Lessons of Communicational Practice - Third Semester (M2)

Course Objectives

On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- Understand what communication and a communication models are.

- Differentiate between inter- and intra-personal communication.

- Be able to use the different forms of communication, especially debating.

1. Introduction to Communication
a. Definition

To communicate (v): the exchange of ideas, information, etc., between two or more persons. In an act of communication there is usually at least one speaker or sender, a MESSAGE which is transmitted, and a person or persons for whom this message is intended (the receiver). Communication is studied from many disciplinary perspectives, is often viewed as a discipline in its own right, and is central to SOCIOLINGUISTICS, PSYCHOLINGUISTICS, and INFORMATION THEORY.
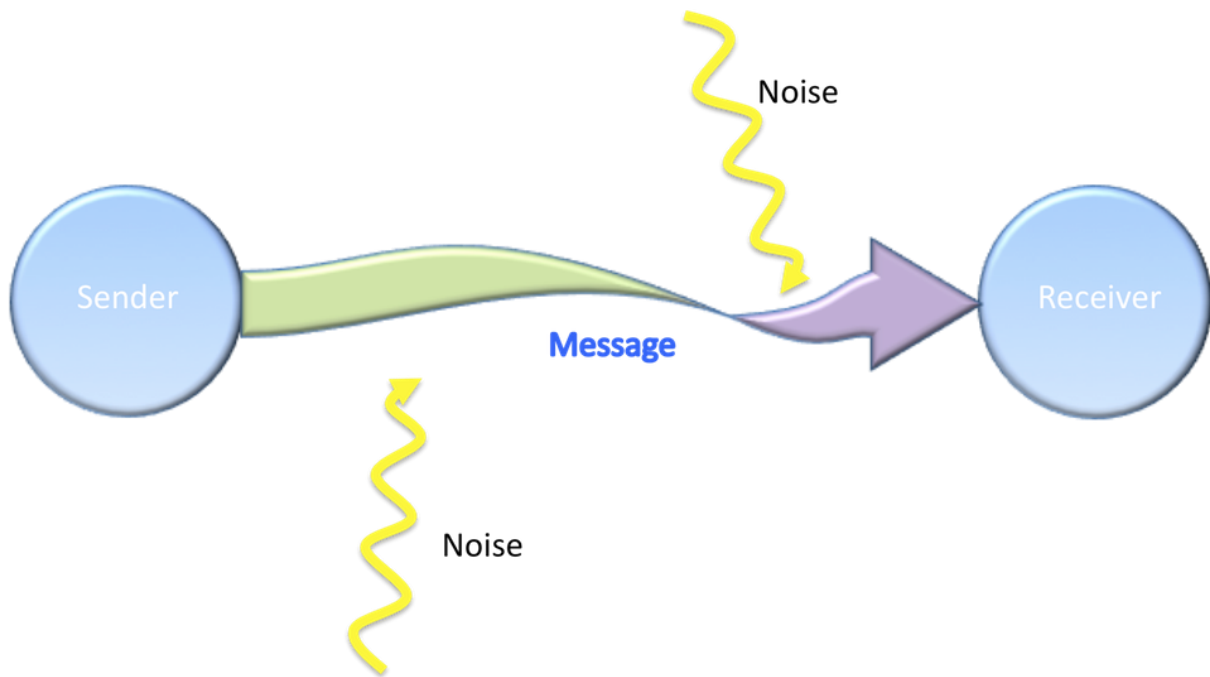
2. Models of Communication

In order to explain the social process of communication, scholars have developed several models. The three most well-known models for communication are Linear, Interactional, and Transactional. As West & Turner (2007) explain, each model sheds light on the development of communication, but emphasizes different parts of the communication process.

a. Linear Models of Communication

Originally developed by Shannon & Weaver in 1948, this model describes communication as a linear process. (See Figure 1.1.) This model describes how a sender, or speaker, transmits a message to a receiver, or listener. More specifically, the sender is the source of the message. A message may consist of the sounds, words, or behaviors in a communication interaction. The message itself is transmitted through a channel, the pathway or route for communication, to a receiver, who is the target or recipient of the message. There may be obstacles in the communication process, or noise. Noise refers to any interference in the channel or distortion of the message. This is a fairly simple model in which a message is simply passed from sender to receiver.

