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Interpersonal Communication (IPC)

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: Communication between members of different nationalities, religions, genders, and generations.

Related areas: Anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, business.

BUSINESS AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION: Communication among workers in an organizational environment.

Related areas: Business, management, public relations, computer science.

SOCIAL AND PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP: Communication in close relationship such as friendship and love.

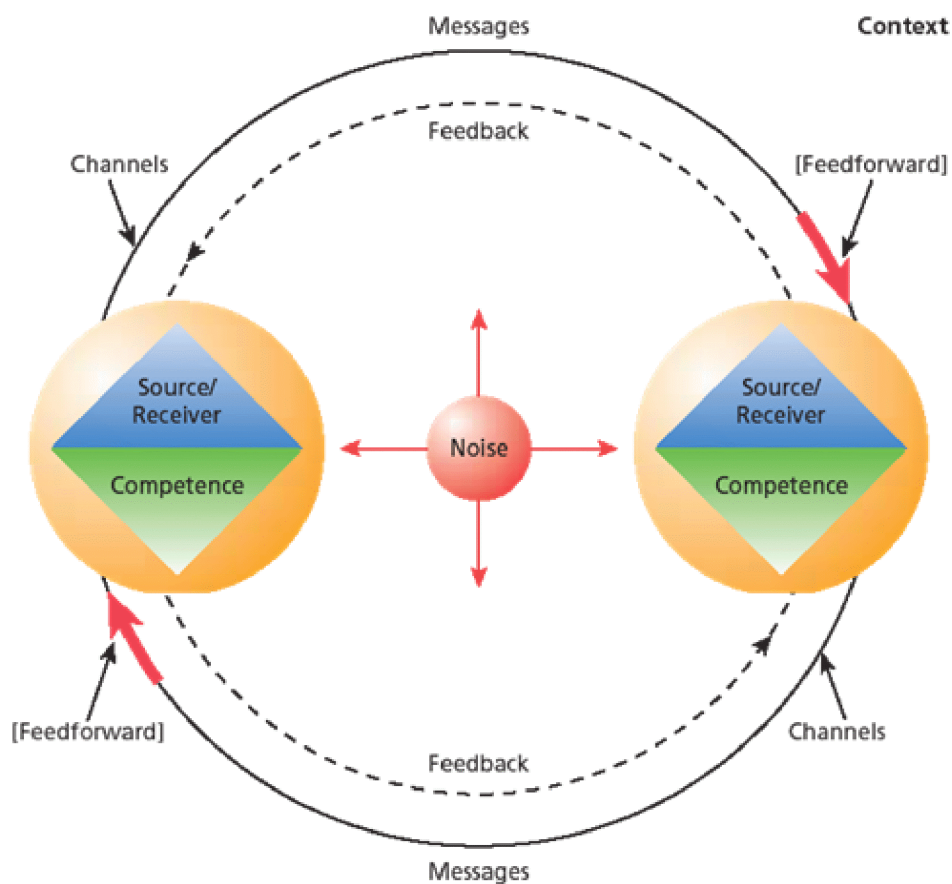
Related areas: Psychology, sociology, anthropology, family studies.

NATURE OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

- ▣ **BETWEEN TWO OR MORE INTERDEPENDENT INDIVIDUALS**
- ▣ **INHERENTLY RELATIONAL**
- ▣ **CONTINUUM FROM RELATIVELY PERSONAL TO INTIMATE**
- ▣ **BOTH VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL**

- ▣ TAKES PLACE FACE-TO-FACE AS WELL AS ON THE INTERNET
- ▣ RANGE FROM EXTREMELY INEFFECTIVE TO EXTREMELY EFFECTIVE.

ELEMENTS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION



- ▣ SOURCE-RECEIVER CONCEPT: SEND AND RECEIVE MESSAGES SIMULTANEOUSLY.

