

# **A MEETING OF MINDS**

Direct Small Group Communication and Public Communication

As part of a Communication Science Curriculum in senior phase classrooms

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Abstract

## **A MEETING OF MINDS**

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In this thesis I present my recommendations regarding the role of direct small group communication and public communication in an envisaged Communication Science curriculum within the Language, Literacy and Communication learning area in the Further Education and Training band. I show that the fundamental switch from the traditional educator-centred teaching to learner-centred teaching in OBE requires that both educators and learners be in command of a range of communication strategies in order to construct meaning in real-world social contexts. Intrapersonal, interpersonal and small group involvements are all essential for successful teaching. I also stress the need for knowledge of verbal as well as nonverbal communication skills to give learners the confidence they need in the workplace.

The cooperative method of teaching brings democracy into the OBE classroom with learners contributing from their daily lives as well as having their needs met. I examine an array of forms of communication that learners and educators must be in command of to succeed in OBE. I argue that since the human mind integrates knowledge, the demarcations between learning areas are mainly posited for heuristic convenience. An analysis of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (C2005) shows that most of the components required to form the basis for offering Communication Science as a coherent formal discipline in the Further Education and Training (FET) band, can be found, dispersed throughout the General Education

and Training (GET) band, (Grades R to 9) within the Language, Literacy and Communication learning area. In the penultimate chapter I utilise the insights gained to suggest what the curriculum could include for teaching direct small group communication and public communication as part of the envisaged Communication Science curriculum.

Finally, I would like to point out that my thesis forms part of a number of coordinated studies on the feasibility of including particular aspects of human communication as part of the envisaged Communication Science curriculum.

## WRITING CONVENTIONS

I wish to draw the attention of the reader to the following conventions that I am following in this study:

1. I am using the abbreviated Harvard style of referencing, for example Reed 1996: 52, meaning Reed 1996, page 52.
2. The Department of Education's policy documents outlining the Revised National Curriculum Statement for Grades R to 9 that I consulted consist of 10 electronic files in Adobe Acrobat format. When referring to the Revised National Curriculum Statement I use the following format: C2005 (rev overview-doc) 2001: 10. The learning area document or policy document appears in brackets.
3. I have made a conscious effort to limit the use of footnotes as far as possible in order to facilitate the uninterrupted reading of the thesis.
4. Illustrative graphics, tables and graphs are all given as Figures 1–16 in their chronological sequence of appearance.
5. For commonly used terms full terms are used in headings. Acronyms are used in paragraphs.
6. In consultation with my promoter I consciously tracked down relevant information relating to verbal and nonverbal small group and public communication, and included the relevant material in my thesis, accompanied by

the website address (URL) of the websites where I found the material. Such website addresses are included in my thesis, both for verification purposes, and for acknowledging the sources of the information that I have drawn together. An example of a typical website address is: <http://www.howardcc.edu/profdev/resources/learning/groups1.htm>. It should however be kept in mind that the Worldwide Web (WWW) is ephemeral and ever changing. It may well be that websites from which I garnered information will go offline or alter their contents over the course of time. While it is inevitable that some of the servers will shed documents, the periodic updating of files on most websites ensures the renewal of knowledge that does not happen as readily in the print media.

7. In instances where authorship could be established for website contents, or for an electronic document downloaded from websites, the author is given, followed by the website address as in: Bell 1998: [http:// www.howardcc.edu/profdev/resources/learning/groups1.htm](http://www.howardcc.edu/profdev/resources/learning/groups1.htm). I give the URL in place of page numbers because Website contents are not paginated.
8. In the bibliography I have separated the references in authored and non-authored references, and authored homepages that relate to the communication process. The non-authored references include websites.

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## *Chapter 1*

### ORIENTATION

#### **PREVIEW**

My research focuses on the introduction of small group communication in an envisaged Communication Science curriculum in Outcomes-Based Education in senior phase and the Further Education and Training band of school curricula. In this chapter, I will provide a brief outline of the structure of this thesis.

In chapter 2, I state the problems that will be investigated, the aims of my research and the research methodology I used to find solutions to the problems.

In chapter 3, I define and discuss the key concepts used in this study and show how cognitive processes determine human behaviour.

In chapter 4, I motivate for direct small group communication and public communication to be part of a newly developed Communication Science learning programme in the Language, Literacy and Communication learning area in the Further Education and Training (FET) band.

In chapter 5, I discuss how humans communicate by the use of verbal as well as nonverbal skills during direct small group communication and public communication.

In chapter 6, I describe the role of communication in OBE. I discuss information sharing as the primary goal among educators and learners.

In chapter 7, I explain the compelling need to introduce direct small group communication and public communication in a Communication Science curriculum in the Further Education and Training band.

In chapter 8, I present the conclusions of my research and make a number of recommendations as to why the introduction of Communication Science would enhance the Language, Literacy and Communication Learning Area in the Further Education and Training band.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, I provided a brief outline of the structure of this thesis concerning the introduction of small group communication in an envisaged Communication Science curriculum in Outcomes-Based Education in senior phase classrooms in the Further Education and Training Band. In chapter 2 I will identify the systemic problems in OBE, state the aims of my research and indicate research methodologies.

## *Chapter 2*

### STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS AND RESEARCH PROCEDURE

#### **PREVIEW**

In this chapter, I will motivate why direct small group communication should form part of an envisaged Communication Science curriculum in Outcomes-Based Education in the Further Education and Training band. I will identify and discuss four systemic problems in Outcomes-based Education for which the introduction of Communication Science can be part of the solutions. Thereafter I will state the aims of my research, and I will indicate what research methodology I used to find solutions to these problems in order to meet the aims of my research.

#### **STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS TO BE ANALYSED**

This thesis presents the curriculum contents for direct small group communication in an envisaged Communication Science curriculum to be introduced as part of the Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) renewal of the Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC) learning area in the Further Education and Training (FET) band of school subjects.

As part of educational renewal in South Africa one of the learning areas, Language, Literacy and Communication, entails of shift from passive learning about language and literature in general to a more pragmatic approach to language use that includes mastery of a series of dynamic communication skills. In this thesis I will argue that such a shift can best be effected through the formal introduction of Communication Science as an independent subject within the Language, Literacy Communications learning area in the senior phase and the Further Education and Training band.

**Problem 1: Broad implications for language learning due to the switch from traditional education to OBE**

Traditional approaches to language teaching entailed the study of the literatures and the grammatical rules of such languages. The introduction of OBE entails a fundamental switch from active teaching and passive learning to an interactive, cooperative process of learning where both educators and learners need to be in command of a range of interpersonal communication skills. In this thesis I will present the results of research on the specific direct communication skills that educators and learners need to master in order for OBE to succeed as a programme of cooperative learning in the senior phase and the Further Education and Training band of school curricula.

**Problem 2: The place of Communication Science in the Language, Literacy, Communication learning area in the senior phase and the Further Education and Training band of school curricula**

With the shift away from passive knowledge about languages to an active communicative competence in particular languages as well as in other subjects I will present the results of research on what the interrelationship should be between language studies, literacy studies and Communication Science in the senior phase and the FET band of school curricula.

**Problem 3: The nature of possible strategic alliances between direct small group communication and other learning areas**

This problem relates to the non-availability of appropriate prescribed texts and learning materials to be used in OBE classrooms in the intermediate phase.

A major implication of OBE is that learning cannot be limited to one or two textbooks because all fields of knowledge are ultimately interlinked in the human brain. This means that effective learning has to be based on studying a wide variety of references in the form of prescribed texts and learning materials. In this thesis I will identify an array of internet-based resources that can be accessed by educators active in LLC in the senior phase, in order to overcome the tendency to narrowly focus on one or two prescribed textbook books.

**Problem 4: The relationship between verbal communication and nonverbal communication in secondary school Communication Science curricula**

Research within Communication Science reveals that participants in the prototypical form of small group communication namely, conversation, derive less than a third of their conclusions from the actual verbal content of the communication, with about two thirds being derived from forms of nonverbal communication such as facial expression, gesture and posture. This problem relates to the cognitive as well as the meta-cognitive aspects of direct verbal and nonverbal communication. In this thesis I will present the results of research on what the interrelationship should be between verbal and nonverbal communication as part of Communication Science in the senior phase and the Further Education and Training band of school curricula.

**AIMS**

Based on the above-mentioned four problems I have the following four aims with this thesis:

**Aim 1**

To work out the broad implications for language learning due to the switch from traditional education to OBE

**Aim 2**

To determine the place of Communication Science in the LLC learning area in secondary school curricula.

**Aim 3**

To determine possible strategic alliances between Communication Science and subjects in the LLC as well as in other learning areas.

**Aim 4**

To determine the relationship between verbal communication and nonverbal communication in the senior phase of school curricula

## **RESEARCH PROCEDURES**

This thesis is of an analytic-descriptive nature, which entails the following:

- A review will be given of the concept of “curriculum” in OBE
- The role of communication in OBE will be explained
- The nature of Direct Small Group Communication within the OBE framework will be explained
- The nature of Communication Science will be outlined, and it will be motivated why Communication Science forms a proper framework for an integrative approach to learning.
- Proposals will be made about use of Direct Small Group Communication in the senior phase of OBE, by using specific communication strategies as part of teaching and learning within the general framework of Communication Science.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this chapter I stated which problems there are with regard to direct small group communication in an envisaged Communication Science curriculum in OBE in senior phase classrooms. Thereafter I stated the aims of my research, and I indicated what research methodology I used to find solutions to these problems in order to meet the aims of my research. In chapter 3 I define the key concepts concerning an envisaged Communication Science curriculum in the FET band.

## *Chapter 3*

### KEY CONCEPTS

#### **PREVIEW**

In this chapter I will define the key concepts relating to my research regarding direct small group communication in a proposed Communication Science curriculum for the Further Education and Training (FET) band of Curriculum 2005. The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the main concepts that I will be working with, and which I will analyse in greater detail in subsequent chapters.

#### **COMMUNICATION**

Williams 1992: 11 states that communication is an activity, not a “thing”. How humans communicate is greatly significant in our lives. Human beings have communicated from the very beginning of time. More of our time is given over to communication than to any other human behaviour. It is vital to the development of our personalities and personal and professional achievement. According to Sternberg 1998: 483 communication can be either verbal or nonverbal. I will show in subsequent chapters how important it is that we have an understanding of human communication – what it is, how it works, where it is going, and particularly, where each of us may be going with it.

#### **Direct small group communication**

Small group communication refers to communication within a group of between three and twelve people. Borchers 1999: <http://www.abacon.com/commstudies/groups/definition.html> states that with three members coalitions can be formed and some kind of organisation is present. Small group communication is used basically to enable people to accomplish things collectively, such as solving problems or making decisions. Examples of small groups are committees and the family. Small

group communication begins with a meeting of minds and I will discuss this in greater detail in chapter 5.