Linear

Graph 01: Illustration of Linear Models of Communication

❖ Criticism of Linear Models of Communication

While the linear model was highly influential during the mid-20th century, this model is perhaps too simple. Its limitations are easy to see if you pause to think about the beliefs about communication, or assumptions, made in this model. First, this model assumes that communication only goes in one direction. Here, a person can be a sender or receiver, but not both. This is problematic because communication in action is more dynamic than the linear model suggests. In action, communication involves a give and take between senders and receivers in which listeners are not simply passive receptacles for a sender's message. This model is also limited because it provides only one channel for only one message. Finally, it implies that messages themselves are clear-cut with a distinct beginning and a distinct end. However, communication is rarely, if ever, as neat and tidy as a linear model would suggest.

b. Interactional Models of Communication

In the move to a more dynamic view of communication, interactional models follow two channels in which communication and feedback flow between sender and receiver. Feedback is simply a response that a receiver gives to a sender. (See Figure 1.2.) Feedback can be verbal (i.e. "yes") or nonverbal (i.e. a nod or

smile). Most importantly, feedback indicates comprehension. It can help senders know if their message was received and understood. By focusing on flow and feedback, interactional models view communication as an ongoing process.

Interactive
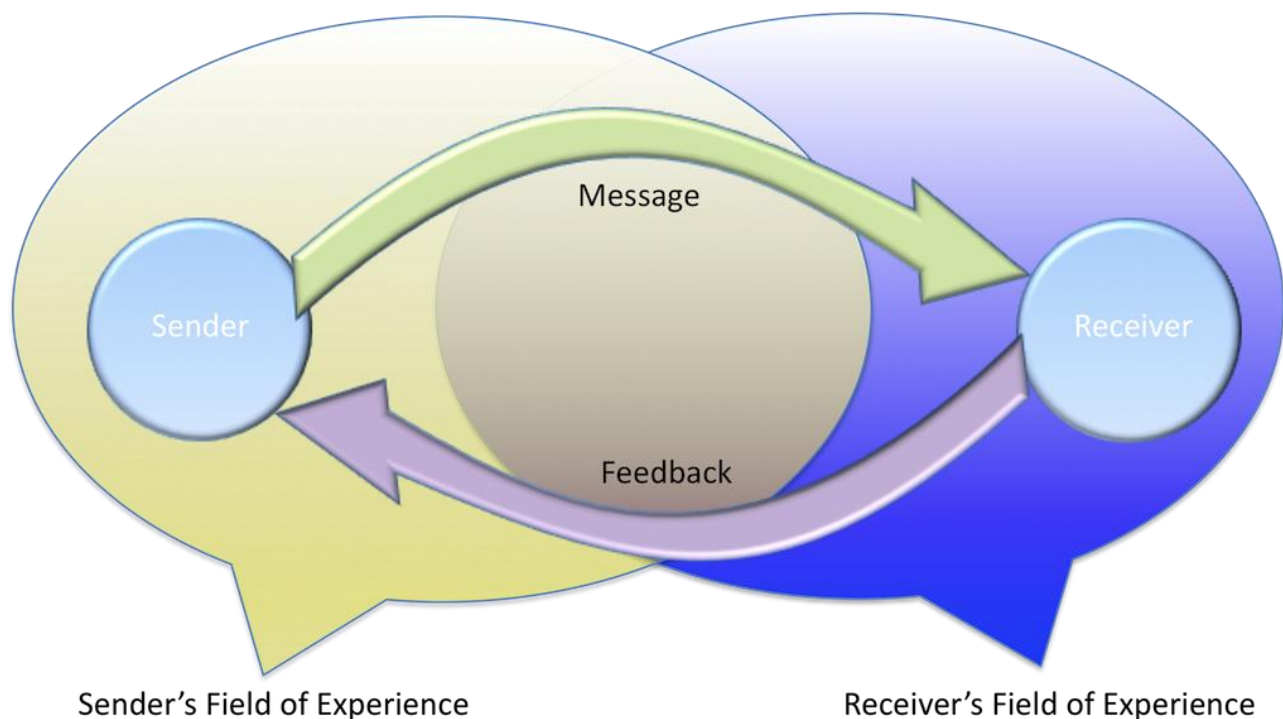
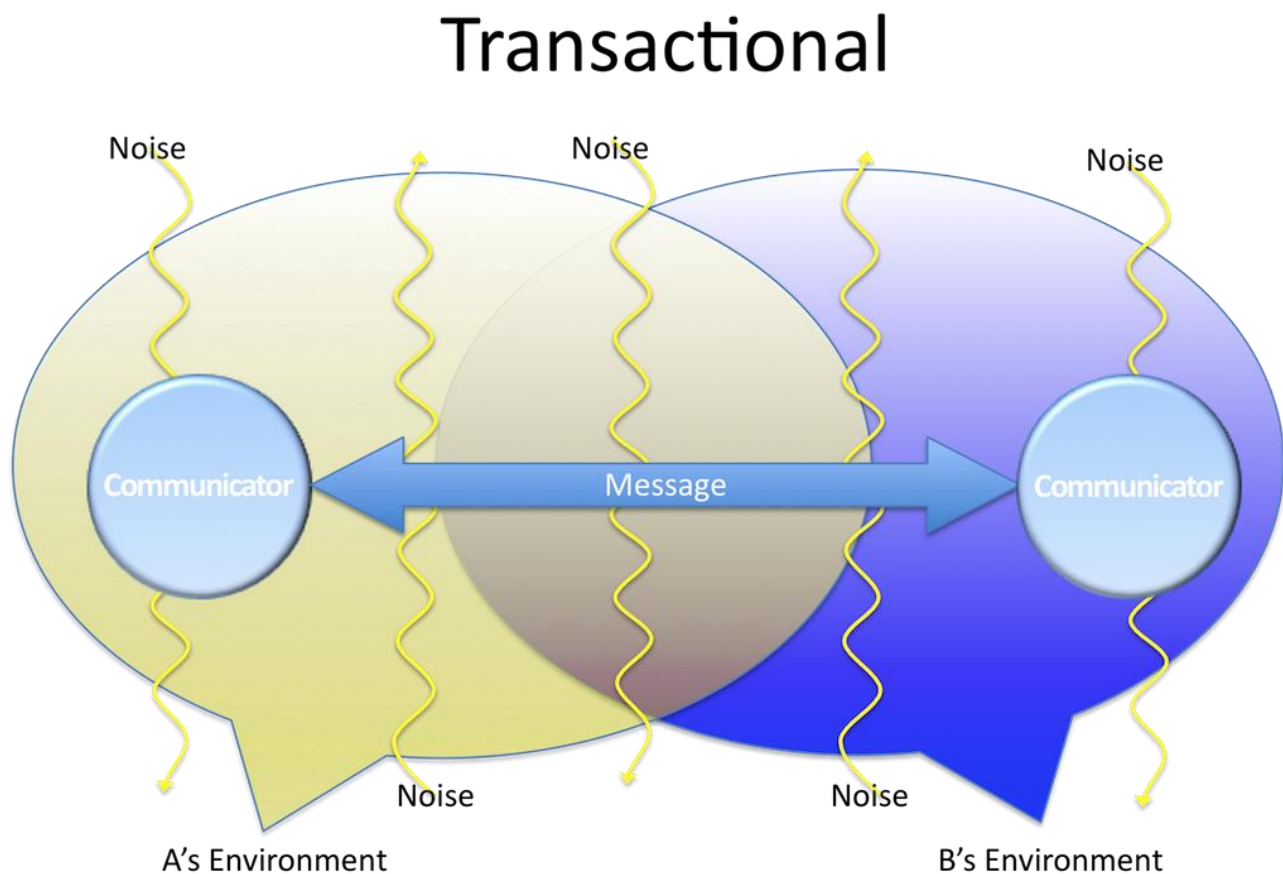Graph 02: Illustration of Interactional Models of Communication

