our ways. It could be a smile, a frown, a chuckle, a sarcastic remark, a muttered thought or simply, silence. These can cause a change, a modification, a continuation or an end of a transaction. Feedback also helps in indicating the willingness to continue with the communication encounter between the source and the receiver. An effectively encoded, transmitted, decoded and understood message can only be determined, confirmed by feedback, an indicator which reveals, whether individual or organisational change has taken place as a result of communication (Weihrich and Koontz, 1993).
- (viii) *Noise*: Noise is anything that interferes, whether in the message sent, the transmission, or at the point of reception, which distorts our

ability to send or receive messages. Noise manifests at the physical, linguistic and psychological levels. Indeed, noise according to Weihrich and Koontz (1993: 542) could result out of:

- (a) an uncondusive environmental;
- (b) the use of ambiguous symbols;
- (c) the interruption in the channel such as may be experienced in a poor telephone connection;
- (d) inaccurate reception caused by inattention;
- (e) faulty and wrong meaning attached to words and other symbols;
- (f) prejudices;
- (g) the fear of possible consequences of changes; and
- (h) onward gestures and odd postures.

### **Summary**

Communication as we have examined, is a deliberate or an accidental transfer of meaning. Human communication occurs at either interpersonal level, small group level and in public fora. The essential elements of communication are sender, message, stimulus, medium, channel, noise and feedback. We shall discuss the functions of communication in the next lecture.

### **Post-Test**

Fill in the gaps

1. Noise is anything that..... with the communication process.
2. Channel is anything that ..... the message.
3. .... is the response to a given message.
4. Who is a receiver?
5. Distinguish between the medium and the channel.

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## LECTURE FIVE

# Functions of Human Communication

### Introduction

In this lecture, you will be introduced to the functions which communication plays in the interaction between men. It endeavours to classify these functions into control, affiliation and task achievements. These classes are clear departure points from the traditional functions of information, education, entertainment and persuasions which communication performs. Other functions are also highlighted.

### Objectives

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

1. discuss the functions of communication;
2. discuss the conventional functions of communication; and
3. discuss what communication does for you.

### Pre-Test

1. Itemise the conventional functions of communication.
2. How would the functions be related to the five aspects of communication?

#### True or False

3. Communication can help us to discover ourselves.
4. Communication helps us to enjoy meaningful relationships.
5. Communication influences as well as persuades us.

### CONTENT

The primary functions of communication are expressed by the structure and presentation of a message. These vary meaningfully at several levels. According to O'Hair *et al.* (1995), the type of statement carries

information about how to understand the context of the micro level while at the macro level, the arrangement of the environment might be in the form of those who use it, and about control distribution. For example, the quantity of space in a room to specific people conveys information about status as well as structures who can easily talk to who. The concept of pattern also hinges on how messages are related to motivation, satisfaction and goal achievement.

An address may function as a means through which information is released to control, create an affiliation, achieve certain goals or to perform certain tasks.

Conventionally, communication is used to inform, to entertain, to instruct and persuade in a given communication encounter. However we shall examine the functions of communication from the perspective of *control*, *affiliation*, *goal achievement* and *task orientation*.

- (a) *Control*: By control, we mean the ability to exert influence on other person(s) and the manner in which such relationship is conducted. In this instance, control is synonymous with dominance, whereas it should be regarded as a necessary part in every relationship.

Consequently, it should be regarded as a defining characteristic in every relationship. O'Hair *et al* (1995) posit that the exact distribution of control in interpersonal relationship is communicatively worked out by the way people talk to each other, how they structure their conversation, as well as the content of each conversation. This explains that at every instance of communication, control is an inexcusable factor, if the goal of communication is to be achieved.

- (b) *Affiliation*: This is the function of communication, which is concerned with how feelings for one another range from *love* (high positive affiliation) to *hatred* (high negative affiliation) are communicated. This explains that within any relationship, the individuals involved anticipate a certain degree of affiliation towards one another. However, the expression of such affiliation could be neglected, since instance could arise when feelings are hidden as a deliberate strategic or political weapon. For example, one might resist the temptation of revealing ones feelings towards a dating partner, until one is sure the partner is really interested in one.

However, it should be noted as stated earlier that affiliation ranges from highly positive (love) to highly negative (hatred). Similarly, affiliation should not be regarded as being synonymous with intimacy, a concept which O'Hair *et al* (1995) define as knowledge about another.

#### *Goal Achievements/Task Orientation*

This is concerned with the focusing of attention on the task at hand in order to achieve a goal. This means that communication functions at this level, on getting the job done. It should be realised however, that communication whether through speaking, listening, reading or writing is purposive since it is, as it were, mostly engaged in to satisfy certain human needs.

Other functions of communication include:

1. creating understanding and insight;
2. building of meaningful relationships; and
3. influencing and persuading others.

#### **Summary**

The functions of communication from the conventional to non-conventional have been examined. It reveals that communication helps us to discover ourselves, enjoy meaningful relationships and also influences, as well as persuades our actions.

#### **Post-Test**

1. Describe a communication process in which you were (a) confirmed (b) rejected (c) disconfirmed by another person. How did you respond in each case?
2. Describe another communication process in which you (a) confirmed (b) rejected (c) disconfirmed another person. How did the other person respond in each situation?

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## LECTURE SIX

# Types of Human Communication

### Introduction

This lecture discusses the types of human communication system. There are two types basically. From the verbal to the non-verbal, this lecture presents an elucidation of what is specific about each.

### Objectives

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

1. discuss the types of communication; and
2. determine which type suits your communication needs/situation.

### Pre-Test

Fill in the gaps.

1. Non-verbal can be divided into ..... and .....
2. Verbal communication consists of ..... and .....
3. Communication without the use of words is .....
4. Communication can be divided into ..... and .....
5. Non-verbal communication falls into seven main categories, list them.

### CONTENT

Communication can be considered as either a one-way or two-way process. A two-way communication occurs when two or more parties

exchange information, share meaning, as well as listen to each other's reactions. An interpersonal/dyadic communication or a telephone conversation is an example of two-way communication. On the other hand, a one-way communication occurs when an individual disseminates information to others without a direct response or reaction to the sender (source). This occurs when orders are issued or when explanations on a task are given. Such form of communication can also include listening to a sermon, a broadcast, or reading a book. In the one-way communication, explanations and clarifications cannot be asked for and responded to immediately. Although, one-way communication could be effective for conveying large amount of information, the inability for the receiver to clarify information, often results in misunderstandings or ambiguity.

There are two broad types of human communication. These are:

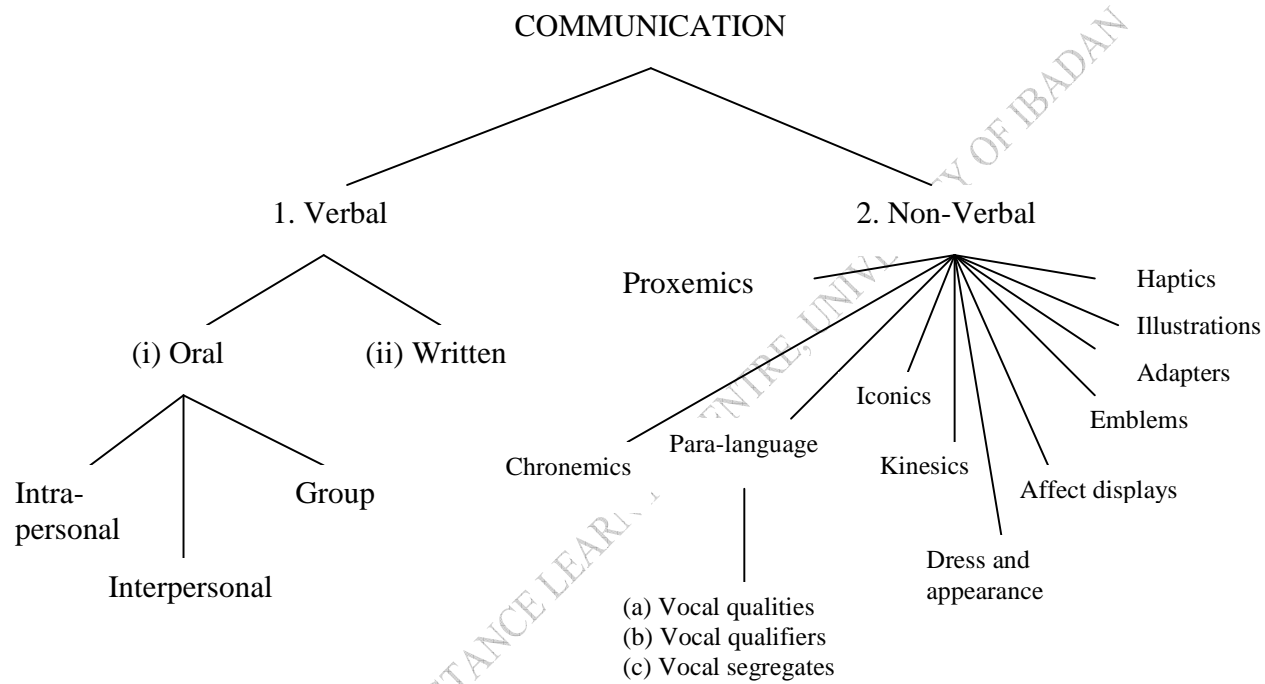
1. Verbal and Non-verbal Communication. This could be represented thus: (see fig. 3 on page 26)

1. **Verbal Communication**

Consists strictly of the use of words to share ideas, or the use of speech organs to produce various sounds or through graphical symbolic representation for example, writing. It also includes any oral (intra-personal, interpersonal and group) or written method of transmitting meaning through words.