### **Public communication**

According to Williams 1992: 210 this is communication typically disseminated widely to large groups of people, hence the label *public*. Steinberg 1999b: 53, states that public communication refers to a situation where a communicator like a lecturer or an entertainer does most of the talking while several people do the listening. Groups of people being addressed in the public speaking context are much larger than in the small group context. The result is that interaction between the members is severely limited or even impossible. However, the relatively face-to-face nature of public communication allows recipients actively to participate in the communication process through their occasional responses to what the communicator says. This allows the communicator to make on-the-spot adjustments to the message. Public communication is one of the major themes of a Communication Science syllabus.

### **COMMUNICATION SCIENCE**

The major references do not define Communication Science as a discipline. Mer-sham and Skinner 1999, 2001a and 2001b for instance use the term without defining it. In the absence of such a definition I am outlining the major components by extracting the most important themes from major authors. According to these authors, Communication Science is a systematic study of the codes, the modes, means and the objectives of the different forms of human communication, namely:

- Small group communication
- Intrapersonal communication
- Public communication
- Mass communication
- Organisational communication

- o Digital communication

### **OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION (OBE)**

Klopper 2000: 5 defines OBE as a form of constructivist education that emphasises the acquisition of practical skills as an integral part of knowledge construction. Van der Horst and McDonald 1997: 13 state that objectives, competency-based education, mastery learning and criterion-referenced assessment together form the theoretical foundation of OBE. An educator who acts as facilitator rather than a mere presenter of knowledge facilitates the learner towards the achievement of outcomes.

Chisholm et al (rev overview-doc) 2001: 20 state that there are eight learning areas in the Revised National Curriculum Statement. The learning areas are Language, Literacy and Communication, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Technology, Social Sciences, Arts and Culture, Life Orientation, Economic and Management Sciences.

According to Manganyi 1997a: <http://www.polity.org.za/govdocs/misc/curr2005.html> the South African Qualifications Authority Act 1995 (Act No. 58 of 1995) makes provision for the generation and registration of national education and training standards/qualifications, and the monitoring and auditing of achievements in terms of such standards and qualifications. This law gives SAQA the power to set up and maintain an integrated National Qualifications Framework (NQF) for all aspects of learning in South Africa.

Chisholm et al (rev overview-doc) 2001: 28, state that level 1 on the NQF is known as the General Education and Training band. In schooling it represents the Foundation, Intermediate and Senior phases. According to Chisholm et al (rev qualifications doc) 2001: 5 the Further Education and Training (FET) programmes reflect learners' emerging areas of interest and take cognisance of learnings towards career fields and opportunities. This band includes Grades 10 to 12 in school education, out-of school youth and adult learners. For the purposes of this study I am utilising information from the GET Band that is appropriate for formalising curriculum in the FET band.

Klopper, 2000b: 6-28 describes core curriculum learning, whole language learning, multicultural learning, observational learning, problem-based learning, cooperative learning, accelerated learning, thematic learning, service learning, brain-based learning, hemisphere preferential learning and whole-brain learning as learning methods that can be adopted in the classroom. Whole brain learning is the most suitable learning approach in the OBE classroom because the full potential of the learner is activated. Communication Science is a comprehensive discipline, which develops all of an individual's potentials and therefore will encourage whole brain learning.

Differences and similarities in learners have to be recognised and confirmed if communication is to be authentic. In the constructivist classroom learners engage in a variety of communication skills, including verbal, nonverbal and written skills. Because Communication Science is so comprehensive, it does not tolerate the narrow acquisition of skills. Educators focus on the seven intelligences, which include visual-spatial, bodily kinaesthetic, musical-rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, verbal linguistic and logical-mathematical.

### **Traditional Outcomes-Based Education**

According to Chisholm et al 2000: 11 Spady, one of the architects of OBE has stated that traditional OBE encompassed negative elements of education, such as rote learning, subject divisions, content-based knowledge and summative assessment. Traditional and transformational OBE would be depicted as opposite ends of the continuum.

### **Transitional Outcomes-Based Education**

Transitional OBE lies between the two extremes of traditional and transformational OBE. According to Brandt 1994: <http://showcase.netins.net/web/fwr/spawil.htm>, Spady's transitional OBE extends beyond the traditional OBE in that higher order competencies are emphasised – 'it centres curriculum and assessment design around higher order exit outcomes'. Having graduates who are broadly competent persons best reflects its vision.

### **Transformational Outcomes-Based Education**

Spady and Marshall 1991: <http://showcase.netins.net/web/fwr/oubapare.htm> state that transformational OBE has its roots in the future-scanning procedures found in well-designed strategic planning and design models. Marsh 1997a: 41, describes transformational OBE as being future oriented and committed to success for all learners. It includes clearly defined and publicly derived “exit outcomes” that reflect changing societal conditions and a curriculum framework that derives from the exit outcomes. It also includes a variety of methods that assures learners successful demonstration of all outcomes and provides more than one chance for learners to be successful. It incorporates a criterion-referenced and consistently applied system of assessment, performance standards, credentialing and reporting.

### **THE REVISED NATIONAL CURRICULUM STATEMENT**

Because the initial national curriculum statement for OBE was generally perceived to be problematic, the Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal in 2000 appointed the new committee popularly known as the Chisholm committee. This committee revised the initial curriculum statement and released the revised national curriculum statement. It was released online in the form of eight electronic documents in Adobe acrobat format. The Revised National Curriculum Statement strengthens and consolidates Curriculum 2005, which was first introduced in 1998. It does so through simplifying and streamlining its main design elements while at the same time ensuring that learning expectations are clearly spelt out at each grade. This Revised National Curriculum Statement is made up of critical and developmental outcomes, learning outcomes and assessment standards.

### **ASSESSMENT**

Van der Horst and McDonald 1997: 167 state that assessment of learning is an essential element of OBE. There seems to be a move from input-based, norm-referenced, summative assessment to outcomes based, criterion-referenced formative assessment. According to Chisholm et al (rev overview-doc) 2001:22-23 assessment standards can be used to demonstrate the depth and breadth of what

should be taught and learnt at each grade. They indicate what has to be assessed and the extent to which learners are achieving the linked learning outcomes. Continuous assessment means that educators need to assess learners not only through marking their work (summative assessment), but also assessing different kinds of written and oral work completed for exams or tests. The purpose of such assessment is to assess strengths and weaknesses. It is formative and developmental thereby promoting competence in learners. Figure 1 represents the holistic approach to assessment.

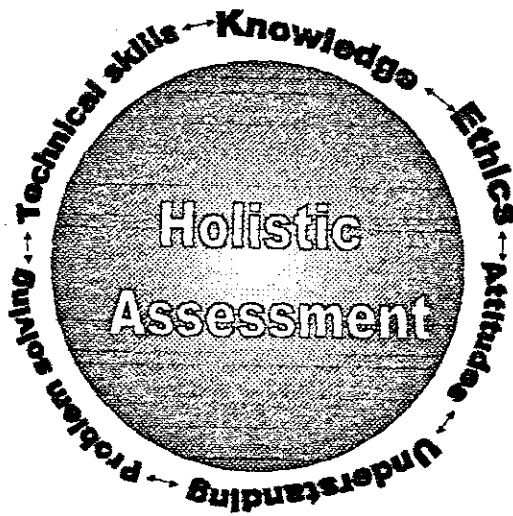


Figure 1: Integrated Assessment Van der Horst and McDonald 1997: 165

### CONSTRUCTIVISM

Klopper 2000: 4 defines constructivism as a theory of learning that is grounded on the premise that human beings continuously and automatically construct knowledge of our interaction with other entities in the environment. According to Hanley 1994: <http://www.towson.edu/csme/mctp/Essays/Constructivism.txt> learners actively take knowledge, connect it to previously assimilated knowledge and make it theirs by constructing their own interpretation. Klopper explains that humans use basic elements of knowledge known as image schemas to construct knowledge in the form of mental models that represent our understanding of which things there are in the world that we live in, how things interrelate and in what interactions they

can be involved. Learning is therefore a process of continuously adjusting our mental models to accommodate new experiences.

## **SYLLABUS**

Marsh 1997a: 4 describes 'syllabus' as a summary statement about the content to be taught in a course or unit, which is often linked to an external examination. The emphasis is on *what* content is to be taught at school. According to Kearsley 1996: [http://www.asu.edu/cfa/wwwcourses/art/SOACore/syllabus\\_definition.html](http://www.asu.edu/cfa/wwwcourses/art/SOACore/syllabus_definition.html)<sup>1</sup> the single most important instrument of structure in a course is the syllabus, which outlines the goals and objectives of a course, prerequisites, the grading/evaluation scheme, materials to be used (textbooks, software), topics to be covered, a schedule, and a bibliography. Each of these components defines the nature of the learning experience.

## **CURRICULUM**

According to Parker et al 1998: 16 curriculum is dynamic and includes all the learning experiences provided for the learner. Marsh 1997a: 5 describes curriculum as an interrelated set of plans and experiences, which a learner completes under the guidance of the school. It includes all persons also associated with the school who might have some input into planning a curriculum. It might normally include educators, school councils and external specialists such as advisory inspectors. The basic elements of curriculum design must reflect the intentions of the teaching-learning goals for any educational program. Curriculum considerations flow from the curriculum goals (what a learner should know and be able to do), to how to best teach and assess those goals in a unified or mutually supporting manner. The vision of lifelong learning supported by OBE forms the heart of the Revised National Curriculum project.

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<sup>1</sup> While website addresses usually end with the element "html" this website ends with "html"

## **CURRICULUM INTEGRATION**

Parker et al 1998: 16, state that particular attention is required to ensure that there is congruence between the various dimensions of learning. Van der Horst and McDonald 1997: 240, state that interdependence of the intellectual, physical, emotional and intuitive domains of human functioning bring about learning that is more effective. Curriculum is relevant to the learner when it takes into account a combination of the general and specific content. This means that curriculum must focus on learner values, thinking processes, cultural diversity, discovery and workplace experiences. The curriculum must provide situations for the transference of learning and knowledge taking into account various problems and situations. Curriculum integration increases the relevancy of learning experiences by connecting learning to real life applications. General and vocational education concepts and skills must be incorporated into the curriculum design. Integrated school-to-work curriculum influences what skills and information learners learn, how well they learn, and how transferable these skills and knowledge are to real-world applications.