The final feature of this model is the field of experience. The field of experience refers to how environment, experiences, culture, and even heredity can influence how a sender constructs a message. Keep in mind that each person brings a unique field of experience to an interaction. Likewise, each communication interaction is unique.

❖ Criticism of Interactional Models of Communication

While the interactional model is more dynamic than the linear model, it still contains some limitations. For instance, this model implies that while people can be both senders and receivers, they cannot do so simultaneously. In lived communication, roles are not quite so clear-cut and in fact are much more fluid.

c. Transactional Models of Communication

The transactional is the most dynamic of communication models. One notable feature of this model is the move from referring to people as senders and receivers to referring to people as communicators. This implies that communication is achieved as people both send and receive messages. (See Figure below) Fundamentally, this model views communication as a transaction. In other words, communication is a cooperative action in which communicators co-create the process, outcome and effectiveness of the interaction. Unlike the linear model in which meaning is sent from one person to another, also unlike the interactional model in which understanding is achieved through feedback, people create shared meaning in a more dynamic process in the transactional model.

Transactional

Graph 03: Illustration of Transactional Models of Communication

This model also places more emphasis on the field of experience. While each communicator has a unique field of experience, they must also inhabit a shared field of experience. In other words, communicators must share at least some degree of overlap in culture, language, or environment if people are to communicate at all. This

model also recognizes that messages will influence the responses, or subsequent messages, produced in the communication interaction. This means that messages do not stand alone, but instead are interrelated. The principle of interrelation states that messages are connected to and build upon one another. The transactional model forms the basis for much communication theory because (1) people are viewed as dynamic communicators rather than simple senders or receivers, (2) there must be some overlap in fields of experience in order to build shared meaning, and (3) messages are interdependent.

3. Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication is an exchange of information between two or more people. It is also an area of research that seeks to understand how humans use verbal and nonverbal cues to accomplish a number of personal and relational goals.

> **Rapport:** is a close and harmonious relationship in which the people or groups concerned understand each other's feelings or ideas and communicate well.
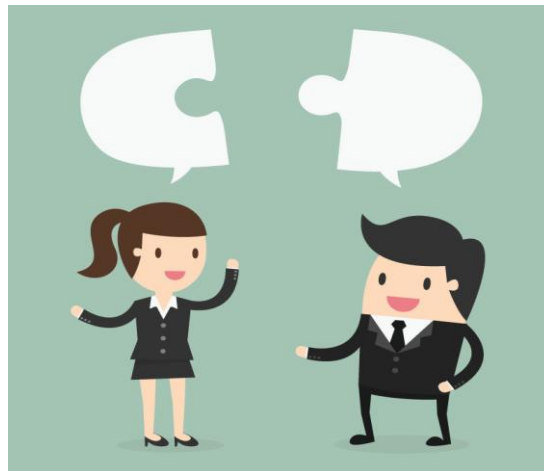
> **Acceptance:** is a set of linguistic or/and nonlinguistic signs to show that the receiver of a message agrees or disagrees with what the sender is trying to communicate. Saying "yes, that is right", "ok", "I agree with that", "hum", smiling and nodding are examples of acceptance.

4. Mass Communication

Mass communication is the process of imparting and exchanging information through mass media to large segments of the population. It is usually understood for relating to various forms of media, as its technologies are used for the dissemination of information, of which journalism and advertising are part.