2. **Oral Communication**

This is the oral interchange of information through sounds produced by the speech organs (for example, the mouth and the vocal cords). One significant feature of oral communication is the face-to-face interaction, which enables the transmission of emotions and persuading the receiver. Moreover, in face-to-face settings, the sender receives immediate feedback from the receiver and as well as adjusts the tone of the message accordingly. Oral communication exists at three levels of intra-personal, interpersonal and group.



**Fig 3:** Author's idea of a diagrammatic representation of verbal and non-verbal communication



(a) *Intra-personal*. When we are alone, our communication is often different from our communication with others. First, it is silent and takes place inside our heads. This form of communication is also said to be less logical, more disjointed and repetitive than other forms of communication. It follows that whenever, one day-dreams, fantasising, considering a difficult personal problem, or trying to make sense of the world around you and soliloquising, you are engaged in intra-personal communication as you assume both the role of the sender and the receiver of your own message.

(b) *Inter-personal Communication*. This is communication between two people in a face-to-face interaction. It is also known as dyadic communication. Usually, this form of communication is generally spontaneous and mostly informal, with the participants receiving feedback from each other maximally.

Roles within this context are relatively flexible, while partners alternate as either senders and or receivers in different situations. Trenholm (1995) expresses that whenever an individual tell a joke to a friend, ask a question, succumb to a sales pitch, share idea with a friend or express love to a romantic lover, you are engaged in inter-personal communication.

(c) *Group*. This describes a process whereby a group of people communicate with one another in a face-to-face encounter. A group consists of three or more persons who come together by accident or by design. Similarly, “a group is regarded as a collection of individuals who, as a result of interacting with another over time, become inter-dependent, developing shared patterns of behaviour and a collective identity.” (Trenholm, 1995:28).

In essence, group communication involves the interchange of ideas or messages, information amongst members with the aim of achieving a goal. It is a sociological fact that groups largely affect individuals throughout life. As individuals, we were born into family groups, we also play and learn in friendship groups as well as spend much of adult life in work groups.

### 3. Written Communication

This involves the use of letters and symbols to convey the spoken message. According to James *et al* (1990), it is the translation of oral messages into alphabetic symbols, which are often structured together to convey meanings through ideas and messages between the participants in a communication encounter. Written communication is expressible through personal, business letters, queries, reports, circulars and memos, essays, compositions and all forms of creative writing, questionnaires and forms designed for collecting information and telegrams, telex, E-mail etc. (James *et al* 1990)

#### Summary

Communication facilitates knowledge sharing, aids decision-making, coordinates work activities and fulfils the need for affiliation. In this lecture, you have been introduced to the types of communication with focus on the verbal type. This lecture provides a framework towards understanding the verbal types of communication which includes both the oral and the written.

In the next lecture, we shall discuss the non-verbal communication, a silent language that speaks.

#### Post-Test

1. Mention five channels of written communication.
2. How would you categorise the E-mail?
3. Briefly describe:
  - (a) Vocal qualities.
  - (b) Vocal qualifiers.
  - (c) Vocal segregates.
4. Define the following terms:
  - (a) Body language.
  - (b) Intra personal.
5. Have you benefited in this lecture? How?

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## LECTURE SEVEN

# Non-verbal Communication

### Introduction

This lecture discusses the various elements described as Non-verbal Communication Form. It describes the manifestation of each of these elements as being idiomatic and cultural in nature.

### Objectives

At the end of this lecture, you will be expected to:

1. discuss the constituents of non-verbal communication.
2. discuss that non-verbal communication's importance in emotional labour.
3. discuss how non-verbal communication differs from verbal communication.

### Pre-Test

Answer Yes or No

1. Non-verbal communication is culture bound.
2. Non-verbal communication is automatic and unconscious.
3. Non-verbal communication requires little formal training.
4. Non-verbal communication is less rule bound.
5. Non-verbal communication is more ambiguous and more susceptible to misinterpretation.

### CONTENT

Non-verbal communication includes facial gestures, voice, intonation, physical distance, silence and format of documents. Non-verbal communication could also be described as communication without the use

of words. It is necessary where physical distance or noise prevents effective verbal exchanges and the need for face-to-face feedback precludes verbal communication. However, even in close face-to-face interaction, most information is communicated non-verbally. Studies have revealed that non-verbal codes are often employed either to complement/accompany or convey meaning as well as assist in reinforcing verbal codes.

Non-verbal communication according to McShanne and Von Glinow (2000) is also important in emotional labour, which refers to the effort, planning and control needed to express organisationally desired emotions.

According to them, employees make extensive use of non-verbal communication to transmit prescribed feelings to customers, co-workers and others. Non-verbal communication differs from verbal communication in three ways: First, non-verbal communication is automatic and unconscious. Second, it is less rule govern/bound. Third, it is more ambiguous and more susceptible to misinterpretation. The following are forms of non-verbal communication:

1. *Para-language*: This refers to *how* something is said. Williams (1989) describes it as meaningful variant in speech, corresponding to patterns of loudness, pitch, rate and hesitations. Hence, it means that all extra language features possess the capability of being identified as paralanguage. It could also be interpreted as emotionality, which bothers on emphasis, nonchalance, uncertainty or fear. Trager cited in O'Hair *et al* (1995) classifies paralinguistic activities into several categories.

These are;

- (i) *Voice Qualifiers*: These include:

- (a) pitch range, which is the lowness or highness of the voice;
- (b) volume which has to do with the loudness, softness of the voice; and
- (c) rate or speed with which we speak.

- (ii) *Vocal Qualifiers*: These include pitch range, degree of hoarseness in a voice, sharp or smooth transitions in pitch, articulation control, rhythm control, resonance, tempo and vocalisation such as laughing, crying, giggling, moaning, sighing and yawning. These reveal the speakers emotional state.

- (iii) *Vocal Segregates*: These are vocalisations used in place of words to express connotative meanings. Segregates include pauses or filler sounds such as “Er - huh – uh –” “Shhh” and “aah”. “you know”, “Right, Right”. “Ok! Ok!”
2. **Kinesics**: This typically includes facial expression (particularly eyebrows, forehead, eyes and mouth), posture and gestures, which convey meaning. It examines most of the normal gestures human beings are noted to exhibit in diverse emotional states. Kinesics consists of hand movements (emblems), a surprised state, dropping shoulders, a knowing smile and a tilting of the head. Others include:
- (i) *Emblems*: Movements and gestures, which have, direct verbal translation known to specific group or culture;
  - (ii) *Illustrators*: Intentional verbal accompaniments used to illustrate what is being said;
  - (iii) *Regulators*: Movements or gestures used to regulate conversation. For example shifting of the eyebrows or a frown to indicate surprise or a disagreement;
  - (iv) *Adapters*: Movement or gestures that satisfy some physical or emotional need of individuals that are involved in the communication process, for example, biting of fingernails, indicating nervousness or constant readjustment of the chair after having sat for a long period of time. Used in response to a heightened emotional state;
  - (v) *Affect displays*: Unintentional movements or expressions that convey a mood or emotional state, for example, sad face;
  - (vi) *Posture*: Way in which an individual sits, stands or walks. Variation is according to sender.
3. **Haptics**: This refers to touching behaviours. Such behavioural patterns include handshake, hand holding, pat on the back and arm around an individual’s shoulder. Meanings associated with each of these are culturally determined. For example, two men walking arm-in-arm could be regarded as “cousins” in the West, while such a sight is a common feature of friendship in Arab environments.

Touch also affects status. The person who initiates touch is usually the one with higher status. It also functions importantly in sexual

communication. It is assumed that if people hold hands, they have a romantic interest in one another. Touch conveys emphasis and affective greetings across cultures. Although, individuals exhibit different perception of touch, it is nevertheless a primary means of communication and a basic need.

Touch communicates. It can make a difference. Helsin cited in O'Hair *et al* (1995) classified the areas of touch on the basis of relationship between individuals involved in the interaction. The classification includes:

- (a) the functional – professional – used to perform a task;
- (b) the polite – used on a social role of a handshake or a kiss;
- (c) the friendship – warmth – indicating liking and affection between intimate people;
- (d) the love – intimacy – used by lovers and spouses to communicate love and closeness. Such includes kissing, embracing and caressing; and
- (e) the sexual – arousal – an intimate form of touch. It also plays an important role in very intimate relationship.

4. **Proxemics:** This is the use of space in all forms to communicate. Space speaks. It is the distance between individuals in any communication encounter. Certain people all over the world maintain certain level of distance when communicating, while others maintain a level of closeness in interaction. For example, Americans are noted to maintain 62.5cm when conversing between themselves, while Arabs enjoy greater closeness while communicating. Hall cited in O'Hair *et al* (1995) devised a system of identification for special zones. This classification is based on the type of interpersonal relationship, which exists between the individuals. These are:

- (i) *Personal Space:* This exists in a casual, friendly interaction. Hall stipulates that between 45cm to 10cm is ideal in such situations.
- (ii) *Public Space:* 30cm to limit of sight. This is the space, which exists between individuals within the limit of visibility and hearing. Feature in public lectures and other performances.
- (iii) *Social Space:* 10cm – 30cm. This exists in an interpersonal, business communication situation.