## **THE LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION LEARNING AREA**

Elements of the Language, Literacy and Communication learning area are distributed diffusely throughout a number of learning areas, but this research proposes that Communication Science as a comprehensive and coherent discipline be systematically introduced in the form of core and elective modules in grades 10 to 12 in the FET band. According to Chisholm (rev languages) 2001: 14 the Language, Literacy and Communication Learning Area includes all 11 official languages: Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, SiSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, IsiNdebele, IsiXhosa and IsiZulu, languages approved by the Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB) and the South African Certification Authority (SAFCERT) such as Braille and sign language. In a multilingual country like South Africa it is important that learners reach high levels of proficiency in at least two languages and that they are able to communicate in other languages. By the end of Grade 9, they should be able to use both languages to demonstrate the competencies described in the Critical Outcomes.

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter I defined the key concepts relating to my research regarding direct small group communication in a proposed Communication Science curriculum for the Further Education and Training (FET) band of Curriculum 2005. I described the key elements of the communication process in direct small group communication as well as in public communication. I briefly discussed the revised national curriculum statement and the role of OBE in the classroom as precursor to the recommendations that I will be making in chapters 7 and 8 in this regard. In subsequent chapters, I will discuss how each of these concepts forms an important part of a Communication Science curriculum. In chapter 4 I will outline the nature of Communication Science as a discipline.

## *Chapter 4*

### COMMUNICATION SCIENCE

#### **PREVIEW**

The core intention of this study is to present direct small group communication and public communication as part of a newly developed Communication Science learning programme in the Language, Literacy and Communication learning area in the Further Education and Training (FET) band. Before one can however motivate the content of a Communication Science learning programme, it should be clearly established what the discipline Communication Science entails. In the rest of this chapter, I will therefore outline the nature of Communication Science as a discipline.

#### **COMMUNICATION SCIENCE AS A DISCIPLINE**

##### **The lack of definitions of the term “Communication Science”**

Standard references on the communication process, such as Merham and Skinner 1999, 2001a, 2001b and Williams 1992, do not provide a definition of the term “Communication Science.”

Marchant 1988: 51 stated almost a decade ago that Communication Science had only just emerged as an academic discipline. In the past, the main concern of communication research was the investigation of effects, that is, of the changes in an individual's behaviour, which occur because of the transmission of a message. The concept “interactivity,” - the result of the new communication technologies - has resulted in an epistemological approach to Communication Science.

In the absence of definitions, another strategy to determine what “Communication Science” means is to survey communication related courses offered at South African tertiary institutions.

Because human communication has many facets, South African universities exploit different niches of this phenomenon. A survey of the homepages of South African universities that offer undergraduate and postgraduate programmes dealing with aspects of the communication process demonstrates how different tertiary institutions are “positioning” themselves in relation to one another in an attempt to optimise their share of the learner intake in a strongly contested tertiary education market. For the purposes of this discussion, I will mainly refer to the undergraduate offerings of the various institutions.

### ***The Department of Communication at the University of South Africa (UNISA)***

This department at UNISA, (<http://www.unisa.ac.za/dept/kom/index.html>) offers a BA Degree in Communication Science as well as new specialised undergraduate communication modules (<http://www.unisa.ac.za/dept/kom/modules.htm>). The modules include an introduction to communication, persuasive communication skills (public speaking), interpersonal communication, organisational communication, public relations and advertising, intercultural, development and health communication. The following third level modules will be offered from 2002: marketing communication, media studies: institutions, theories and issues, media studies: content, audiences and production, new media technology, international communication, communication research, political and government communication, communication ethics, public relations practice and applied advertising.

The Department of Communication offers both an undergraduate and post graduate study in Communication Science a generalist programme that stresses the most prominent theories underlying nonverbal, intrapersonal, interpersonal, small group, organisational and mass communication in conjunction with language and literary study.

### ***The Department of Communication Science at the University of Zululand***

The undergraduate programme offered by the Department of Communication Science at the University of Zululand (<http://www.comsci.co.za/>), the *BA in Communication, Information and Technology*, like UNISA’s programme, grounds learners in gen-

eral theoretical principles of a variety of aspects of communication. The broad, general focus of the programme includes modules that deal with the principles and practices of interpersonal communication, intrapersonal communication, mass communication, public communication and organisational communication. The programme also contains modules dealing with public relations and journalism, including electronic journalism. The latter module forms part of the strong emphases that the programme places on digital communication, in the form of modules in computer literacy, computer mediated learning in paper-free virtual classrooms. There is also an emphasis on standard, as well as emerging technologies, which drive digital communication, such as web browsing on the Internet, email, web authoring and the convergence of modes of digital communication.

The BA in Communication, Information and Technology is based on the most recent principles of electronic knowledge acquisition. Learners will learn how to:

- Think critically and creatively
- Work independently, or as a team member
- Communicate in small groups, or in public
- Write professional reports and articles
- Develop leadership skills
- Motivate workers, persuade clients and negotiate with customers
- Prepare for a career in the broadcast media, public relations, advertising, marketing, journalism, corporate communications and digital media
- Master 21st Century computer-based electronic communication skills, like creating electronic documents, using e-mail, doing electronic research on the Internet and doing electronic web pages for clients

The Department of Communication Science at the Durban Campus specialises in postgraduate thesis and dissertation studies in the fields of interpersonal communication, organisational communication, electronic communication, educational communication and the relationship between cognition and communication.

***The Department of Communication at the Rand Afrikaans University***

This department ([http://general.rau.ac.za/comm/pregrad\\_fp.htm](http://general.rau.ac.za/comm/pregrad_fp.htm))<sup>2</sup> offers Bachelors degree programmes in Audiovisual Production Management, Corporate Communication, Journalism, Marketing Communication and Sport Communication in contrast with UNISA and the University of Zululand that offer single programmes with broad, general foci.

***The Faculty of Arts at University of Stellenbosch***

The Department of Journalism at the University of Stellenbosch offers a specialised postgraduate degree for journalists.

***The School of Communication Studies at Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education***

This department (<http://www.puk.ac.za/oorsig/index.html>) offers an undergraduate degree in Business Communication (BBK).

***The Department of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University***

This department (<http://www.rhodes.ac.za/academic/departments/journalism/>) offers a specialist four years Bachelor of Journalism programme.

From the above reviews, it can be seen that communication is a multi-varied area of study and that different tertiary institutions in South Africa generally offer different aspects of it. The term Communication Science should be reserved for comprehensive generalist programmes like those offered at UNISA or the University of Zululand.

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<sup>2</sup> Please note underscore character `pregrad_fp`, which does not show in the RAU website address due to underling convention in website addresses

If one considers all the offerings of the different universities then one can define Communication Science as the systematic study of the theoretical principles that inform the practice in the following areas of human communication as well as a number of professions that utilise them:

- Interpersonal communication
- Intrapersonal communication
- Public communication
- Mass communication
- Organisational communication
- Digital communication
- Journalism
- Public relations

With the introduction of OBE there has been a shift away from old style teaching, to modern styles of teaching that are very reliant. It has become evident that educators have to have a command of communication skills. Education could easily be listed as a profession that is dependent on communication skills.

#### **COMMUNICATION SCIENCE IN THE FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING BAND**

Learners in this band are heading for higher education and are increasingly in programmes that prepare them for careers in commerce and industry and the private sector. Even a cursory scan of job advertisements shows that in all of these professions excellence in communication skills is given very high priority. This leads one to the conclusion that in the FET band Communication Science should be formalised as a course of study along with the languages to proactively equip learners with the type of communication skills that they will later require in their chosen careers.

## COMMUNICATION SCIENCE IN THE ADULT BASIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING BAND

Because the utility of communication science forms the focus of another student's masters research, I will make only general observations in this regard. This band is being specifically formalised to assist adults to acquire appropriate skills for their present careers and to give them on the principle of recognition of prior learning access to higher education to enhance their future career prospects. A review of present matric language subjects as well as language studies at university level show a heavy emphasis on the study of literature. Particularly for adult learners it is appropriate to engage in courses of study that heavily emphasise communication skills in strategic alliances with computer literacy training rather than a heavy emphasis on the study of literature.

According to Williams 1992: 21 the most successful communications professionals of the next half century will likely be those whose entrepreneurial spirit guides them to best meet the needs of a society entering into a truly communications-saturated future.

### THE TERM "COMMUNICATION" IN THE TITLE "COMMUNICATION SCIENCE"

According to Steinberg 1999a: 3 when we think about communication, we immediately think about a conversation between friends, a politician making a persuasive speech, a minister delivering a sermon, or even the exchange of glances between lovers. Others immediately associate communication with mass media such as newspapers, radio and television. To some, communication brings to mind computers, cellular phones and satellites. Communication is also used to describe traffic signals, Morse code, the sign languages of the deaf, uniforms, flags and telephone calls. A child's cry, a mother's kiss, a facial expression, graffiti on the wall of a public restroom, even silence, are also referred to as *communication*. It is equally difficult to describe why we use communication. People communicate to establish relationships with others, to express feelings and opinions, to share experiences, to work together efficiently, to be entertained, and to persuade others to think as they do. What is

very clear is that communication is used to describe many things. For this reason, it is difficult to arrive at an exact definition of communication.

Williams 1992: 10 describes communication as the exchange of meaningful symbols, a process that requires a medium. Communication can be transactional and interactive. Williams states that most human communication has some purpose to it and we communicate to satisfy our human needs.

Steinberg 1999a: 4, believes that one of the reasons for the proliferation of definitions is that there is no single approach to the study of communication. Definitions differ according to the *theorist's* views about communication. In the scientific study of communication, there are two general and basic views about communication:

- A technical view
- A meaning-centred view

Theorists who adopt a technical view are concerned with how accurately and efficiently messages can be transferred from one person to another along a channel such as a telephone wire or the airwaves that carry sound and pictures to radios and television sets. They attempt to identify ways of increasing the clarity and accuracy of the message and concentrate on improving the tools and techniques that promote efficient communication, such as clear telephone lines or faster computers. Communication is seen as a linear (one-way) sequence of events from Person A to Person B. From a *technical* point of view, communication can be defined very simply as *sending and receiving messages*, or *the transmission of messages from one person to another*. However, solving technical or engineering problems does not tell us much about the complexity of communication or the human aspect of communication.

A second and more complex view of communication is that, in addition to the transmission of messages, it involves their interpretation and *meaning*. This view considers communication as a human phenomenon and the central aspect of human existence. Our ability to communicate is what distinguishes us from other forms of life. Meaning-centred theorists concentrate on issues such as what moti-

vates people to communicate in the first place, how they give meaning to each other's messages, what happens between them during communication, and how they use language to create and exchange meaningful messages. The emphasis is on the *interaction* between the participants in communication. From this point of view, communication can be defined as a *dynamic process of exchanging meaningful messages*.