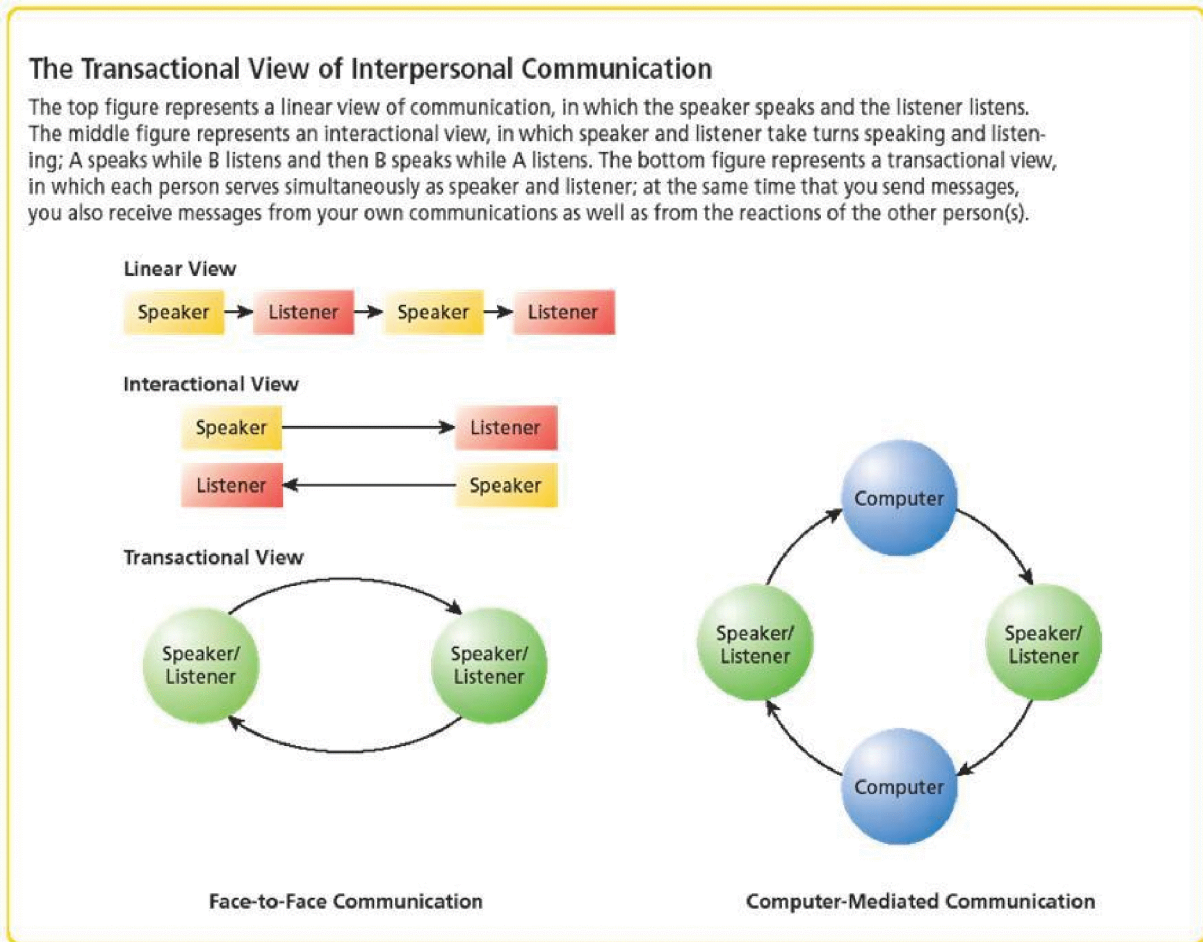
- ▣ **ENCODING-DECODING: PUTTING MEANING INTO VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL MESSAGES AND DERIVING MEANING FROM MESSAGES RECEIVED.**
- ▣ **SIGNALS THAT SERVE AS STIMULI. METAMESSAGES: MESSAGES ABOUT MESSAGES**
- ▣ **FEEDBACK: MESSAGES SENT BACK BY THE RECEIVER TO THE SOURCE.**
- ▣ **FEEDFORWARD: MESSAGES THAT PREFACE OTHER MESSAGES AND ASK THAT THE LISTENERS APPROACH FUTURE MESSAGES IN A CERTAIN WAY.**
- ▣ **CHANNELS: MEDIA THROUGH WHICH MESSAGES PASS AND WHICH ACT AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN SOURCE AND RECEIVER.**
- ▣ **NOISE IN THE INEVITABLE PHYSICAL, PHYSIOLOGICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND SEMANTIC INTERFERENCE THAT DISTORTS MESSAGES.**
- ▣ **CONTEXT IS THE PHYSICAL , SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL, TEMPORAL, AND CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT.**
- ▣ **ETHICS IS THE MORAL DIMENSION OF COMMUNICATION.**
- ▣ **COMPETENCE IS THE KNOWLEDGE OF AND ABILITY TO USE EFFECTIVELY YOUR OWN COMMUNICATION SYSTEM.**