(iv) *Intimate Space*: Ranges from the points of touch to 45cm from the other person. At this distance, physical contact is natural. Often a feature with people who are affectionately close or people forced together in crowded situations.

5. **Chronemics**: This is the use of time to communicate. In certain cultures, punctuality is regarded as a virtue which communicates. Williams (1989:55) posits that: “there are differences across cultures in considering the amount of time you may spend in a conversation or transaction or the like.” Chronemics also refers to the individual’s perception of time, a conception which is classifiable into psychological, biological and cultural time.

(i) *Psychological Time*: This relates to the way individuals perceive or feel about time. This will determine the importance an individual ascribes to the communicative interaction.

(ii) *Biological Time*: Determined by biological cycles, it determines the period an individual is most active. It also determines an individual’s communicative competence at various points in time.

(iii) *Cultural Time*: This is how various cultures make use of time.

We are expected to structure time in such a way that our tasks and activities are accomplished efficiently.

6. **Dress and Appearance**: Certain changeable features such as dress, hairstyle, make-up and the like often constitute non-verbal codes. These features which are culture-gender-age and status bound, speak volumes about individuals. Similarly, they determine the extent of respect that will be accorded such individuals.

7. **Iconics**: These are the symbolism found in objects or designs that are also regarded as communication. Icons represented by symbols illustrate a meaning. Largely, icons consist of emblems and other art works. For example, a photograph, a graphic, a drawing and painting can portray their referents as well as carry varied meanings. For example, the Nigerian flag symbolises to Nigerians certain things, to Christians, the *Cross* carries a symbolic signification, while the Islamic *Crescent* is also symbolic of the Islamic faith. Generally,



Icons are symbols that attempt to portray their referents (Williams 1989).

8. **Colour:** Colour has been observed to have more than a passing effect on man. Colours exert both emotional and physiological effects on us. For example, the colour red has been observed by Max Luscher, which when looked at for a long time affects the pressure of the blood, respiration rate, and increases heart beat. Colour also helps to persuade people either to own up to a crime or to make a purchase. Also, colour preferences reflect personality. Faber Birren cited in Gamble and Gamble (1996) suggests that somebody who likes red is likely to be outwardly directed, active, impatient and optimistic. Let us examine the following colour chart for more understanding.

**Table 1**

COLOUR FORWARD	COLOUR PRUDENT	COLOUR LOYALS
This consumer likes to be the first to try a “menu” colour and is willing to spend more for a product in a fashionable colour.	This consumer will buy a new colour only after seeing friends try it, and often puts quality ahead of colour when choosing products.	This consumer replaces a product with another of the same colour and prefers safe colours like blue or grey to fashionable colours.
Colour forward people are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Women under 30 or over 50 or men under 30.</li> <li>▪ City dwellers.</li> <li>▪ Impulse buyers.</li> <li>▪ Making less than \$35,000 a year.</li> <li>▪ Buyers of contemporary home furnishings.</li> </ul>	Colour prudent people are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Men or women between 30 and 50.</li> <li>▪ Sub-urban.</li> <li>▪ Careful shoppers.</li> <li>▪ Making more than \$50,000 a year.</li> <li>▪ Buyers of contemporary or traditional home furnishings.</li> </ul>	Colour loyal people are often: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Men over 60.</li> <li>▪ Sub-urban or rural</li> <li>▪ People who dislike shopping.</li> <li>▪ Anywhere on the income spectrum.</li> <li>▪ Buyer of casual country or traditional home furnishings.</li> </ul>

Source: *Colour Personalities*: Deborah L. Jacobs: “The Titans of Tint Make their Picks” *New York Times*, Play 29, 1994. In Gamble & Gamble 1996.

**Summary**

In this lecture, we have examined the non-verbal communication. We have also discussed their components and features. We shall in the next lecture, examine the significance of language in human communication.

**Post-Test**

1. Analyse and observe your effectiveness as a non-verbal communicator, in what ways have you impeded verbal meaning?
2. How significant are colour schemes to you? Which colour is your preference? Why?
3. Over 65 per cent of the social meaning of the messages we send to others is communicated non-verbally. (Yes or No)?
4. Perceiving and analysing non-verbal cues can help us understand what is really happening during a conversation. (Yes or No)?

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## LECTURE EIGHT

# Language in Human Communication

### Introduction

This lecture focuses on the issue of language in human communication. It establishes language as a crucial factor in the process of human communication. Proceeding from defining what language is, this lecture offers the student what he/she needs to know about language in communication.

### Objectives

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

1. understand what language is;
2. understand the functions of language in communication; and
3. discuss how to use language to achieve desired objectives.

### Pre-Test

1. Language is made up of:
  - (a)
  - (b)
  - (c)
  - (d)
2. List the most important functions of language in communication.
3. What are modal verbs? How do they affect communication?
4. What are the barriers to language?

## CONTENT

### What is Language?

Language according to Gamble and Gamble (1996) is a unified system of symbol that permits a sharing of meaning. Within this definition, a symbol represents *WORDS*, which represent things. The process of communication involves the use of words through which we create meanings and expectations. However, as important as words are in representing and describing objects and ideas, the meaning of a verbal message is not stamped on the face of the words we use. Meanings lie in individuals and not in words. This McShane and Von Glinow (2002) affirm when they said that words and gestures lack or carry no inherent meaning in them. According to them, meaning lies in the users of the words. Hence, the sender must endeavour that the receiver understands these symbols and signs. Language according to Trenholm (1995:82) “is a rule-governed system of symbols that allow the users to generate meaning and in the process, to define reality.”

Within the context of this definition, language exhibits certain important characteristics, it is made up of symbols, rule governed, productive, and affects individuals' view of the world. Consequently, language is said to be made up of:

- (a) Sounds;
- (b) (Grammar) structure;
- (c) Meaning (semantics); and
- (d) Social context (pragmatics).

However, lack of mutual understanding is a common reason why messages are distorted and often misunderstood. These reasons include: jargon and ambiguity

- (i) *Jargon*: This is a technical language of a particular occupational group or recognised words with specialised meaning in specific organisations and or social groups.

Jargon facilitates communication if both the sender and receiver share the same frame of reference (*Isomorphism*), while it becomes a barrier when the receiver does not understand this specified language.

- (ii) *Ambiguity*: This is the state of being imprecise in meaning, or uncertain with meaning or capable of more than one interpretation.

Ambiguity is a barrier in communication because the sender and the receiver interpret the same word or phrases differently.

However, ambiguous word/language is deliberately used in work settings to avoid conveying emotions as well as minimise conflict. Nevertheless, ambiguous language may constitute a barrier where events and objects are not all defined.

However, to have a good understanding of what language is, we need to note that, language means:

(a) Word barrier

(b) Meaning: (i) Denotation and Connotation.

(ii) Meaning and Time.

(iii) Meaning and Place.

(iv) Meaning and Culture.

(v) Meaning and Gender.

(vi) Meaning and Power.

(vii) Meaning and Experience.

How then do you make language work for you?

(i) A call for commonsense.

(ii) A call for clarity.

### **Summary**

However, within the context of this lecture, we have set the tone for the next chapter. We have discussed what language is and what it entails. We have also examined barriers to language in communication as well as how you can make language to work for you.

The next lecture focuses on the functions of language in communication.

### **Post-Test**

1. What is language?
2. What are the functions of language in communication?
3. How do you use language to achieve desired objectives?

## LECTURE NINE

# Functions of Language

### Introduction

This lecture centres on itemising for discussion the functions which language performs when subjected to interaction between people. From language as a means to reveal the self, a means to express feelings and values, to the conveying of meaningful messages, this lecture presents the totality of language in human nature.

### Objective

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to discuss the functions of language in communication.

### Pre-Test

1. What are the major functions of language in communication?
2. What are the other functions that language performs in human communication?

## CONTENT

### Functions of Language

The three most important function of language in communication are to:

1. reveal the self;
2. express feelings and values; and
3. convey meaningful messages.

Other functions include:

- (i) Language is often used to conquer the silent and unknown. This means that language helps us to escape from silence, as well as break silence, when we feel frightened and oppressive. Also, we conquer the unknown by labelling it that is, ascribing names to things hitherto not known;
- (ii) Language permits us to make and avoid contact;
- (iii) Language enables us to assert individual and social identity;
- (iv) Language is used to give or seek information, to educate, to entertain, to persuade or manipulate others;
- (v) Language allows us to control and to be controlled by the world; and
- (vi) Language can be used to monitor the process of communication.

However within the context of this lecture, we shall focus on the use of language to reveal the self, express feelings, and convey meaningful messages as already highlighted in an earlier part of this lecture.

### 1. Using Language to Reveal Self

The way in which individuals make use of language is entrenched in the sub-conscious of man, since the core of human language reflects the innermost structure of *the self* and *the self's* perception of the world. Because the real self consists of many different *selves*, that is, of which manifests at various times and in various ways, certain aspects of language usage undergo changes through speech, acts and settings. These changes are possible because each of the *self's* has its own voice and vocabulary. For example, the use of the "is" and modal verbs, qualifiers, active and passive verbs clearly illustrate the fact that language is used to reveal the self.