Steinberg 1999a: 5, states that defining communication as a *process* brings us closer to an understanding of the complexity of communication. In contrast to the technical view, considering communication as a process means that it is not a fixed, static thing; rather, it is dynamic, never-ending and ever changing. It does not have a beginning or an end, nor does it follow a fixed sequence of events.

The use of the term *process* also tells us that communication is characterised by continuous evolution and change. We change others and are changed by them when we communicate. All the communication encounters you have had in the past, as well as all the information, ideas and opinions you have gathered gradually change you and your behaviour, and consequently the way you communicate with others.

A process is also irreversible, which means that each communication encounter you have influences the one that follows. How you communicated with someone in the past can help or hinder your communication with them in the future.

An extension of the process definition is the *transactional definition* of communication. Contemporary theorists regard communication not only as an interactive process of exchanging meaningful messages, but as a *transaction* between the participants during which a relationship develops between them. A transactional process is one in which the people communicating are mutually responsible for the outcome of the communication encounter as they transmit information, create meaning and elicit responses. The focus is on the *quality of the relationship* that develops between them, as well as on the transfer and interpretation of messages. Communication becomes a reciprocal process in which meaning is negotiated through the exchange of messages. From this perspective, communication is defined as a *transactional process of exchanging messages and negotiating meaning to establish and maintain relationships*. The con-

cept of transaction suggests that the participants must arrive at some mutual agreement about the meaning of their messages for communication to be effective and for their relationship to be satisfying.

The definitions make it clear that the communication process is more complex than one person sending a message to another person.

**THE TERM “SCIENCE” IN THE TITLE “COMMUNICATION SCIENCE”**

The term “science” in the title “communication science” relates to the systematic, comprehensive study of all aspects of human communication, the interrelationship between cognition and communication, including the subconscious aspects of communication encoding and decoding.

**A MODEL OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS**

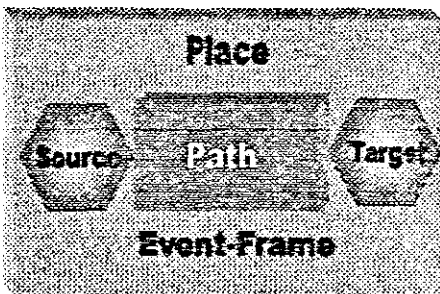


Figure 2: The most generic communication event-frame

Communication occurs with a meeting of minds. Figure 2 illustrates the most generic aspects of the process of human interaction. It also forms the basis of communication as a more specific form of communication.

It is important to also make the above human interaction model the basis of human communication.

Complex interaction events consist of event frames where different participants alternate in fulfilling the functions of source and target at successive stages as in Figure 3. The generic figure can represent any specific interaction between two participants, whether it is sword fighting, tennis or conversation. It therefore forms the basis for the communication event frame presented as Figure 3.

At the generic level the process is not context specific and is general enough to serve as a basic model for any type of communication. Most often we are not aware that *time* and *place* are fused in the event-frame. It is only when there is an event that does not live up to our expectations that we become irritated at the loss of time. The ability to perceive an inter-relationship is the most fundamental of the event-frame schemas. Cognitive science tells us that the brain finds common patterns, which we perceive as events. I will discuss how the participants fulfil specific roles in these events in direct small group communication.

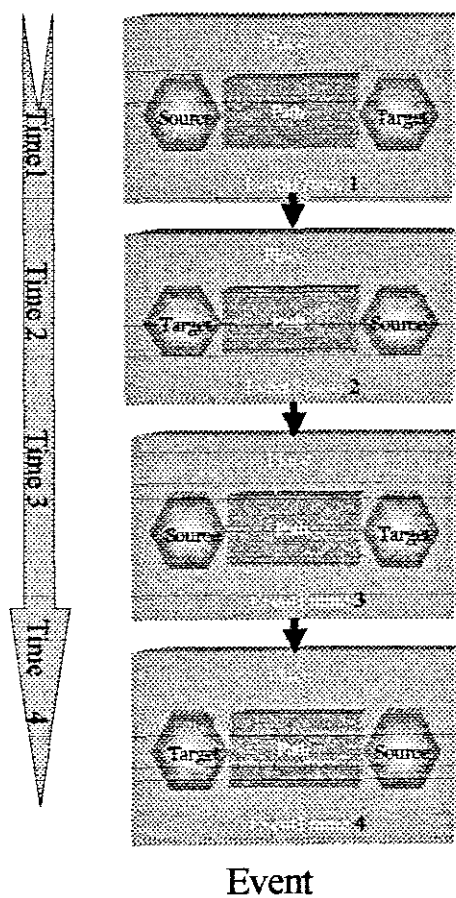


Figure 3: The alternation in taking turns to function as source and target by the participants in complex event interactions

An event consists of a number of these time frames that follow one another in sequence. Conversation is the most extensively used form of communication. A person will have dozens of conversations in the course of the day but write a letter once a week or maybe once a day. In nomadic cultures small group communication is the predominant form of communication. Conversation fulfils a prominent role in the daily information exchanges of participants.

A common frame of mind is the pathway to the communication process, whether it is small group communication, mass communication or interpersonal communication. The prerequisites for success-

ful communication are as follows:

- Both participants must be conscious.
- Both participants must be of sound mind.

Conversation is the prototype for human communication. When two humans communicate, they focus attention on an entity. A personal process of knowledge construction begins.

Williams 1992:11 states that the most fundamental level of the communication process is the basic relationship among *source*, *message* and *receiver*. Williams states that we use *message* to describe a collection of symbols that are transferred between or among communicators.

The communication medium is the physical basis for the exchange of messages. Whereas the codes will differ from language to language, people who indulge in verbal communication all over the world, use the same medium – the air around them.

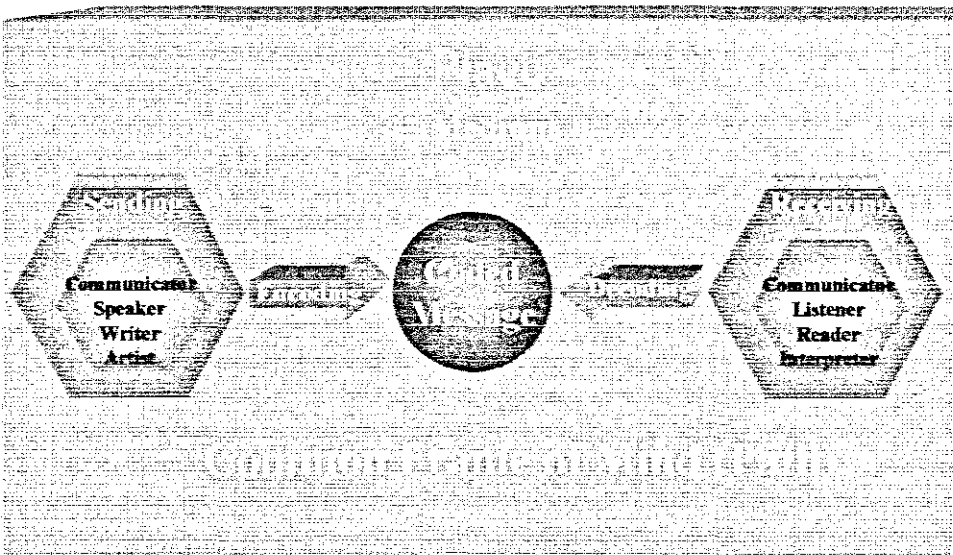


Figure 4: Common Frame of Mind (Path)

The codes themselves are variations in air pressure that propagate themselves between that of the speaker and the listener. They are converted to electro-chemical signals and transmitted to the language areas of the brain. Upon arrival in the brain these electro-chemical impulses activate concepts stored as long-term memory. Sternberg 1998: 272 states that information in the long-term store seems to be primarily semantically encoded – that is, encoded by the meanings of words. However, we can also hold visual and acoustic information in the long-term store.

According to Merham and Skinner 1999: 18 messages are composed of signs and symbols, which have (for the source and the recipient) a certain meaning. Encoding is the form of expression by the source of an already conceived idea into a message appropriate for transmission. To encode is therefore to change a meaning into a series of signs and symbols, such as language. Encoding is the activity required to transform ideas into observable sensory signs. The idea is in your mind but you have to put it into sensory signs that must be observable to the person with whom you are communicating. The definition of encoding is therefore the transmission of inner thoughts, beliefs and feelings into external, material signs.

Merham and Skinner 1999: 18 state that decoding is the reverse process that occurs in the mind of the recipient it is the activity required to interpret the sensory data into meaningful information. If the message is encoded in spoken word, the recipient receives the sound waves through the auditory sense. The brain will recognise these sounds as speech to which meaning will be attached. The message is now decoded. Decoding is defined as the transfer of raw sensory data into meaningful information. Merham and Skinner 2001a: 10 explain that decoding is the translation of received stimuli into an interpreted meaning. Recipients therefore decode messages by changing the symbols and signs into meaning.

Natural media of communications			
	Encoding	Transmission	Decoding
Sound	Human speech articulation	Acoustic vibrations	Sound perception
Vision	Gestures, Visual	Light waves	Visual perception

Touch	Bodily movements, gestures	Direct contact	Touch sensation
Smell	Release of molecules	Molecules carried in air	Olfactory sense
Taste	Release of molecules	Molecules carried in air	Olfactory sense
Equilibrium	Anything capable of moving the human body or its parts	Direct, physical movement	Sense of equilibrium

Figure 5: Williams 1992:117

Interpretation can be defined as the recipient's conception of the received message. The communicator encodes her/his ideas and transmits them within a medium; the recipient receives and decodes them, but the real turning point of communication is the recipient's interpretation of the message. In order to interpret, the recipient must be understood.

Mersham and Skinner 1999: 18 say that understanding is an active state. One can look without seeing, hear without absorbing and receive a message without attaching the significance intended by the communicator. To understand and interpret, the recipient must be just as active as the communicator.

Meanings such as ideas, images and thoughts are expressed in signs and symbols (that is, language). For communication to occur at all, the source and the recipient must have at least some minimum degree of prior common experience, some level of shared meaning. At the other extreme, no two individuals have the same experiences, hence the language used (the message, signs and symbols), often have somewhat different meanings for the recipient and the source. Furthermore, an individual's experience is continuous so that the meaning of the same symbols changes over time.

According to Mersham and Skinner 2001a: 10-11 many failures to communicate are due to mistaken assumptions by the source or recipient about the meaning of a symbol they have exchanged. Meanings are relative and open to subjective interpretation this led Berdo (1960) to state: 'Meanings are in people, not in the message.' He

meant that words have no meanings in themselves; the source and the recipient assign their meanings.