➢ **Public Speaking**

Public speaking is the act, art, or process of making effective speeches in public, i.e. before an audience. It refers to both the formal and informal contexts. In ancient times, the Latin term oratory and Greek word rhetoric which mean "the art of persuasion, both in speech and writing" were used to refer to the activity of public speaking.

➢ **Debating**

Merriam-Webster defines debate as a contention by words or arguments. In terms of law or government, it is the formal discussion of a motion before a deliberative body according to the rules of parliamentary procedure. A debate can also serve as a regulated discussion of a proposition between two matched sides.

❖ **Steps of a Good Debate**

✓ Formally greet the chairperson, the opponent and the audience.
✓ In the introduction, make clear reference to the definition and topic of the debate.
✓ In the body, make at least three points to support your stand. Facts, statistics and quotations are highly appreciated to be used in supporting your viewpoint.
✓ Refute your opponent's argument as forcefully as possible, yet respectfully.
✓ Conclude with a brief summary of the argument and appeal for support from the audience.

5. Intrapersonal Communication

Intrapersonal communication is the process by which an individual communicates within themselves, acting as both sender and receiver of messages, and encompasses the use of unspoken words to consciously engage in self-talk and inner speech.

➢ **Assertiveness:** is a skill regularly referred to in social and communication skills training. Being assertive means being able to stand up for your own or other people's rights in a calm and positive way, without being either aggressive, or passively accepting 'wrong'.

➢ **Leadership:** is both a research area, and a practical skill encompassing the ability of an individual, group or organization to "lead", influence or guide other individuals, teams, or entire organizations.

Glossary

a. **Channel:** is the way in which a MESSAGE is conveyed from one person to another. The two most common channels of communication are speech and writing. Other examples are the use of drum beats, smoke signals, or flags.

  ➢ The path along which information is sent. In telephone communication, for example, the message is changed into electrical signals by the telephone and the channel of communication is the telephone wire.

b. **Communication Arts:** in a mainstream curriculum, those aspects of the curriculum that deal with verbal, non-verbal, and visual forms of communication, such as radio, TV, dance and drama.

c. **Communication Disorder:** is a disability or impairment that affects a person's ability to communicate, either verbally or non-verbally.

d. **Communication Network: is** the range of persons that members of a group communicate with. In any group (e.g. students in a class or members of a school staff), some members communicate more frequently with one another than with others, depending on their relationships, frequency of contact, etc. Communication networks may be studied as part of the study of BILINGUALISM and DIGLOSSIA as well as in studies of second language acquisition, since language learning and language use may depend upon both the frequency of use of a language as well as on whom one uses it to communicate with.

e. **Communication Strategy:** is a way used to express a meaning in a second or foreign language, by a learner who has a limited command of the language. In trying to communicate, a learner may have to make up for a lack of knowledge of grammar or vocabulary. For example the learner may not be able to say *It's against the law to park here* and so he/she may say *This place, cannot park.* For *handkerchief* a learner could say *a cloth for my nose,* and for *apartment complex* the learner could say *building.* The use of PARAPHRASE and other communication strategies (e.g. gesture and mime) characterize the INTER-LANGUAGE of some language learners.

f. **Communicative Competence:** is knowledge of not only if something is formally possible in a language, but also the knowledge of whether it is feasible, appropriate, or done in a particular SPEECH COMMUNITY. Communicative competence includes:

  ➢ **Grammatical competence** (also **formal competence**), that is knowledge of the grammar, vocabulary, phonology, and semantics of a language.

  ➢ **Sociolinguistic competence** (also **sociocultural competence**), that is, knowledge of the relationship between language and its nonlinguistic context, knowing how to use and respond appropriately to different types of SPEECH ACTS, such as requests, apologies, thanks, and invitations, knowing which ADDRESS FORMS

should be used with different persons one speaks to and in different situations, and so forth.

➢ **Discourse competence** (sometimes considered part of sociolinguistic competence), that is knowing how to begin and end conversations.