#### (i) *The Use of "is" and Modal Verbs*

The verb "is" and other forms of the verb appear to be the most commonly used. The way they are used could, however, reveal a good deal about an individual's aggressiveness, dogmatism and perception of the world. The verb "*is*" is used in the context of:

- (a) An auxiliary – He is sleeping.
- (b) A verb of existence – He is in the room.
- (c) A verb of identity – He is a lecturer.
- (d) A verb of predication/attribution – He is a glutton.

- (ii) *Modal Verbs*: These are employed to indicate various degree of force or determination.

Let us examine the differences in perceptible force of the modal verbs. For example:

- (a) Could: implies tentativeness.
- (b) Can: capacity to do something but not instructed to do it.
- (c) Might: unsure prediction.
- (d) May: indicates permission but no advice.
- (e) Should: admonishes or offers advice.
- (f) Will: makes a strong prediction.
- (g) Shall: gives an order.

The use of each of these modal verbs reveals the *self in us*.

- (iii) *Qualifiers*

The degree of qualifiers one employs in one's language also reveals something significant about one's self and the materials presented. For example, a qualifier may reveal (a) the limits one places on the strength of a claim or the worth of an idea; for example, "that is probably true" or "more often" and (b) on the degree of one's self assurance and truth; for example, "This is probably true".

- (iv) *Active and Passive Verbs (voice)*

The self is also revealed through the use of active and passive verbs. Active construction emphasises:

- (a) The agent - The tree, He, I.
- (b) The dynamic action of interaction for example, He hit the ball, the tree shades the park.

Active verbs are likely to dominate one's messages; when we are urging listeners to do something, when we wish to visualise conflict, action an effect, or when we want to convince the audience about the change-seeking posture as a speaker.

The passive construction emphasises the object and stylistic patterns of relationship. Passive verbs tend to dominate our message when we are advising the listeners to think about an idea, an object or to contemplate a concept. Our use of either the active or the passive verb helps to reveal to the audience more about ourselves, our view of oneself and of the world.



## 2. Using Language to Communicate Meaning

Language is used to assist the audience to understand the sense of meaning of a particular message. This concerns language selection, because appropriate selection of words is said to increase listeners' comprehension and intention capabilities.

These have been of concern to historical theorists and practitioners, while the virtues of appropriate language selection is reflected in accuracy, simplicity, reiteration and coherence.

- (i) *Accuracy*: Precise meaning can be expressed only if words are carefully chosen. To ensure accuracy of meanings, precise words should be selected, definitions and specific details should also be given where and when necessary.
- (ii) *Simplicity*: Your expression must be exact, clear and simple. To ensure simplicity, use short specific words with meanings that are specifically obvious.
- (iii) *Reiteration*: This is the intentional repetition either in form of rephrasing of ideas or concept in more than one set of words or sentences, or re-examination of ideas or concepts from more than one point of view. If carefully handled, reiteration may be employed to clarify ideas as well as help listeners to remember ideas expressed more readily.
- (iv) *Coherence*: Relationships between ideas should be made clear by signposts in form of carefully worded phrases and sentences inserted at appropriate points. Coherence in speech and of ideas can be ensured by using connectives and by presenting ideas logically.

## 3. Using Language to Communicate Feelings and Values

A speaker's linguistic choice serves to provide the audience with ones which reveal his/her feelings, attitudes and values. For example, a certain idea can be phrased in a variety of ways. Such might reflect certain derogatory meanings which may convey a certain valuation or a sense of the perspective through which the speaker views an idea. These are often reflected through the use of imagery, intensity metaphors and parapraxes (these are linguistic errors or slips of the tongue, which are known to be caused by inner conflicts).

**Summary**

In a nutshell, language is an all-pervasive concern of the affective communicator. Button cited in Gronback *et al* (1978) observes that “the style is the man himself”, hence, an individual’s language style reveals much about such individual’s (his/her) concern for accurate/coherent meaning, feelings about the aspirations towards the message. It behoves the message originator to think through linguistic choices carefully since language could become one of the potent linguistic forms of expression and communication.

**Post-Test**

1. What functions do you subject language into?

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## LECTURE TEN

# Writing in Human Communication

### Introduction

This lecture focuses on writing in human communication. This is discussed as a feature of communication within the context of this lecture. It underscores the importance of writing above all other skills – Listening, Reading and Speaking in human communication system.

### Objectives

At the end of this lecture, the students should be able to:

1. discuss the process of writing;
2. discuss the stages in writing; and
3. adopt each of the stages when writing.

### Pre-Test

1. Write a lucid essay on the topic: My Childhood Days. Itemise the stages you adopt in writing.
2. Examine the following carefully:
  - (a) Pre-writing stage.
  - (b) The writing stage.
  - (c) The post-writing stage.
3. Why is writing a means of communication?

### CONTENT

Of all the four language art skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, the latter is the most important of them all. This is so because, it is not only expressive in nature, it also reveals who the writer is.

The writing process involves three stages: pre-writing (stage I); writing (stage II) and post-writing (stage III). However, there are situations when these stages overlap. However, it will be useful for you to understand and master the overall process in each of the three stages. The concept of writing is tied to the essential ingredient of symbols.

As you will recall, symbols are words, objectives and actions that stand for or represent a unit of meaning. The relationship between symbols and what they stand for is often arbitrary, particularly for verbal symbols. Equally, another central ingredient of writing is the system of rules that governs the composition and ordering of the symbols. Everyone has had to learn the set rules of a language, how to spell, correct grammar and vocabulary as well as to gain enough mastery of the language to tell jokes, to poke fun and to be sarcastic.

### **The Systems of Rules in Writing**

The system of rules in writing derives from the rule systems in verbal codes. These parts or components of language are called phonology, morphology, semantic, syntax and pragmatics.

Of all these five, morphology, semantic, syntax and pragmatics are very relevant in writing. For good understanding, we shall examine each of these items critically.

1. *Morphology*: This is the combination of phonemes to form morphemes. Phonemes are the basic sound units of a language, for example, (k), (t), (a). These are combined by certain rules to form words. Morphemes on the other hand, are smallest units of meaning in a language. These units are combined to form words for example, comforted = comfort + ed. Uncomfortable = Un + comfort + able.
2. *Semantics*: As noted above, morphemes – either singly or in combination, are used to form words. The study of the meaning of such words is *semantics*. It is also the study of the relationship between words and what they stand for or represent. It should be noted that the most convenient and thorough source of information about the semantics of a statement is the dictionary – which defines what a word means in a particular sentence.

However, the note on semantics might be incomplete if the distinction between *denotative* and *connotative* meanings of words are

not brought to the fore. Denotative meanings are the public objective, legal and documented meanings of a word. They are those found in dictionaries or law books. On the other hand, connotative meanings are personal, emotionally charged, specific and private to an individual. These are strongly to be considered for writing to communicate effectively.

3. *Syntax*: This is the relationship, which exists between one word and the other. This emphasises that each language stipulates the correct way to arrange words. For example, in English, it is not acceptable to create a sentence such as: “On by the book desk door is she”. Each language has a set of rules that govern the sequence of words. To learn another language, you must learn the rules.
4. *Pragmatics*: The study of pragmatics focuses on how language is actually used. This goes beyond the level of phonology, morphology and semantics rather, it focuses on how users of a particular language are able to understand the meanings of specific utterances and how you structure sentences in different contexts.

### **Stages in Writing**

1. *Pre-Writing Stage*

This involves the amassing of materials for your writing after you might have chosen a topic. This is a stage of experimentation and rehearsal – dredging up from memory or developing from experience and observation ideas, details, suggestions, words and phrases that will become your final piece of writing.

2. *Writing Stage*

Once you have gathered your materials, the second stage is the writing stage, where you will complete your first draft, composing your ideas in sentences and paragraphs.

3. *Writing Stage*

This is the last stage in the writing process. This includes writing, the first draft and the final piece. Post-writing involves proof-reading, editing and obtaining response from other readers. This also involves revision, which includes “re-thinking” the piece of writing, including

adding new and more information to clarify a point, changing the arrangement of some paragraphs and leaving out extraneous materials.

**Summary**

In this lecture, the most important language art skill; writing is treated. The system of Rules in writing, which includes morphology, semantics, syntactics and pragmatics, are examined. Also the stages in writing; which are pre-writing, writing and post-writing stages were examined.

**Post-Test**

1. Carefully examine the different stages involved in writing.
2. Writing is a means of communication. (Yes or No)?

## LECTURE ELEVEN

# Types of Writing and Role of Grammar in Human Communication

### Introduction

This lecture focuses on the type of writing and the role of grammar, usage, and mechanics in communicative writing. It is a continuation of the discussion in lecture ten of the text.

### Objectives

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

1. explain different types of writing in human communication;
2. discuss the role of grammar and usage in human communication; and
3. explain the mechanics in communicative writing.

### Pre-Test

1. Write a comprehensive essay on the two basic types of writing.
2. Writing is intricate, painstaking and creative. Discuss.

### CONTENT

There are basically two types of writing. These are: The Personal and Institutional.

By the personal, we mean all writings done in our private/personal capacities. These include personal letters, and creative works. This could contain elements of the descriptive, the expository, the explanatory, the persuasive, the information and the narrative.

On the other hand, institutional writings are those done in our official capacities such as official letters, memos and reports. They also contain elements as listed under the personal writing.