### **COLLABORATION SKILLS**

Collaboration means working effectively with others to achieve a common goal. Communication with learners and colleagues is one prerequisite to successful collaboration. A complex interaction event constitutes a sequence of specific event frames where a source sends information along a path to a target, be it a person throwing a ball at another, or a person directing words at another.

Basic collaborative skills include those required for management, supervision and participation in group activities. Denning 1992: <http://www.labmed.umn.edu/~john/sgc/intro.html> identifies the following collaborative skills:

- Bringing new members into the group
- Assigning work tasks to members of the group under your supervision
- Assessing the progress of work performed by those under your supervision
- Making and grounding assessments
- Participating in an effective review

While bullying behaviour and corporal punishment are forms of confrontational communication, tender interactions are part of cooperative communication. Confrontation communication forms an obstruction in the learning situation, while cooperative communication opens the channels to constructive learning.

A signal is transmitted from a sender to a receiver (or a group of receivers) along a channel of communication. Lyons 1981: 19 states that the signal will have a particular form and will convey a particular meaning (or message). The connection be-

tween the form of the signal and its meaning is established by what is commonly referred to in semiotics as the code: the message is encoded by the sender and decoded by the receiver.

Natural languages are codes or channels along which signals are transmitted. The most striking characteristic of language is that it is flexible and versatile. We can use language to give vent to our feelings, emotions, to solicit the co-operation of our fellows, to make threats or promises, to issue commands, ask questions or make statement.

We can make reference to the past, present and future, to things far removed from the situation of utterance – even to things that need not exist. No other system of communication human or non-human would seem to have anything like the same degree of flexibility or versatility.

Messages can be conveyed in a number of ways: by the sounds of spoken conversation, by images in photographs, printed pages, patterns in a television image and even by the tone of our voice. Humans can interpret messages and symbols for their meanings.

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter I looked at the lack of a definition for Communication Science. While major references use the term Communication Science, none provide a definition for it. I also described what communication entails by providing various definitions of communication as well as looking at the communication process from the most generic model to the more complex model. A study of the courses at the various universities reveals that too many people could probably be training for jobs that can only be offered to a few. The GET and the FET bands at school therefore have to guide learners to fit into society.

I therefore presented the outline the nature of Communication Science as a discipline. I presented motivations why direct small group communication and public communication should be included as part of a newly developed Communication

Science learning programme in the Further Education and Training (FET) band. In the next chapter I will focus on how humans communicate using both verbal as well as nonverbal skills in direct small group communication and public communication.

## *Chapter 5*

### DIRECT SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

#### **PREVIEW**

In this chapter I will look at how humans communicate by the use of verbal as well as nonverbal skills in direct small group communication and public communication. Conversation is the prototype for human communication. When two humans communicate, they focus attention on an entity. A personal process of knowledge construction begins.

A group is a number of individuals that interact with one another on an ongoing basis. Two people can form a group. An organisation of thousands of people can form a group. When relatively few people communicate in a group it is known as small group communication. When an individual communicates with an audience it is known as public communication. When the members of permanent or stable groups communicate verbally, in writing or publicly, it is known as organisational communication.

According to Nofsinger 1991: 1 the immense power of everyday talk is at our disposal to contact and influence other people: to enlist their help, to offer them companionship, to protect ourselves from their demands, to establish important relationships with them, and to present ourselves as having the qualities that they (and we) admire. Almost everything that we do that concerns other people involves us in conversation.

#### **SMALL GROUPS**

##### **Definition of a small group**

Stenberg 1998: 493 describes a group as a collection of individuals who interact with each other, often for a common purpose or activity. A group is sometimes dis-

tinguished from a *collective*, a set of people engaged in common activity but with minimal direct interaction

Sternberg explains further that groups serve two basic functions: to get work done and to handle relationships among group members. Leaders of groups also serve two key functions: to guide the group to achieve its task-oriented goals and to facilitate the group's functions of mutual support and group cohesion.

Vu 1997: [http://www.slcc.edu/comm/syllabi/jones/com\\_jones.htm](http://www.slcc.edu/comm/syllabi/jones/com_jones.htm) adds that members of groups usually have a little in common. It could be the same motivation, perception, goals or destiny. In most cases the result of what the group does affects all members of the group and not each member independently. An example of this is a basketball team losing a game; the whole team loses not each member in isolation.

### **Groups large and small**

Williams 1992: 169 says that we often make a distinction between small-group communication, which involves approximately three to twenty-five people, and large-group communication, which may involve more than twenty-five people. In small-group communication, there are few enough people so that everybody has a chance to participate in the give-and-take. With larger groups, we are usually dealing with one or a few people communicating to an "audience." A discussion around the dinner table about the day's events is an example of small-group communication, so is a committee meeting of ten people.

### **The importance of goals in group interactions**

Goals keep a group together through tension and conflict. They serve an important purpose of providing focus and motivation. Members are filled with a sense of accomplishment as each goal is met. Members are then motivated to work toward the final product. Goals also ensure that each member knows her/his role within the group. Members become frustrated when the goals are impossible to carry out. Goals therefore have to be specific, challenging, attainable and clear. Goals that

are challenging drive members to try harder, while those that are too challenging may adversely affect the morale of the members.

### **The role of norms in group interactions**

According to Kiesler 1978:123 norms are shared expectations, which guide many behaviours and beliefs in groups. Groups develop, enact and enforce norms through social pressure because norms are useful for regulating social interaction. Norms act as implicit agreements for guiding social trade-offs; they provide information for reducing uncertainty; they are a vehicle for gaining social rewards such as liking and respect.

Roles apply to subsets of individuals in groups, and are especially useful for dividing up tasks, power and resources. Each person has many roles, some of which may not fit the person very well (role strain) or may require conflicting behaviours and attitudes (role conflict).

In assessing the effectiveness of a norm or role expectation in controlling a person's behaviour or belief, it is important to focus on social pressure from the group, a psychological force (implicit or explicit) to fulfil the group's shared expectations. A person who ignores or rebels against social pressure, that is, who deviates from norms and roles, is likely to be rejected by the group. Deviance has many ramifications, some quite unpleasant.

From the before mentioned information one can see that groups do not consist of homogenous, like-minded people, but individuals who each have their own likes, dislikes and behaviours. How stable a group is, depends on how heterogeneous a group is.

### **Stages of group formation**

Woods 1997: <http://www.inov8.psu.edu/puzzle/sections/development.htm> describes the following stages in-group formation:

- *Forming*: This is when the group comes together and they become familiar with the project. Members get to know each other and expectations are discussed
- *Storming*: This is when the honeymoon phase has ended, and the group begins to experience conflict. Members realise that they do not see eye to eye on certain issues and have not resolved them. There is still vagueness over each other's roles. At this point, members may begin to resist working together and want to work independently
- *Norming*: At this stage, groups are able to verbalise their concerns and expectations. Members may be used to each other and feel comfortable expressing their concerns
- *Performing*: Groups are able to perform. They make progress on their project. Members may feel more accepting of each other

### **Types of groups**

According to Williams 1992: 170-171 we are born into what sociologists call a primary group. When we are old enough we join other groups such as children on a playground, a preschool class, other family groups. These additional groups as well as those continuing through to adulthood are called secondary groups.

Sociologists call these social groups, but from the perspective of Communication Science they are social networks. There are particular relationships and lack of relationships that determine what they communicate about and what the status relationship between them will be.

In adult life we carry out significant amounts of communication in secondary groups. One mark of adulthood is that we greatly expand the type and complexity of the groups within which we communicate:

- *Learning group*: A college class or seminar

- *Living group*: One or several roommates; a cluster of individuals who live near you; or individuals in a dormitory or fraternity
- *Organisational group*: A collection of individuals who represent some formal part of a business, institution, or organisations – the people in the accounting office, the receptionist, the “marketing group”
- *Committee*: People who come together to accomplish some specific goal
- *Therapeutic group*: Individuals who are using the group experience in order to help one another work out personal problems, to stimulate one another, or to engage in any other type of personal growth; “assertiveness training”, “consciousness raising” or “growth groups”
- *Ritual group*: A collection of individuals who go through certain prescribed actions that are meaningful to them – a religious service or a traditional, formal meeting of a business group, where the main purpose is to participate in certain rituals
- *Circumstantial group*: A group of individuals who are brought together by some course of events, often accidental or circumstantial, as in a group of individuals who find themselves waiting in line at the bank or who are travelling together in a section of an airplane
- *Event, ceremony, or public communication group*: Individuals who come together to attend a presentation or performance of some type – a motion picture audience, the audience for a public speech, people attending a concert or a rally, people taking part in a riot or a mob
- *Public gathering as a group*: Usually a large group of people who come together for some cause in which they have immediate on-the-spot interest to which the assemblage gives momentum and strength, as in the case of a protest group

Human beings live complex social lives because they are simultaneously individuals as well as members of several groups. The primary group is the group in which s/he exists, and besides the primary group the individual will be a member of a co-primary group which in the case of non-adults is the school, college or university that they attend and in the case of adults will be the work. An individual can be, among others, a member of a church, sports club, volunteer organisation, and a member of an extended family.

Due to the differences between individuals they fulfil different roles in these communication networks in which they are members.

### **Roles in groups**

Every member of a group plays a certain role within that group. Borchers 1999: <http://www.abacon.com/commstudies/groups/roles.html> adds that some roles relate to the task aspect of the group, while others promote social interaction. A third set of roles is self-centred and can be destructive for the group.

#### ***Task-oriented roles***

According to Merham and Skinner 1999: 117-119 task roles reflect the work a group must do to accomplish its goals. Borchers 1999: <http://www.abacon.com/commstudies/groups/roles.html> identifies several roles, which relate to the completion of the group's task:

- *Initiator-contributor*. Generates new ideas
- *Information-seeker*. Asks for information about the task
- *Opinion-seeker*. Asks for the input from the group about its values
- *Information-giver*. Offers facts or generalisation to the group
- *Opinion-giver*. States her/his beliefs about a group issue
- *Elaborator*. Explains ideas within the group, offers examples to clarify ideas

- *Coordinator*: Shows the relationships between ideas
- *Orienter*: Shifts the direction of the group's discussion
- *Evaluator-critic*: Measures group's actions against some objective standard
- *Energiser*: Stimulates the group to a higher level of activity
- *Procedural-technician*: Performs logistical functions for the group
- *Recorder*: Keeps a record of group actions

### ***Social roles***

Groups also have members who play certain social roles:

- *Encourager*: Praises the ideas of others.
- *Harmoniser*: Mediates differences between group members.
- *Compromiser*: Moves group to another position that is favoured by all group members.
- *Gatekeeper/expediter*: Keeps communication channels open.
- *Standard Setter*: Suggests standards or criteria for the group to achieve.
- *Group observer*: Keeps records of group activities and uses this information to offer feedback to the group.
- *Follower*: Goes along with the group and accepts the group's ideas.

