

COMMUNICATION STUDIES

At the end of this lesson, students are going to learn:

1. What is meant by Communication studies?
2. What are its main subfields?
3. What are the main topics of these studies?
4. What are the main methods used by communication scientists?
5. What are the main aims of Communication studies?
6. Who are the famous names in this field?
7. What is meant by media? What can we find in this field?
8. Do media have an influence on people? How it can happen?
9. What is the importance of media in our life as English language learners?

Definition:

The word communication is derived from the Latin root *communicare*. This was due to the Roman Empire also designing what might be described as a mail or post system, in order to centralize control of the empire of Rome. This is an academic domain which deals with the processes of human communication.

What are its main subfields?

Communication studies is an interdisciplinary major that consists of a number of interrelated subfields:

- Popular communication,
- Science communication,
- Health communication,
- Political communication (including the study of news and journalism) , and
- Philosophy of communication

Its Main Topics :

Communication science is an academic discipline that deals with processes of human communication and behaviours, patterns of communication in interpersonal relationships, social interactions and communication in different cultures. The discipline encompasses a range of topics, from face-to-face conversation to mass media outlets such as television broadcasting.

It also explores how messages are interpreted across the political, cultural, economic, semiotic, hermeneutical and social dimensions of their contexts. Communication science also integrates aspects of the social sciences and the humanities.

The scientific methods

The scientific methods commonly used in the field:

As objectivists, communication scientists favour the following empirical methods: experimental design, quasi-experimental designs, surveys, focus groups, conversation analysis, interviews, critical theory, cultural studies, textual analysis, history, creative industries, and media theory (media ecologies and medium theory). The range of social scientific methods to study communication has been expanding. Communication researchers draw upon a variety of qualitative and quantitative techniques.

The scientific methods

The linguistic and cultural turns of the mid-20th century led to increasingly interpretative, hermeneutic and philosophic approaches towards the analysis of communication.

Conversely, the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s have seen the rise of new analytically, mathematically, and computationally focused techniques.

What are the main aims of Communication studies?

Communication is commonly defined as giving, receiving or exchanging ideas, information, signals or messages through appropriate media, enabling individuals or groups to persuade, seek information, give information or express emotions effectively.

The core mission of Communication Studies is to foster communication and media literacies in the service of global citizenship, community participation and ethical leadership

Who are the famous names in this field?

Wilbur Schramm 1907 –1987 is considered the founder of the field of communication studies in the United States.

Paul Lazarsfeld, Harold Lasswell, Carl Hovland, and Kurt Lewin are also considered as its founding forefathers.

Media studies

Media: (plural of media) are the collective means of communication or the tools used to store and supply information or data.

It is a discipline and a field of study that deals with the content, history and effects of different media, particularly "mass media". Media studies can take inspiration from the traditions of the social sciences and humanities.

The word medium is defined as "one of the means or channels of general communication, information, or entertainment in society, as newspapers, radio, or television"

It is either associated with communication media, or the specialized communication businesses such as: print media and the press, photography, advertising, cinema, broadcasting (radio and television), and/or publishing.

The impact of media on people :

Media technology has made **communicating increasingly easier as time has passed throughout history**. Today, children are encouraged to use media tools in school and are expected to have a general understanding of the various technologies available.

The internet is arguably **one of the most effective tools in media for communication**. Tools such as e-mail, Skype, Facebook etc., have **brought people closer together and created new online communities**. However, some may argue that **certain types of media can hinder face-to-face communication and therefore can result in complications like identity fraud**.

In a large consumer-driven society, electronic media (such as television) and print media (such as newspapers) are **important for distributing advertisement media**. More technologically advanced societies **have access to goods and services through newer media than less technologically advanced societies**. Media technology has **helped to connect diverse people from far and near geographical location**. The mass media are **powerful in shaping, influencing and even altering identities, and perception of the world**.

Teaching English through Mass Media:

Using various kinds of Media in the classroom **has always been a challenge**, and how to bring these Media in the classroom is more than a challenge. **Students and teachers should be able to use in their classroom's different media through different technologies**.

Media **provide teachers and students with creative and practical ideas**. They **enable teachers to meet various needs and interests of their students**. They also provide students with a lot of language practice **through activities using newspapers, magazines, radio, TV, movies, books, Internet, etc, and tasks which develop reading, writing, speaking and listening skills**.

Media **entertain students and encourage reading English in general, both inside and outside the classroom, promoting extensive reading by giving the students the confidence, the motivation and the ability to continue their reading outside the classroom** .