However, there are traditional types of writing, these are:

1. Descriptive;
2. Narrative;
3. Expository;
4. Argumentative; and
5. Persuasive.

1. *Descriptive*: These are essays that contain or seek to give or make precise specific observations about people, places, ideas, emotions and objects to the reader. This can be used also to illustrate the ideas of the writer in personal essays.
2. *Narrative*: These are essays that seek to relate incidents or experiences in a chronological order to the reader. In fiction, the narrator can be the writer or one or more of the characters within the story, while in personal essays, the narrator is always assumed to be the writer.
3. *Expository*: This is the form of writing that explains. It may explain how to do something or how something works, it may explain facts or ideas.
4. *Argumentative*: This is the type of essay, which seeks to compare two things as having at least one quality in common. These are based on arguments, which could be by analogy, false analogy, begging the question, apriori (circular thinking) and extended middle.  
Winterowd and Murray (1985) provide a detailed discourse on the subject matter.
5. *Persuasive*: These are essays, which seek to bring about changes in opinions or actions in the reader. You give information but the aim is to change minds and bring about actions.

### **Role of Grammar in Writing**

Having described these essay types let us examine the role of grammar in *writing*. To avoid duplication, consult your CLA 102 text, *Introduction to Writing*, with emphasis on the lecture on Grammar and Parts of Speech.

Finally, let us examine a few principles which you must follow in writing. These are:



1. The grammar must be right, that is, you must understand the parts of speech such as Nouns, Verbs, Pronouns, Adjectives, Adverbs, Conjunctions, Interjections and Prepositions. Ensure that they collocate while writing.
2. Understand and use the orthographic conventions accurately. These include the use of the period, the question marks, the exclamation point, the comma, the semi-colon, the colon, the dashes, the apostrophe and capitalisations.
3. Understand and know how to use words and their spellings.
4. Understand and know how to use reference materials such as:
  - (a) dictionary;
  - (b) reader's guide; and
  - (c) encyclopaedia.
5. Ask and answer the set of basic questions such as:
  - (a) Who?
  - (b) What?
  - (c) When?
  - (d) Where?
  - (e) Why?
  - (f) How?

Especially, when writing descriptive essays. Another set of questions are the *pentad* questions which will help you to investigate a subject or an event in greater depth and to organise your information. Questions such as:

  - (i) What is the action?
  - (ii) Who are the actors?
  - (iii) What is the scene?
  - (iv) What is the method or agency?
  - (v) What is the purpose?

### **Summary**

We have examined that writing is a significant means of communication. It is intricate, painstaking and creative.

### **Post -Test**

Using one of the following subjects, or one of your own choosing, write an essay. Follow the pre-writing, writing and post-writing steps. Your purpose is to thoroughly define the word or term, that is, your topic.

1. Excursion.
2. Teenager.
3. A good job.
4. Propaganda.
5. Hero.

### **References**

Winterowd, W. Ross and Murray P.Y. (1985). *English: Writing and Skill*. San Diego: Coronado Publishers Inc.

Soola, E.O. (1995). *Introduction to Writing*. Ibadan: Centre for External Studies, U.I.

Soola, E. O. (1995). *Writing for Specific Purpose*. Ibadan: Centre for External Studies.

## LECTURE TWELVE

# Introduction to Theories of Human Communication

### Introduction

This lecture considers and discusses the concept of theory in human communication systems. It proceeds with the definition of a theory as well as reasons for studying a theory as explanation to the varied manifestation of communication as a human phenomenon. Within this lecture, explanations are offered, which considered theory and modelling as a simplification of the complex nature of human communication.

### Objectives

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

1. discuss what a theory is;
2. discuss how theories relate to communication; and
3. use relevant theories to explain certain concepts in communication.

### Pre-Test

1. What is a theory?
2. The characteristics of theory include:
  - (i)
  - (ii)
  - (iii)
  - (iv)
3. Why do we study theories?

## CONTENT

### What is Theory?

A theory, according to Kurt Lewin (1958) is a way of determining and explaining the ordering and occurrence of various events. By this definition, a theory helps us to put in perspective, facts, which could predict what could happen even when events theorised about, had not taken place. Wilbur Schramm (1963) a communication scholar says that a theory is a “crap-defactor” which enables us to separate scientific statements from unscientific ones. Another scholar, Abraham Kaplan (1964) describes a theory as a way of making sense out of a disturbing situation. However, to McLean (1972), a theory refers to our understanding of the ways things work.

In a research work, Dennis McQuail (1983) says that a theory consists of a set of ideas of varying status and origin which seek to explain or interpret some phenomenon. According to Earl Babbie (1995), a theory is a generalised and more or less comprehensive set of statements relating different aspects of some phenomenon. These definitions emphasise the intellectual rigour that is involved or ought to be involved in the formation of a theory.

### Characteristics of a Theory

A theory possesses certain characteristics. These are:

1. *Intellectual rigour*: A theory evolves out of obvious intellectual rigour, which alone can assure that they become testable, verifiable or systematic.
2. *Dynamism*: A theory is subject/amendable to change. Hence, Kaplan (1964) states that there is nothing constant about theories, since new facts may make us modify or repudiate an existing theory.
3. *Approximate Realisations*: A theory in spite of its dynamism is always a step behind reality. This is so because facts continue to emerge through which predictions which are scarcely ever realised with exactitude become increasingly difficult to affirm viewpoints postulated. Theories allow us to have/make appropriate realisations.
4. *Economy*: A good theory accounts for many cases through which a model also evolves.

### **Why do we Study Theories?**

We study theories because:

1. they help us in managing reality. Kurt Lewin's definition at the beginning of the lecture suffices;
2. a theory becomes a yardstick against which to measure any scientific endeavour;
3. such theories provide intellectual satisfaction; and
4. any conscientious student should be capable of evolving a theory as satisfaction derivable from a good study.

### **How do we Arrive at a Theory?**

Theories are derived through the scientific method of investigation. This process involves the following steps:

1. *Conceptualisation*: The scholar starts with a topic, which might be a concept.
2. *Operationalisation*: The translation of general concepts into specific indicators or variables, and the specification of the procedures to be adopted.
3. *Observation*: Following careful specification of the variables, we then embark on the observation of these variables from the data available. Choice could be made from any of the available ones. For example, experimentation, questionnaire method, interviewing, personal observation and document observation.
4. *Analysis*: This is the process through which meaning is extracted from what has been observed.
5. *Testing*: The hypotheses or research questions evolved in the study from the result of the analysis.
6. *Generalisations*: This is the statement of information in the relations between two or more variables belonging to clearly defined classes.
7. *Theory*: This derives from the generalisation.

8. *Law*: This occurs when a theory has stood prolonged/repeated tests without being disproved or substantially modified, it becomes a law. For example, Boyle's law in Physics, Avogadro's law and Newton's law in Chemistry.

### **Theory and Research**

Theory and research appear to be connected through a “never-ending circle of two approaches to scientific inquiry of deduction and induction”.

#### **Summary**

In this lecture, we have offered various definitions of what a theory is. We have also discussed the characteristics of a theory, as well as advance reasons why we study theories. We have also emphasised how we often arrive at a theory with focus on how/when a theory becomes a law. In the same vein, we have also stated the connection between a theory and a research.

We shall in the next chapter examine and discuss the types of theories there are, with emphasis on the general communication theories with particular focus on mass communication theories.

#### **Post-Test**

1. From your reading, find a definition of theory, which is not included in this lecture.
2. (a) State two reasons for studying theory.  
(b) Can you think of another reason which is not included in this lecture?
3. State and briefly discuss the first three major steps in the scientific method.

#### **References**

Earl, Babbie (1995). *The Practice of Social Research*. Belmont: Wadsworth Pub. Co.

Severin and Tankard (1987). *Communication Theories: Origins, Methods and Uses in the Mass Media*. New York: Longman.

McQuail, Dennis (1993). *Communication Models*. U.K: Longman.

## LECTURE THIRTEEN

# Types of Theories

### Introduction

This is a further discussion based on the previous lecture. It centres on the types of theories peculiar to the concept of communication. It is an introduction to the two types of theories. These are:

1. the general basic theories; and
2. mass communication theories.

It also discusses models. These are graphic representation of theories. In short, this lecture offers an insight into theories and models as peculiarities of the human communication mode.

### Objectives

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

1. explain the different theories;
2. discuss the distinctions between the different types; and
3. apply these theories in different situations.

### Pre-Test

1. List the four categories of the general social theory recognised by McQuail.
2. What is the difference between a general communication's theory and normative theory?
3. Do you agree with the fact that all theories evolve from the commonsense theory?

### CONTENT

It is hoped that any student who has read the preceding lecture alongside other materials would have acquired a basic understanding of the nature of

theories and human communication. So, we can now proceed to study different kinds of theories as they relate to communication generally and mass-communication. However, focus will be on the general communication theories.

For the purpose of this lecture, we shall categorise the theories into:

1. Basic Theories: These apply to human communication theories; and
2. Mass Communication Theories

### 1. **Basic Theories**

#### (i) The Lasswell Theory:

The easiest way to describe this theory is to answer the following questions:

Who?

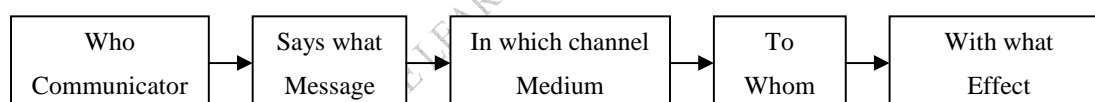
Says what?

In which channel?

To whom?