### ***Individualistic roles***

These roles place the group member above the group and are destructive to the group:

- *Aggressor*. Attacks other group members, deflates the status of others, and other aggressive behaviour
- *Recognition seeker*. Calls attention to himself or herself
- *Blocker*. Resists movement by the group itself
- *Self-confessor*. Seeks to disclose non-group related feelings or opinions
- *Dominator*. Asserts control over the group by manipulating the other group members
- *Help seeker*. Tries to gain the sympathy of the group
- *Special interest pleader*. Uses stereotypes to assert her/his own prejudices

### **Leadership roles within groups**

With very few exceptions, all groups have people who fulfil leadership roles. The quality of leadership does not only determine interrelationships but also the nature and quality of communication within the group.

Borchers 1999: <http://www.abacon.com/commstudies/groups/leader.html> states that leadership is concerned with control and power in a group. He adds that leadership can be aimed at either maintaining the interpersonal relationships in the group or prodding the group to achieve its task. Groups will sometimes have two leaders: one for the social dimension and one for the task dimension. There are also three main perspectives on leadership. First, some researchers believe some people are born with traits that will make them a good leader. A second perspective is that the group's leader selects an appropriate leadership style for the given task. A third way of understanding leadership says that to some degree, leaders are born with traits that make them good leaders, but that they also learn how to become a leader and use strategies appropriate to a given situation.

Borchers says: "*Good Leaders are born.*" This means that people are born with traits that make them effective leaders. The challenge for the group is to find a person with these traits.

*One-Best-Style:* This approach says that in a given situation, one particular style of leadership is most effective. There are four main styles:

- *Autocratic:* Leader uses her/his authority to make decisions.
- *Democratic:* Authority is shared and all group members help make decisions.
- *Laissez-faire:* A "hands-off" style in which the leader allows the group to make its own decisions.
- *Abdicator:* No one in the group exercises leadership. This style, says researchers, leads to group disintegration and is followed by autocratic leadership.

The contextual approach that leaders are to some degree born with leadership traits, but that the situation, personalities of other group members, pressures on the group, and group norms also determine leadership.

Gangs have a gang leader, the church has a pastor as leader, schools have principles as leaders, and in businesses the chief executive officers are leaders. The above-mentioned leadership characteristics will determine how democratic or autocratic the relationship between members of the group is, and how cooperative and confrontational the forms of communication within the group are.

### **Interpersonal processes**

According to Kiesler 1978: 16 interpersonal processes are psychological phenomena that influence social interaction in groups and organisations. He argues that interpersonal processes affect all facets of experience in groups and organisations, such as bureaucratic strategies for solving organisational problems. Knowing about inter-

personal processes is useful for attaining a greater understanding of how groups and organisations behave and might behave, even if one cannot change that behaviour.

Four psychological principles comprise the fundamentals of interpersonal processes. These are:

- That people respond and act on their own views of reality, not its objective qualities
- That people are influenced by the immediate (social) situation they perceive themselves to be in
- That people act on motives that they bring to situations as well as motives altered or created by situations
- That interpersonal actions are guided by values and beliefs which derive from the culture in which people live

Wellman's theory of commonsense belief-desire psychology 1992: 93-121 presents a rationale for these above-mentioned psychological principles. He showed that sensory perceptions inform thinking, sensations and emotional awareness. Thinking in turn biases perception while sensation and emotional states colour thinking. Values and beliefs as sub-domains of thinking bias perceptions.

### **Communication networks**

*Communication networks* are recurring patterns of interaction. By examining networks, we examine where there are communication channels and which members transmit and receive messages to and from one another.

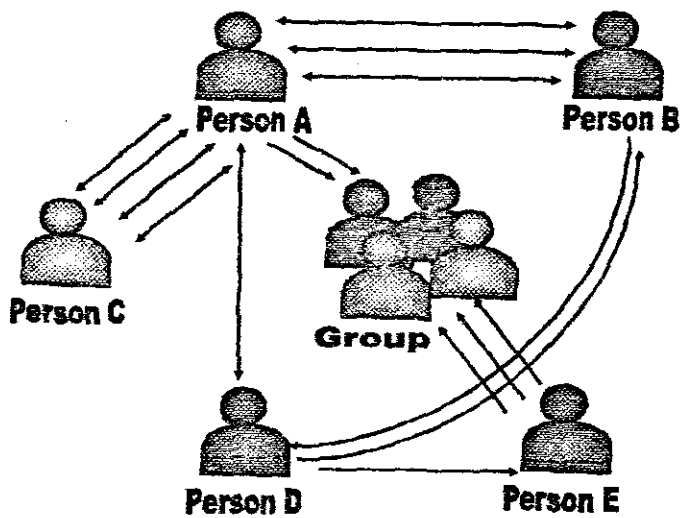


Figure 6: Network Analysis Chart Williams 1992: 184

Interaction analysis can tell us much about the general nature of how people communicate when they are in a group. This includes how patterns change depending on the group's past, the relationship among the members, the style of leadership, the relations between the personal motives of the participants, and the reason for the group's existence. Parham 1988: 488 states that one of the four basic structures seems to exist in any group regardless of whether the group is large or small, formal or informal. The more a basic structure allows a person to communicate with other people in the group, the greater the satisfaction that person will experience in the group. The members name the person at the centre of the communication structure more frequently as the leader. Structures that are more centralised seem to be more effective when the operations are simple enough that the one person at the centre can handle the directing. When the operations are very involved and complex, less centralised structures are more effective.

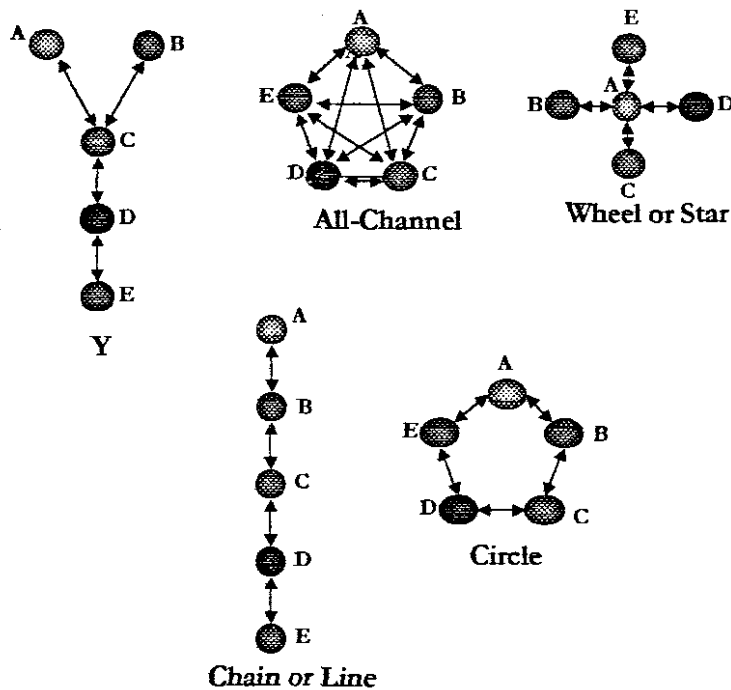


Figure 7: Types of networks Parham 1988: 488

Mersham and Skinner 2001a: 48, state that as a result of the complexities of modern day business, organisations have evolved a number of communication networks. Networks simply represent the structure of channels through which messages pass from one person to another in groups. These networks may be viewed from two perspectives – either as small groups left to their own resources or as formalised structures established by an organisation for communication within the company. Whatever the perspectives, networks represent general types of group communication patterns and can be found in most groups and organisations.

In the circle and all-channel patterns are decentralised and sometimes leaderless. In the circle communication structure, all members in the group tend to be equal. Communication circulates through the group. The circle pattern is effective in discussion groups and may not be most efficient for problem solving. No person controls communication more than another person.

The chain structure is not as effective as the other structure because the person communicates with the person next to her/him only. People at the ends of the chain can communicate with just one other person.

The Y structure is most typical of large groups. It is tightly centralised.

The wheel communication structure is the most tightly centralised of all the structures. All communication is channelled through one person. The wheel is most efficient for small groups.

Groups are faced with real problems and decisions. Open channels need to be created to allow discussions among members. This provides an opportunity for ideas that are proposed to be accepted or rejected, or modified in response to group feedback. The leader of the group therefore has to have an understanding of communication networks in eliciting contributions from all members and encouraging open communication.

### **Conversational techniques in small groups**

The techniques and patterns that people use in conversation form the basis for other more “official” and more noticeable type of interaction (such as interviewing for a job, testifying in a court, holding a group meeting, or participating in a broadcast news interview or talk show). People do not adopt a totally new or different system for communicating in these more formal, controlled, or task-oriented episodes. Instead, they *adapt* their system of conversational interaction to fit these other circumstances. We learn conversation first and then apply our conversational skills to other forms of interactive talk.

Nofsinger 1991: 3 goes on to say that conversation is the primary method through which interpersonal relationships are formed, maintained, and dissolved. We become acquaintances through conversation. Through conversation, we establish and strengthen friendships and peer relationships. Our family life is created and enacted each day through conversation. And, in large part, we find employment (or fail to) and achieve success on the job (or fail to) through our everyday talk.

Interpersonal processes affect all facets of experience in groups and organisations. Knowing about interpersonal processes is useful for attaining a greater understanding of how groups or organisations behave or might behave.

Kiesler 1978: 93 states that the process of encoding and decoding of symbols results in a set of perceptions and inferences about the speaker and the relationship as well as the content of the intended message. The effects of the communication process include changes in the views of the communicator (such as the realisation that a complainer will not back down) and changes in the relationship itself (such as the escalation of good and bad feelings). Communication can therefore exacerbate or alleviate problems in groups and organisations. The communicator can pleasantly stop the spiral of bad feelings.

### **Verbal communication**

Stenberg 1998: 483 states that communication in relationships follows a pattern of social penetration, in which the breadth of topics and the depth of discussions tend to increase during the course of the relationship. At first we tend to talk about fairly superficial things. Gradually, we increase the depth and breadth of what we are willing to talk about.

Gender differences appear to exist in communication patterns, content and styles. These differences can interfere with effective communication. For example, later adolescent and young adult males prefer to talk about political views, sources of personal pride, and what they like about the other person, whereas females in this age group prefer to talk about feelings towards parents, close friends, classes and fears. Also, in general, women seem to disclose more about themselves than do men.