AXIOMS OF IPC

IPC a Transactional Process

Interpersonal communication is best viewed as an ever-changing and circular process. Everything involved in interpersonal communication is in a state of flux: the individual is changing, the people he communicates with are changing, and at the same time the environment is changing. At times these changes go unnoticed, and at others they continue to interrupt.

The process of communication is circular, as each participant in the communication process serves simultaneously as a speaker and listener. Hence it is a mutually interactive process.



- **Interdependent Elements**

The elements in IPC are interdependent. Each element is connected to the other and to the whole. The sender, receiver, message, medium, feedback can't exist in isolation; they have to be connected together for IPC to take place. Because of this interdependency, a change in any one element causes changes in overall communication situation. For instance; a group of students are discussing about

the recent exams that were held, and then a teacher joins the communication circle, this will change the overall manner in which communication was taking place.

- **Inevitability of IPC**

Communication is basically regarded as intentional, purposeful and consciously motivated, but at times communication takes place without the willingness of a IPC participant. An assistant editor sitting with an expressionless face, staring out of the window thinks he is not communicating with the manager. But the manager reads various meanings out of his behavior. He might think that the assistant is bored, lacks interest, worried about something, is tired etc. The assistant did not intend to communicate any of these meanings. If his behavior goes unnoticed then no communication would have taken place.

- **Irreversibility of IPC**

IPC is irreversible. What has been communicated cannot be uncommunicated. One may go on trying to negate, reduce the effects of the message, but can't undo the message. In this way one needs to be cautious to send out messages that are not wished to be withdrawn later.

- **IPC is a Process of Adjustment**

The impediments to communication on account of differences in education, social background, age, personal and professional experience can be overcome by a process of adjustment in which participants of communication try to understand the other person's signals, how they are used and what they mean.

This principal is especially important in intercultural communication, largely because people from different cultures use different signals to signify different things. Focused eye contact means honesty and openness in much of the US, but the same behavior may signify arrogance or disrespect in Japan, Middle East, and many Hispanic cultures.

- **The content and relationship dimension in IPC**

Each Time We send a message (i.e, behave to communicate) that message has two part/dimensions:

(a) **A Content Dimension** that contains what you actually Speaks or Write;

(b) **A relationship dimension** that indicates how that content is to be taken which is communicated verbally or mot often is communicated non-verbally with paralinguistic cues such as vocal influence, tone intensity and so forth.

For example; the judge may say to the lawyer “See me in my chamber immediately.” This message has both the content aspect [as the lawyer will see the judge immediately] and the relationship aspect [the use of simple command]. However the lawyer is not expected to give the same command to the judge, who holds a superior position.

Hence, the content has to be similar to the relationship in a particular communication situation. If they are incongruous the communication would essentially fail to have a desired impact.

- **Defining Relationship By Punctuation**

Punctuation refers to the tendency to divide communication transactions into sequence of stimuli and responses.

A child may be losing interest in studies and the parents may be scolding him for it, but the more they scold the more loss of interest takes place. In this way it becomes a vicious cycle.

Understanding how another person interprets a situation, how he or she punctuates, is a crucial step in IPC understanding. It is also essential in achieving empathy [feeling what the other person is feeling].

- **Relationships may be viewed as symmetrical or complementary.**

Symmetrical— mirror each other’s behavior—equal or similar

Complementary—engage in different behaviors—unequal or opposite

Behavior of one is stimulus for the other's complementary behavior.

Differences are maximized.

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