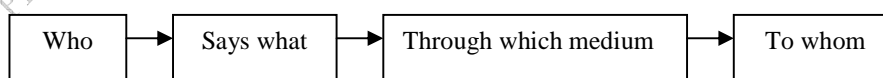
With what effect?

This can be transformed graphically thus:



#### (ii) **Braddock's Extension of Lasswell Formula**

Braddock's theory is an extension of Lasswell's theory. Braddock merely added two more facets of the communicative act, namely, the circumstances under which a message is sent, and for what purpose the communicator says something.



Under what circumstances:

For what purposes?

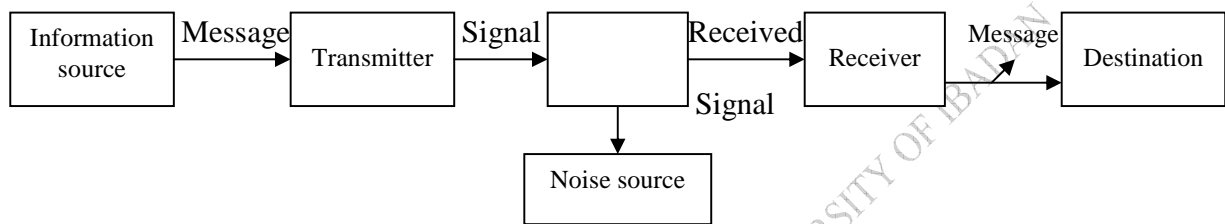
With what effect?



### (iii) Shannon and Weaver

This theory describes communication as a linear, one-way process. The model states five functions to be performed and notes one dysfunctional factor, noise.

Graphically it may be represented as follows:



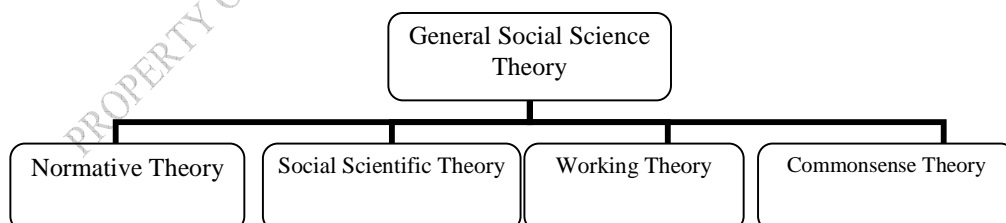
Other theories include:

- (i) De Fleur's theory;
- (ii) Osgood and Schramm theory;
- (iii) Dance helical theory;
- (iv) David Berlo's SMCR theory; and
- (v) Gebner's general theory of communication.

For further readings, consult Denis McQuail on *Communication Models and Theories of Communication*.

## 2. Mass Communication Theories

These are based on Denis McQuail's (1963-6) classification, for example.



## **Other Categories of Mass Communication Theories**

These include:

- (i) Bullet Theory; (iv) Knowledge Gap;
- (ii) Hypodermic Needle Theory; (v) 2 Step Flow/N Step Flow; and
- (iii) Uses and Gratification Theory; (vi) Agenda Setting.

All these theories explain the functions and the role which the media play in the society. For further readings, consult Denis McQuail's *Mass Communication Theories*, Severin and Tankard's *Communication Theories: Origins, Methods and Uses in the Mass Media* and Dennis McQuail's *Communication Models*.

## **Problems with Models**

Several theorists have faulted models based on:

1. models have limiting and confined perspectives to phenomena.
2. models could be incomplete altogether, oversimplified and involve certain concealed assumptions.

## **Modelling**

Models are within communication setting, a diagrammatic reformulation of conclusions, theories and hypotheses. It is said to be a consciously simplified description in graphic form of the piece of reality. It seeks to:

1. show elements, structures, processes and their relationships;
2. give an organising function by expressing relationships amongst diverse components that ultimately constitute a uniform whole; and
3. clarify social phenomena through straight forward/unambiguous explanation.

## **Basic Models**

Modelling can be traced to the pioneer work of Harrold Lasswell in 1948. This theory has been referred to in an earlier section in this lecture. The Laswell's formula does appear very simple. Several theorists have adjudged it to be too simple to describe a very complex communication process.

**Summary**

We have discussed the types of theories, with focus on the general basic communication theories. In the same vein, we have discussed modelling and models, tracing its origin to the problems with the concept.

We shall in the next two lectures discuss relationship building and social interaction.

**Post-Test**

1. Evolve a theory of your own based on your understanding.
2. Construct a communication model.

**References**

Denis, McQuail (1993). *Communication Models*.

Denis, McQuail. *Mass Communication Theories*.

Earl, Babbie (1995). *Elements of Social Research*.

## LECTURE FOURTEEN

# **Social Interaction and Relationship Building in Human Communication**

### **Introduction**

This lecture discusses social interaction and relationship building in human communication. It highlights the roles, needs, functions and stages in the development of relationships. It also establishes listening as a crucial factor not only in relationship building, but also as a significant skill in human communication.

### **Objectives**

At the end of the lecture you should be able to:

1. explain the role of relationships and social interaction;
2. explain the stages of relationship development; and
3. explain how to improve your relationship satisfaction.

### **Pre-Test**

1. Do you think men and women differ in their need for inclusion, control or affection? Why? And how?
2. Do you think men and women differ in the way they express their needs? Why?
3. Identify relationships in your own life that have stabilised at one or more stages coming together.

### **CONTENT**

Relationship has been observed as a meaningful connection, which through the course of our lives, we experience a sizeable number of them. This lecture seeks to highlight the nature of relationships we share with others, our satisfaction or dissatisfaction with them and how we can

improve them. However, one major connection is communication. It is needful to say that, how we manage our survival, how we develop intimacy and how we sustain them as well as how sensible we are, depend on our communication skills. Consequently, we could afford to say that through communication, we can start or end a relationship. Through communication, we express ourselves, our needs, our desires to and with others.

What causes us to come together is communication and what happens to the relationship we enter into, over time is the result of communication. Whatever happens to our relationships, it is crucial for us to understand that communication is crucial to relationship building as it could amount to “the life blood or the death blow of a relationship.” (Gamble and Gamble, 1996: 212)

### **The Role and the Need for Relationships**

The question to ask ourselves in today’s world is to consider how important relationships are to us. This question has become paramount as a result of human’s overdependence and over-reliance on technology. However, despite the fear that technology would replace personal relationships, we still savour person-to-person contact. This desire runs contrary to some theories, which seek to say that as a result of development in technology, personal relationships will be obliterated. Human beings more than ever before seeks, on a daily basis, to feel a greater need to develop warm and personal relationships. This has been assisted by technology, which has succeeded in reducing the world to a global village with the punch of a button. Thus, love and friendship relationships are being greatly fostered. Even in the face of technology, relationships are becoming cherished and precious.

### **Functions of Relationships**

Through relationships, we attempt to meet three basic needs. These are:

1. the need for inclusion;
  2. the need for control; and
  3. the need for affection.
- 
1. *The Need for Inclusion:* This has to do with the degree with which we establish and maintain mutual interest with others. It is also the extent to which we can take interest in others, as well as others can take interest in us. Oftentimes, we seek to be understood as well as want

others to pay attention to us. Nobody seeks to be ignored in any form. To be included in any way is considered normal, nobody for example, likes being left out either in a game, in a party or to be ignored in a meal time conversation. The need for inclusion has made loneliness an affliction. Research has shown that there is a high rate of mortality in men of 50 years in age, who lacked any close relationship. What exactly is loneliness? This is a perceived discrepancy between perceived and achieved social relationships. Inclusion has also been discovered by physicians to have very high therapeutic effect. Hence, it is often highly recommended to patients in particular and generally to all, as it is said to be capable of enhancing an individual's physical and mental well-being.

2. *Control*: This has to do with our need to establish and maintain satisfactory levels of influence and power in a relationship. This becomes so, when in a given situation, we feel the need to really be in charge, while at other times, we often feel the need to assume a more submissive role. However, we tend to feel that others do not respect our views, values or abilities, once our need for control goes unusual, thus feeling incapable of making a sound decision or directing others.
3. *Affection*: This involves our need to offer love to others, as well as receive love from others. It also has to do with experiencing emotionally close relationships. However, once this need is not met, we tend to feel unloved and unlovable. But if our experience at this level proves to be pleasant, we are likely to conclude that we possess the ability to handle both close and distant relationships, thus recognising that not everyone we come in contact with will necessarily care the same way we do. (Gamble and Gamble, 1996).

### **Development of Relationships: Stages in Relationship Building – from Beginning to Ending**

Relationships pass through a number of stages. These stages include:

1. Initiating - (stage I);
2. Experimenting - (stage II);
3. Intensifying - (stage III);
4. Integrating - (stage IV);
5. Bonding - (stage V);

- 6. Differentiating - (stage VI);
- 7. Circumscribing - (stage VII);
- 8. Stagnating - (stage VIII);
- 9. Avoiding - (stage IX); and
- 10. Termination - (stage X).