### **Communication on the group level**

According to Williams 1992: 169 you have doubtless already spent many hours of your life in face-to-face communication that involves more than two persons, a situation that can properly be called group communication. This may be in informal groups as when chatting with friends, or it may be a more formal group that is part

of a business or organisation. Although many of the generalisations made about individual communication apply to communication in groups, we humans do have various strategies for adapting to the presence of more individuals entering into the interactions. We tend to communicate a bit differently when more than one person is listening to us; sometimes we may be addressing multiple persons in the group. And, of course, not only may we attend to what a person in a group is saying to us; we may simultaneously monitor the group reaction. Also, as in the study of interpersonal communication, we will see a manifestation in group behaviours of communication and the development of social structures among people.

### **Communication transactions are between equals or up-and-down**

Whether in small group, public or organisational communication some communicators will have equal status and some will have unequal status. Myers and Myers 1985: 22-23 state that you can relate to people either as equals or as non-equals. The most typical example of a non-equal relationship is that of the mother-infant pair. The mother clearly takes care of the baby, and the baby is clearly taken care of. The two cannot exist without each other, and this is not just a biological truism. There can be *no taking care of if there is no one to be taken care of*.

Non-equal relationships include two different positions. One communicator is in the superior, one-up position while the other occupies the one-down or inferior position. It is important not to equate the words 'up' and 'down' with "good," "bad," "strong," or "weak." Non-equal relationships *are* often set by social or cultural factors as in the case of doctor-patient, learner-educator, and parent-child relationships. The one-up person usually defines the nature of the relationship, while the one-down person accepts and goes along with the decision.

In equal relationships, communicators exchange the same kind of behaviour. Mutual respect and a feeling of partnership exist. Friends, peers, and colleagues are usual examples of relationships among equals.

## **TEAMWORK IN SMALL GROUPS**

Groups may be of a permanent or temporary nature. Examples of permanent groups are:

- Teams of people who usually work together and who meet frequently to talk about quality and improvement matters
- Peer groups who gather on a regular basis, such as all supervisors or all department managers or all senior managers
- Common interest groups, such as employees and particular customers, or employees and supplier representatives

Examples of temporary groups are:

- Project teams, which are set up within the organisation to look at particular issues, or to develop a new product or process
- Project teams set up with customers or suppliers to look at and resolve specific problems, and which disband once the project is accomplished.

## **BRAINSTORMING**

Brainstorming provides non-judgemental environment for members to share ideas and find the best solutions. Before the session begins every member must understand the problem at hand. Members must be encouraged to generate ideas individually. The recorder keeps writes down all the ideas presented during the session. Members must be encouraged to voice their ideas. Others may need time to build on others' ideas. Members can make the most of particular ideas if others do not claim ownership of them. The solution must only be decided on when all members have had an opportunity to share their ideas. Good listening skills must be practised. Members must try to actively listen to others' views rather than concentrating on what they want to say next. There are no right or wrong answers. However,

when the feasibility of the solution is being looked at, members should be as honest as possible. The final decision must be informed and well thought-out.

### **TYPES OF SKILLS REQUIRED**

Small groups face many types of difficulties. Some of these include interpersonal conflicts, making decisions and keeping focused on the task. While task functions keep the group focused and involved. Personal functions address the personal needs as well as disruptive behaviours. All these functions have to be performed if a group is to work well. Although the responsibility of ensuring that the group achieves the best results rests with the group leader, each member plays an important role in supporting the vision of the group leader.

### **Skills for leading and participating**

Small group leadership and membership skills are the skills required to achieve the best results from team meetings. Skill in meetings can be divided into two areas, 'leadership' and 'membership'. These are the two major roles people play in groups. A group must have an appointed leader to coordinate its activity, and this person's leadership ability is critical to how well the group will work together. But equally important are the membership abilities of the others who make up the group. Membership ability is the ability to be part of a group so that your contributions are always positive, and so that you also help others to contribute in the best possible way.

Group leadership and membership skills are covered together here for a number of reasons:

- o Most people are, at various times, both leaders and members of small groups, so they need both leadership and membership skills
- o The same issues of personal interaction arise for both leaders and members
- o A group will not work well unless both leadership and membership are handled competently

## **TENSION AND DEFENSIVENESS**

Sometimes, within groups, people communicate messages that make others feel tense or defensive, without even realising it. This can be very harmful to a group. It can make group members less likely to contribute their own ideas, agree with others' opinions (even when they are shared), and attempt to overcome conflict. These feelings can be circumvented, however, if you are conscious of the messages you are sending to others.

Tension and defensiveness are increased when:

- People are kept from expressing their ideas
- Group members refuse to listen to or acknowledge the validity of other opinions
- People feel they are being judged or evaluated
- People act or talk with superiority
- Individuals do not trust the group enough to share their feelings or thoughts
- Ideas are misconstrued due to a lack of clear, open communication
- An individual's verbal and nonverbal cues are not congruent

## **MANAGING CONFLICT**

Conflict is the double-edged sword of group functioning. The absence of conflict means that the group is not reaching its full potential to identify problems and explore possible solutions. It may mean that the group is not sufficiently motivated, or challenged, to generate the 'creative tension' that forges the best solutions. An excess of conflict, on the other hand, can be destructive to the group and undermine its ability to carry out any action at all.

Tension in effect is pent up energy. It can be diffused or utilised constructively to manage conflict by building feedback procedures within the communication process. Conflict can be managed by redirecting group members' attention away from the group towards the problem that they are working on and by building feedback loops into the communication process so that it constructively channels the emotional tension within the group.

### **Stopping conflict escalation**

For small group communication conflict must be seen as an essential factor in finding the best solution to a problem. In this view observing two rules, which automatically keep discussion productive, prevents conflict escalation. These are:

- Attack the problem, not the person
- Avoid blaming at all times

### **FEEDBACK**

Feedback is when we respond to comments made by others. Very often we do it out of habit, without even realising it. If used properly, feedback allows group members to provide verbal and nonverbal support for each other, clarify ideas, increase each other's confidence, promote group closeness and refine communication skills. If used improperly, it can also be detrimental, causing us to become defensive or withdraw from group discussion.

Feedback is helpful when it

- Immediately follows the comment or idea
- Does not degrade the person
- Focuses on positive aspects of the idea
- Suggests improvement rather than criticises

- Describes ideas rather than judges them
- Pertains to that particular situation (does not use words such as "always" or "never")

Feedback is detrimental when it:

- Judges the person or idea
- Is made in an attempt to control the conversation
- Evaluates the person or idea
- Is intended to make the other person feel inferior
- Is intended to increase your own standing within the group
- Focuses on negative aspects of idea

### **DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOURS**

There are many types of disruptive behaviour which group members can engage in and which needs to be dealt with to stop them from hindering the group's progress. There are three rules to follow when dealing with disruptive behaviour, and anyone in the group may initiate action to stop it:

- Learn to recognise disruptive behaviour in yourself, and try to understand and to change it
- Point out disruptive behaviours to others tactfully, with good will, and in a time and place, which is appropriate
- Be open to others pointing out your disruptive behaviour, and respond by changing it

Some common disruptive behaviour is:

- Blocking or diverting: taking the discussion off on a tangent, arguing too much on a particular point, fixing on less important details
- Power seeking: clashes with the leader, forming cliques
- Recognition seeking: excessive talking, advocating extreme ideas, add an example or repeat what has been said in different words, tell a meaningless anecdote
- Dominating: using a loud voice, making definitive pronouncements, endless speeches, special interest pleading, this sort of behaviour can produce a tense combative atmosphere
- Clowning: occasional comic relief lightens the discussion, constant joking and remarks will disrupt the meeting
- Other problem behaviours: silence, denying, seeking sympathy, attention seeking

## **RECOGNITION**

People work best when they feel that they belong, that their participation is meaningful, and that their contributions are important. What is frequently overlooked is the need to constantly reinforce this feeling in group members by giving recognition when and where it is due. By recognising and acknowledging all actions which help the group to function well and accomplish its aims, you will be consolidating and improving the capabilities of the group.

## **COMMUNICATION IN THE WORKPLACE**

According to Smeal College of Business 1999: <http://www.smeal.psu.edu/courses/core/ba304/lecture.notes/grp99bw.ppt>, as the workforce becomes increasingly competitive, learners will be required to bring in skills to help their organisation thrive in the global marketplace. Among those skills are group work and communication skills. No longer is the working environment centred on an individ-

ual effort. The success of an organisation depends on the ability of a diverse group of people to work successfully to reach goals.

It is essential that as we enter the workforce, we be armed with the skills necessary to work effectively in groups. Organisational groups differ from educational groups in many ways, including that corporate teams:

- o Tend to have predetermined goals
- o Are bound by the organisation's rules of conduct and mission
- o Have more than just grades at stake
- o Tend to work on projects that are longer ranging in scope
- o Have less trouble finding meeting times

Despite these and many other differences between educational and professional groups, the concepts of effective team management remain the same. The keys to remember are that each group situation should be viewed within its own context and that within each group people will have their own ways of perceiving and interacting. As long as you remain open, confident, collaborative and learn from your past experiences, working in a professional group can be an empowering and beneficial experience for both you and your company.

### **The workplace: seven skills employers want**

When learners enter the workforce, employers look for specific skills. Learners should possess both technical skills and also social skills that will promote teamwork. The seven skills that employers want are:

1. **Learning to learn:** The ability to apply new information quickly and effectively
2. **Listening and oral communication**

3. Competence in reading, writing and computation: analytical and critical thinking will be valuable skills in a working environment where tasks are more ambiguous.
4. Adaptability: Creative thinking and problem solving
5. Personal management: Self-esteem, goal setting/motivation, and personal/career development
6. Group effectiveness: Interpersonal skills, negotiation and teamwork
7. Organisational effectiveness and leadership

### **The functions that groups fulfil in organisational communication**

The disadvantages of using groups are stultification, bad habits, stress, and reductions in social contact, prejudice, attack, exploitation, loss of choice and rejections. Groups also tend to be more inefficient than individuals. On the other hand groups allow for companionship, for learning about oneself, developing a sense of belonging and help with problems and difficulties. Division of labour and pooling of resources are the most important reason for using groups.

### **The media of group communication**

Typically, we consider group communication to be face-to-face, with speech and nonverbal symbols as the main media. But, as with interpersonal communication, there are media alternatives for group communication. Technology has expanded these alternatives. I will briefly discuss the media alternatives. This section will be dealt with in the thesis of a colleague.

#### **Two-way video teleconference**

Provides a partial visual channel for group interaction. The disadvantage is that it is expensive to set up such groups.

#### **Computer teleconference**

Involves the exchange of keyboard messages that are sent and received by computer terminals linked by telephone lines to a central computer. The computer

stores the messages as a record of the group interaction and makes them available to individuals who are communicating with the group during “off” times.