➢ **Strategic competence**, that is, knowledge of COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES that can compensate for weakness in other areas.

g. **Communicative Function:** is the extent to which a language is used in a community. Some languages may be used for very specific purposes, such as the language called *Pali*, which is used only for religious purposes in Buddhism. Other languages are used for almost all the communicative needs of a community, e.g. Japanese in Japan.

h. **Communicative Interference:** is the interference which is caused by the use of rules of speaking (e.g. greetings, ways of opening or closing conversations, address systems – see ADDRESS FORM) from one language when speaking another. For example, conversations in English often open with a health question (*How are you?)* but in other languages, such as Malay, open with a food question *(Have you eaten yet?).* A Malay-speaking student learning English who opened a conversation in English with *Have you eaten yet?* would be speaking with communicative interference from Malay to English.

i. **Cross-cultural Communication:** an exchange of ideas, information, etc., between persons from different cultural backgrounds. There are often more problems in cross-cultural communication than in communication between people of the same cultural background. Each participant may interpret the other's speech according to his or her own cultural conventions and expectations. If the cultural conventions of the speakers are widely different, misinterpretations and misunderstandings can easily arise, even resulting in a total breakdown of communication. This has been shown by research into real-life situations, such as job interviews, doctor-patient encounters and legal communication.

j. **Dyad:** is a situation of two people in communication with each other. A dyad can be considered as the smallest part of a larger communication network. For example, in describing language use within a family, some dyads would be mother-child, grandmother-child, elder sister-younger sister.

k. **Egocentric Speech:** is the speech which is not addressed to other people. This is one of two types of speech which the psychologist Piaget observed in the speech of children learning a first language. Egocentric speech serves the purpose of giving pleasure to the child and of expressing the child's thoughts, and provides an opportunity for the child to experiment or play with speech. It may be contrasted with <u>socialized speech</u>, or speech which is addressed to other people and which is used for communication.

l. **Extra-linguistic Features:** describe those features in communication which are not directly a part of verbal language but which either contribute in conveying a MESSAGE, e.g. hand movements, facial expressions, etc., or have an influence on language use, e.g. signaling a speaker's age, sex, or social class.

m. **Face:** in communication between two or more persons, the positive image or impression of oneself that one shows or intends to show to the other PARTICIPANT*s* is called face. In any social meeting between people, the participants attempt to communicate a positive image of themselves which reflects the values and beliefs of the participants. For example Ms Smith's "face" during a particular meeting might be that of "a sophisticated, intelligent, witty, and educated person". If this image is not accepted by the other participants, feelings may be hurt and there is a consequent "loss of face". Social contacts between people thus involve what the sociologist of language, Goffman, called **face-work**, that is, efforts by the participants to communicate a positive face and to prevent loss of face. The study of face and face-work is important in considering how languages express POLITENESS.

n. **Face threatening Act:** is any SPEECH ACT that is potentially threatening to the FACE of a speaker or hearer or threatening to the speaker or hearer's freedom of action. For example, apologies are potentially threatening to the good image of the speaker, while complaints are threatening to the good image of the hearer; requests potentially threaten the freedom of action of the hearer, while promises threaten the freedom of action of the speaker. In Brown and Levinson's theory of POLITENESS, potential threat to face is also influenced by SOCIAL DISTANCE and power relationships between speaker and hearer.

o. **Intercultural Communication:** is an interdisciplinary field of research that studies how people communicate and understand each other across group boundaries or discourse systems of various sorts including national, geographical, linguistic, ethnic, occupation, class or gender-related boundaries and how such boundaries affect language use. This could include the study of a corporate culture, a professional group, a gender discourse system, or a generational discourse system.

p. **Intergroup Communication:** is the communication between different groups, especially those which are socially, ethnically, or linguistically different. Intergroup communication is often by means of a LINGUA FRANCA, a language known by speakers of both groups. For example, in Indonesia, where many different languages are spoken, Bahasa Indonesia, the national language, is the language most frequently used for intergroup communication.