1. *Stage I (Initiating)*: This involves what happens when we first come into contact with others. At this stage, we watch out for obvious signs, which either move us to initiate a conversation or repels us from communicating or interacting with others.
2. *Stage II (Experimenting)*: This is the stage when we try to find more about the other person. This is often a feature after initiating a relationship. An example is the cocktail party chatter. This stage allows us to:
  - (a) uncover integrating topics and offers an opening for more penetrating conversations;
  - (b) serve as an audition for future friendship as well as provide a scope for a consent friendship;
  - (c) provide a safe procedure for indicating who we are and how the other person can know us better; and
  - (d) maintain a sense of community with others.
3. *Stage III (Intensifying)*: This stage is when people become good friends, thus sharing things in common. They describe more about themselves. They predict each other's behaviour better. They adopt and call themselves names – pet-names or nicknames.
4. *Stage IV (Integrating)*: This stage involves the union of the two friends into one, forming a pair, a couple or a package. At this stage, interpersonal synchrony is high as the two may dress, act and speak alike.
5. *Stage V (Bonding)*: This is the stage where relationship becomes institutionalised or formalised. This can translate into a wedding license or a business contract. Thus, the relationship becomes highly formalised, becoming guided by specific rules and regulations. An eventual alteration can lead to discomfort and outright rebellion.

6. *Stage VI (Differentiating)*: This is the stage where individuals in a relationship attempt as well as re-establish an “I” orientation. Previously held joint possessions adopt a more individualised character. For example, “our car” becomes “my car” and “our child” becomes “your son”. However, if this persists, it can signal the break-up of a relationship.
7. *Stage VII (Circumscribing)*: At this stage, the quantity of communication between the partners tends to be on the decline. In some instances, discussions only centre on safe topics, while others, conversation are carried-on without any real depth. At this stage, fewer and less intimate disclosures are made by the interactants. Consequently, the relationship can be said to lack energy, interest and the vibrancy needed.
8. *Stage VIII (Stagnating)*: The participants in a relationship at this stage feels that they no longer need to relate with each other. They engage in a communication which they can predict its outcome, thus only a shadowy relationship exists. In reality, they are like strange bed fellows living through the hollow shell of what was once a heart cry relationship.
9. *Stage IX (Avoiding)*: At this stage, individuals really break up; they consciously avoid contact with one another. An otherwise healthy relationship becomes estranged with unpleasant face-to-face and voice-to-voice relationship becoming unpleasant. The message often sent at this stage is usually the “I don’t want to see you anymore”. This leads to an eventual collapse in relationship.
10. *Stage X (Termination)*: This is the stage where the bond or chord holding the relationship together gets severed or broken. This often leads to the death of the relationship. However, it should be noted that all relationships will one day come to an end, however, this doesn't mean that saying good-bye, either through death, or an agreement to break up, is easy or pleasant.



**Summary**

In this lecture we have discussed the three basic needs in a relationship. The needs of inclusion, control and affection are often met through the relationships we keep. In the same vein, we have also discussed the different stages involved in relationship building.

However, it should be stressed that a relationship stabilises at any of the stages.

**Post-Test**

1. Have you had some relationships that did not go beyond the experimentation stage, which you now wish had gone further and farther? Think about such and identify what kept them intensifying.
2. Why do you think relationships break-up? Have you experienced such? What caused it?
3. Do you agree that “without communication, relationships shrivel and die”? If you do, why? or If you do not, give reasons.

**References**

Burgoon, M. and Ruffner, M. (1978). *Introduction to Human Communication*.

Gamble, T.K. and Gamble, M. (1996). *Communication Works*.

Lustig, M. W. and Koester, J. (1999). *Inter-Cultural Competence: Interpersonal Communication Across Cultures*.

Trenholm, S. and Jensen, A. (1996). *Interpersonal Communication*.

## LECTURE FIFTEEN

# Listening as Communication

### Introduction

This lecture discusses the concept of listening as communication. It proceeds from what is listening, through the types of listening to why listening is regarded as an important concept in human communication. It also highlights listening as a crucial factor in relationship building and social interaction.

### Objectives

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

1. discuss what listening is;
2. discuss the difference between listening and hearing;
3. discuss what inattentive listening is; and
4. apply this skill in different contexts.

### Pre-Test

1. What do you understand by listening?
2. Why is listening important in communication?
3. What problems do you encounter in listening?
4. Listening is crucial in interpersonal communication – Do you agree?

### CONTENT

Of all the four communication and language arts skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening, listening is the most neglected. Even though it is a receptive skill, yet it has received less attention from educators. In the same vein, it is the most crucial skill in initiating and maintaining relationships. Again, it is the skill through which we receive information. Studies have shown through research that we spend an average of 42 to 53 per cent of our communicative time listening, 16 to 32 per cent

speaking to others, 15 to 17 per cent reading and 9 to 14 per cent writing. Thus, we spend much time listening than we spend in other communication skills. This data reveal to us how important listening is in communication. It is important to pay conscious attention to listening as our entire lives depend greatly on how good we are in listening. Therefore, it is necessary that we endeavour to treat listening as if our entire existence depends on it.

See how well you can answer these questions:

1. How much time do you spend to listen?
2. How much do you retain?
3. How efficient are your listening skills?
4. What percentage of information do you retain when you listen?

### **What is Listening?**

Listening is a deliberate process through which we seek to understand and retain aural (heard) stimuli for a future use (Gamble, and Gamble 1996:181).

### **Differences between Hearing and Listening**

1. Hearing is a natural and passive process which requires little but no conscious effort.
2. Listening is a deliberate conscious process.
3. Hearing is automatic, requiring no conscious effort.
4. Hearing is inborn or innate.
5. Listening is acquired.
6. Hearing is not a mental process.
7. Listening is a mental and an active process.
8. Hearing requires less energy to be expended.
9. Listening requires different level of energy involvement (from the least to the greatest).
10. Through listening, we understand, retain, analyse and evaluate content (while hearing is superficial). This helps us in listening to react appropriately through feedback to content.

### **Listening and Unlistening**

At different listening acts, we exhibit diverse behaviours, which might qualify as unlistening acts. At this instance, what are these behaviours and how do they relate to the overall essence of listening? The behaviours are:

1. *Nodding*: We pretend to be listening whereas we are not. Often, we look at the speaker and we nod our heads either in agreement or disagreement; we also mutter some remarks. By this, we assume the role of pretenders. We do this either to avoid being called to answer a question by the teacher or because we are bored or otherwise occupied in thought.
2. *Ear Hogging*: This is the process whereby people desire other people to listen to them. But they never have the time nor the desire to listen to others. Ear hogs are always pre occupied in their own thoughts and ideas, hence they tend to monopolise the process. They equally deny others the right to be listened to.
3. *Gap Filling*: This is the act through which individuals who claimed to be listening never in actual fact listen. To make up for the gaps, gap-fillers make up what they have missed by manufacturing information. Often they present a feature of “I got it all”.
4. *Beeing*: By this act, individuals who listen, only pay attention to only those portions that interest them. Every other thing said by the speaker are considered irrelevant thus, such are ignored.
5. *Ear Muffling*: This is the process whereby listeners shut their ears to information they would not do business with. Sometimes, ear muffs pretend not to understand what the speaker is saying or often they act as if they did not hear at all.
6. *Dart Throwing*: This is the process where a listener lies in wait for the speaker to make a mistake or slip. He/she then uses this to launch an attack at what and how the speaker has spoken.

The question that arises is, how does one increase his/her capacity to listen effectively to achieve the desired result?

Please, note the following:

1. Focus your attention;
2. Set appropriate goals before listening;
3. Listen to understand ideas;
4. Listen to retain information;

5. Listen to analyse and evaluate content; and
6. Listen emphatically and actively.

### **Summary**

In this lecture, we discovered that listening is a deliberate and active process of seeking to understand and retain aural stimuli. We have also discovered that we spend between 42 to 53 per cent of our time listening, yet we spend little time to understand its intricacies. It is hoped that the knowledge gained will improve our listening skills.

### **Post-Test**

1. Who is an ear hog?
2. Consider the type of behaviours we often exhibit in listening, where do you think you belong? List your characteristics features.
3. How can you relate listening with relationship building? In what ways will the listening behaviours affect your relationship with others?

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## LECTURE SIXTEEN

# The Self Concept and Diversity in a Relationship and Human Communication

### Introduction

This lecture discusses the concept of the self concepts of the self and diversity in a relationship, with emphasis on the importance of culture both in relationship and in human communication. It also offers strategies you need to adopt in improving your intellectual communication abilities.

### Objectives

At the end of the lecture, you should be able to:

1. explain the concept of the self in relationships;
2. explain the concept of diversity vis-à-vis culture and gender in relationships; and
3. apply the knowledge gained in improving your relationship satisfaction.

### Pre-Test

1. What do you know about yourself?
2. How do you relate with people from different other cultures?
3. How does your gender affect your self-concept?
4. How do you express disagreements with someone different from your culture?

### CONTENT

#### Definition: What is the Self - Concept?

Irrespective of one's age, status or position, it is important to consider, appropriately, who you are, what you intend to be and do with your life. In this lecture you will be led into understanding of who you are, which

you can consciously apply to your relationship with others. However, before we proceed further, let us understand the or your self-concept.

Self-concept is anything, everything you think and feel about yourself. It could be said to be the *totality* of your attitudes and beliefs, which you hold about *who* and *what* you are.

It should be noted, however, that self-concept is not innate, rather, it is acquired and developed as one grows. This picture remains, often times, stable as one can easily predict certain traits of behaviour and attitudes as one grows.

In relationship building, self-concept affects our interaction with others. It may initiate us into communicating with others, while it may also repel us into interacting with others. It may also affect our view of the world, as well as people around us.

The question which logically arises is, how is your self-concept formed?

1. *Environment and Experience:* To a very large extent, your self-concept is often times shaped and affected by your environment and the people around you. These include where you live, your parents, relations, teachers, friends, co-workers, supervisors and others. If in the course of growth, you have experienced acceptance, values, worth, love and significance from those around you, your self-concept becomes positive, while if those around you have made you to feel self-out, small, worthless, unloved and insignificant, you will likely develop a negative self-concept.
2. *Role-Taking and Self-Exploration:* The role we assume each day as well as attempt to discover who we are, often affect our self-concept. For example, we are daily being conditioned to vary the marks we wear in relation with the roles we perform. These are often manifested through the language we use, the attitude we displays as well as the appearance we present.

Consequently, we become different *selves* in our movement from one set of conditions to another. At this point the S-R paradigm becomes relevant, as we are conditioned by the conditions and circumstances we are in, to affect the nature of the self in us. Constantly, we see ourselves and think about ourselves differently from the way people see us. However, clues to self-understanding are

a continuous thing as you interact with your environment and others around you.

3. *Popular Media:* Our view of the self is affected by the popular media of Television, Radio, Film and the Print. Mostly, we are influenced by television and film characters, and their life styles. It is said that subtly, these media (visual) affect us as well as shape the views of ourselves and our relationship with the world.  
(Think about your favourite actor in a movie, how have you been affected by his/her exploit?)

4. *Gender:* Research has revealed that we often treat people differently because of Gender. For example, a female child is treated differently in dressing and handling compared to a male child. Colour schemes for a female child differ from the colour scheme of a male child.

In the same vein, biblically, women are regarded as weaker vessels while men are regarded as the bread winner and the stronger of the two. Women are regarded as property to be acquired, while men are often treated as the father in the house. All these affect an individual's understanding of his/her self-concept.

Because of these perceptions, women often develop a less positive self-concept than men do. This often affects the performances expected of each of the gender. The woman is expected to be pleasant, unaggressive, and emotional, while a man is expected to be strong, ambitious, successful and in control of his emotions. In a nutshell, a man's sense according to John Gray cited in Gamble and Gamble (1996), "is defined through his ability to achieve results, while a woman's sense is determined through her feelings and the quality of her relationship".

### **The Johari Window**

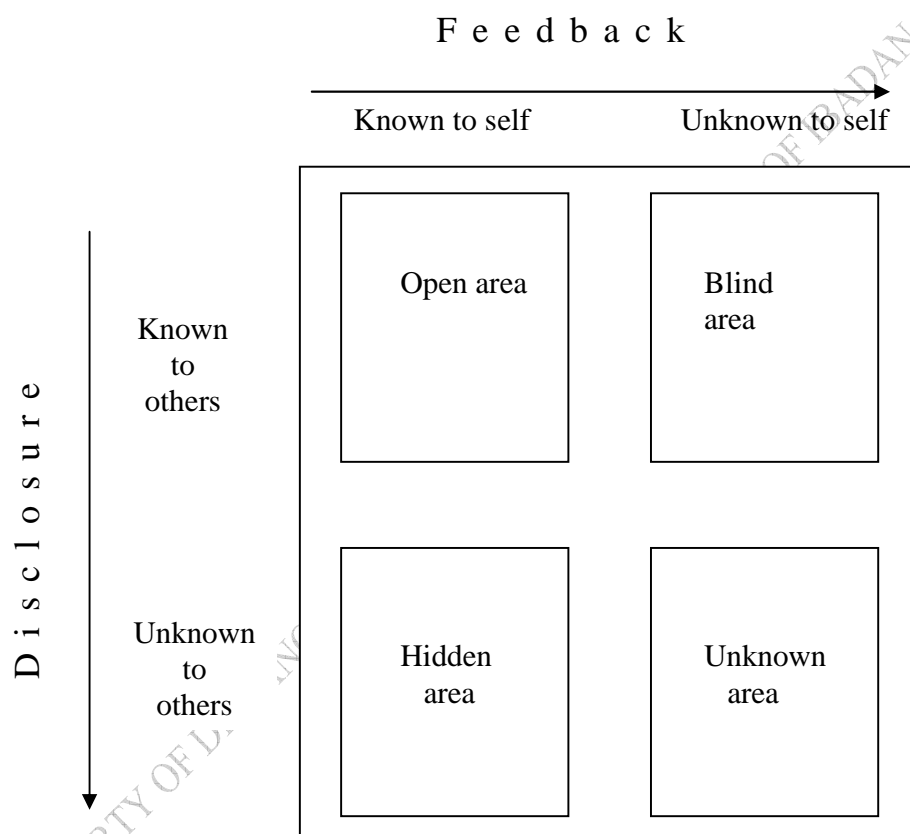
#### *Knowing Yourself and Others*

A powerful way through which perceptual biases could be eliminated or minimised is to know yourself. It is to become aware of your values, beliefs, and prejudices.

The *Johari Window* provides you with a model for understanding how individuals in a relationship can increase their mutual understanding. Developed by Joseph Luft and Harry Ingram, this model divides



information into four “Windows” – open, blind, hidden, and unknown - based on the assumption that your own values, beliefs and experiences are known to you and others.



SOURCE: Based on J. Luft, Group Processes (Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield, 1984)

The open area includes information about you that is known to both you and others. (Your dislike for cigarette smoking). The blind area refers to information that is known to others but not yourself. (for example, Your colleagues knowledge about your being embarrassed and awkward when with someone on a wheel chair).

The hidden area contains information known to you both unknown to others. (for example, personal secrets about your likes, dislikes and personal experiences.). The unknown area includes your values, beliefs and experiences not known to you or to others.

The *Johari Window* aims at increasing the size of the open area to the individuals in a relationship such that your perceptual limitation are aware of this is parity zone by reducing the hidden area through *disclosure*.

The open area also increases through *feedback* from others about your behaviour and feedback usually produce revelation about information in the unknown area.

### **Diversity and Relationship: The Cultural Dimension**

Every interaction entails communication with people culturally different from us, that is, ourselves. Thus, if we are ignorant of other people culture, it might lead to our experiencing undesirable communication outcomes.

It is important to say that, the price often paid when culturally confused is high. This could lead to loss of business opportunities, increased level of tension amongst people and outright break in hostilities, war and destruction.

The importance of culture in relationships has led to the evolution of intercultural communication. This, we shall attempt to define in this lecture.

### **What is Intercultural Communication?**

Intercultural communication according to Lustig, and Koester, (1990) “is a symbolic process in which people from different cultures create shared meanings.” In the same vein, Gamble and Gamble (1996) define intercultural communication “as the process of interpreting and sharing meanings with individuals from different cultures”. These definitions based on the premise, that the interactants:

- (a) are willing to, as well as learn from other cultures different from ours;  
and
- (b) learn more about our cultures.

A culture consists of a system of knowledge, beliefs, values, customs, behaviours, artefacts that are acquired and used by its members during daily living. Within a culture, there are co-cultures or sub-cultures, which

are composed of members of the same general culture who differ in some ethnic or sociological ways from the parent culture.

However, in interacting with people belonging to different cultures, you need to consider the role culture plays in shaping your communication so that you could understand one another. It is important to stress that culture is communication and communication is culture.

### **Concepts in Inter-cultural Communication**

1. *Inter-racial Communication:* This is a form of communication, which occurs when interactants are of different races.
2. *Inter-Ethnic Communication:* Communication existing between people from different ethnic origins.
3. *International Communication:* Communication, which occurs between political structures rather than persons.
4. *Intra-cultural Communication:* This includes all forms of communication among members of the same racial, ethnic or other co- or sub-culture groups.
5. *Ethnocentrism:* This is the tendency to see your own culture as being superior to all others. It is a feature of failed inter-cultural communication efforts.
6. *Cultural Relativism:* This is opposite to ethnocentrism. Instead of viewing your culture as superior to others, you try to understand the behaviour of other groups based on the context in which their behaviour occurs rather than from your own frame of reference.
7. *Cultural Pluralism:* This is the advocacy for respect for uniqueness, tolerance for difference and adherence for the principle for cultural relativity. It centres on having respect for the unique features in other cultures and peoples different from you and yourself. This is to say that God created us differently but we are all the same that is, human beings with diverse culture and languages.

### **How to Improve Your Ability to Communicate Inter-culturally**

Within the context of this section in this lecture, we shall attempt to suggest ways through which you could improve on your ability to communicate inter-culturally. These are:

1. Desire to relate more effectively with persons of different cultures;
2. Avoid basing your reliance on stereotypes that can affect your perception;

3. Refrain from formulating expectations based solely on your own culture;
4. Recognize how faulty knowledge / education about others can impede understanding; and
5. Make a commitment to develop communication skills and abilities considered appropriate in a multi-cultural world.

### **Summary**

We have in this lecture, discussed the points that we live in a world of increased activity of global contact and diversity. We have also focused on the concept of the self and the effect on communication. Equally of significance is the model of the *Johari Window* in explaining perception about human communication, by this, we have brought to the fore the essence of self-concept, culture and the *Johari Window* in explaining communication as a human phenomenon.

### **Post-Test**

1. Have you ever considered your culture superior to or better than another culture? How did your feelings influence your relationship with members of that culture?  
Answer Yes / No / True / False
2. I try to communicate with persons like me as often as I can.
3. I am fearful of persons from different cultures.
4. I find it difficult to tell, when persons from other cultures do not understand me.
5. I am unfamiliar with rules of communication of any culture other than mine.
6. How do you view yourself in the light of this lecture?

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