### **Computer conferencing**

Individuals throughout the world have a variety of ways of communicating with one another, such as by posting entries to public online conferences, by jointly co-authoring a report in a shared file space, or by discussing problems in a private group conference.

### **Voice mail**

I am not discussing e-mail because it is a written type of communication, but e-mail is a precursor to voice mail. By choosing options through the keypad of a touch-tone phone, individuals can send voice messages to “distribution lists”, or add voice commentary to voice messages they have received from others, and then forward that combined message to one or more recipients.

### **Group decision support systems (GDSS)**

GDSS can support face-to-face communication or geographically temporally dispersed groups. Project groups, or managers needing to make complex decisions can use networked terminals to anonymously suggest solutions, model different options, discuss decision criteria, and rank and vote on the top solutions. Some of these systems provide a large shared screen showing the common information, graphics, charts, data, or textual comparisons.

## **NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION**

Nonverbal communication is an integral part of small group communication. According to Givens 2000: [nonverbal2@aol.com](mailto:nonverbal2@aol.com) nonverbal communication is the process of sending and receiving wordless messages by means of facial expressions, gaze, gestures, postures, and tone of voice. Also included are grooming habits, body positioning in space, and consumer product design (e.g., clothing cues, food products, artificial colours and tastes, engineered aromas, media images and computer-graphic displays). Nonverbal cues are produced and received below the level of

conscious awareness. They include all expressive signs and cues (audio, visual, tactile, and chemical) used to send messages apart from manual sign language and speech.

Body-language signals may be:

- *Learned*
- *Innate*
- *Mixed*

Eyewink, thumbs-up and military-salute gestures are clearly learned. Eye-blink, throat-clear and facial-flushing cues on the other hand are clearly inborn or innate. Laugh, cry, shoulder-shrug and most other body-language signals are “mixed”, because they originate as innate actions, but cultural rules later shape their timing, energy and use.

### **Categories and features**

Nonverbal communication can be divided into four broad categories:

- *Physical*: This personal type of communication includes facial expressions, tone of voice, sense of touch, sense of smell, and body motions
- *Aesthetic*: This includes the type of communication that takes place through creative expressions like playing instrumental music, dancing, painting and sculpturing
- *Signs*: Examples of the mechanical type of communication include the use of signal flags, the 21-gun salute, horns, and sirens
- *Symbolic*: This type of communication includes the use of religious, status, or ego building symbols.

## NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION AND THE BRAIN

Givens 2000: [nonverbal2@aol.com](mailto:nonverbal2@aol.com), explains that the nonverbal brain includes those circuits, centres and modules of the central nervous system involved in sending, receiving and processing speechless signs. In right-handed individuals, modules of the right-brain cerebral hemisphere, considered to be more nonverbal, holistic, visuo-spatial and intuitive than the verbal, analytic, sequential and rational left-brain hemisphere.

Just as the brain's speech centres like the Broca's area control language communication, areas of the nonverbal brain control communication apart from words.

### **The amygdala**

Givens 2000: [nonverbal2@aol.com](mailto:nonverbal2@aol.com) describes the amygdala as an almond-shaped neuro-structure involved in producing and responding to nonverbal signs of anger, avoidance, defensiveness and fear. Many gestures reflect the amygdala's turmoil. In an anxious meeting, e.g., we may unconsciously flex our arms, lean away or angle away from colleagues who upset us. Lip, neck and shoulder muscles may tense as the amygdala activates brain-stem circuits designed to produce protective facial muscles. The amygdala also prompts releases of adrenaline and other hormones into the blood stream, thereby stepping-up an avoider's response and disrupting the control of rational thought.

### **Bodily cues**

Bull 1984: 23 states that the term *nonverbal communication* implies that there should be nonverbal behaviours with shared meanings, which constitute a code through which messages are conveyed by an encoder and responded to systematically and appropriately by a decoder.

Bull 1984: 76 states further that bodily cues are related to speech in terms of its syntactic, semantic and phonemic clause structure. Three main types of speech-related bodily cues have been distinguished. Their social functions include:

- *Emblems*: These refer to those nonverbal acts, which have a direct verbal translation – their function is communicative and explicitly recognised as such.
- *Illustrators*: These are movements, which are directly tied to speech – there is some evidence to show that they facilitate the comprehension of discourse – suggesting that they too function as a form of communication. They have been related to the emotions and attitudes of the speaker and to the process of speech encoding.
- *Regulators*: These are movements, which guide and control the flow of conversation. It has been argued that bodily cues play a role in initiating and terminating interactions, and in turn-taking, therefore again suggesting that they too function as a form of communication

Bodily cues communicate information about emotion, language, individual differences, affiliation and dominance, and information about interpersonal relationships to observers of the relationships.

We have contended that to be communicated at all, an experience has to be translated into some symbolic code. As far as we know now, what goes on in a person's brain does not get transmitted to another person's brain directly without the mediation of a symbolic system.

According to Myers and Myers 1985: 216-217 the study of nonverbal communication is relatively recent. For a long time people felt that unless words were involved, communication did not take place. This attitude was, and still is, reinforced by the fact that our culture places a strong emphasis on the virtues of speech. In spite of a few wise sayings ("Silence is golden," "One picture is worth a thousand words") you value glibness, praise a "gift of gab," and consider silence in many social situations a weakness. In groups, silent members are more often than not perceived as the least influential members of the group.

This common attitude about silence, or the absence of verbalised noise, is rooted in a misconception about the nature of communication:

- o That communication can be turned on and off — on when you talk, off when you do not.

Nothing could be more misleading. There is no opposite of communication. According to Williams 1992: 15, one cannot *not* communicate. Your silences and other nonverbal aspects of communication are no more random than your words. They, too, are systematic expressions of meanings, which you use, often quite unconsciously in your interpersonal contacts.

Myers and Myers 1985: 218-219 state that silences are an integral part of interpersonal communication. They occur more often than you think. Silences in many cases are perceived as embarrassing. You somehow feel they should not happen; and when they occur, you try desperately to fill the gaps they create. Silences, however, are not to be equated with the absence of communication. Silences are a natural and fundamental aspect of communication, often ignored because misunderstood.

*As most learners of social interaction are aware, lapses in conversation are so potentially embarrassing that participants will often resort to noisy “masking” behaviours to fill in the silence — coughing, clearing the throat, sighing, whistling, yawning, drumming the fingertips; or they may utter meaningless “socio-centric sequences” such as “but ah,” “so,” and “anyway” in the hope of nudging a partner into taking a turn.*

Most studies of lapses (or “latencies,” as they are sometimes called) in speaking exchanges have concluded that the person who cannot handle such gaps easily is considered a less competent communicator. The person who manages better the periodic silences, which normally occur in much of our communication, is thought to be more effective.

Effective communication between people depends heavily on silences because people take turns at talking and at being silent when listening. Unless one is silent, one cannot fully listen. Unless you know that silences are a part of the gamut of communication, you will continue to be afraid of them and avoid them instead of making full use of them.

Myers and Myers 1985: 220-221 explain that silence can be a challenge, like the silence of the pouting child or the stubborn and angry friend, or the silence in a classroom toward the very last minutes of a period when the educator asks, "Do you have any questions?" and learners almost dare each other to say one word which might trigger the educator to continue talking after the bell.

### **Partings**

According to Bull 1984: 75 there is some evidence to suggest that people use bodily cues when they wish to bring a conversation to a close. At the beginning of a conversation the most common stance is where equal weight is placed on both feet; toward the end of the conversation, the most common stance is where more weight is placed on one or than the other, and shifting the weight from foot to the other occurs significantly more toward the end of the conversation.

### **Facial expressions**

Givens 2000: [nonverbal2@aol.com](mailto:nonverbal2@aol.com) explains that better than any body parts, our faces reveal emotions, opinions and opinions and moods. While we learn to manipulate some expressions (e.g., our smile) many unconscious facial expressions (e.g. lip-pout, tense-mouth and tongue-show) reflect our true feelings and hidden attitudes. Many facial expressions are universal, though most may be shaped by cultural usages and rules.

Pease 1999: 9 found that emotion is so closely is tied to facial expression that it is hard to imagine one without the other. Studies have shown that facial expressions of happiness, sadness, anger, fear surprise, disgust and interest are universal across cultures.

According to Underwood 2000: <http://www.cultsock.ndirect.co.uk/MUHome/cshtml/index.html> the exercise below is based on research by Ekman and others (1972) into the importance of facial expressions for displaying emotion. It seems that there are seven principal facial expressions, which we are generally quite good at recognising and which appear to be so universal that even learners who have been blind and deaf from birth display them:

- Anger
- Disgust, contempt
- Fear
- Happiness
- Interest
- Sadness
- Surprise

Underwood 2000: <http://www.cultsock.ndirect.co.uk/MUHome/cshtml/index.html> states that these appear to involve configurations of the whole face, though the eyebrows and mouth carry much information. The importance of the area around the eyes and mouth is shown by observations which demonstrate that when we examine a photograph of a person's face, we scan the whole face, but concentrate primarily on the eyes and mouth. This is further supported by the use of 'emoticons' or 'smileys' in e-mail, which suggest an emotion simply by showing the eyes (and/or eyebrows) and mouth.

For example, :) or :-), the original smiley, means something like 'I'm happy', but can also mean 'what I have just written was tongue in cheek' or 'only joking'. The opposite of that smiley is :( or :-( You can frown as well |:-| or have an evil grin >:-) or even stick your tongue out :-Q

He adds that facial expressions are essential to the establishment of relationships with others as was demonstrated an infamous experiment in which the facial muscles of a newly born monkey was severed, as a result of which it failed to establish a relationship with its mother.

This simple experiment has been carried out across a wide range of different cultures and strongly suggests that, although of course there are differences in the extent to which different cultures permit the display of various emotions and the different ways they act on those emotions, the emotions themselves are common to all members of our species.

**Face and personality**

Underwood 2000: <http://www.cultsock.ndirect.co.uk/MUHome/cshtml/index.html> states that subjects were asked to rate the personality of people in photographs. This is what they came up with:

<i>Facial features</i>	<i>Judged as</i>
<i>Structural aspects</i>	
Thin lips	Conscientious
Thick lips (female)	Sexy
High forehead	Intelligent
Dull eyes	Not alert
Protruding eyes	Excitable
<i>Persistent emotional expressions and their effects</i>	
Mouth curvature	Friendly, cheerful, easy-going, kind, likeable with a sense of humour, intelligent, well-adjusted
Facial tension	Determined, aggressive, quick-tempered, not easy-going
<i>Grooming</i>	
Much make-up	Feminine, sexy, frivolous (females)
Dark or coarse skin	Hostile (males)
Spectacles	Intelligent, dependable, industrious

Figure 8: Face and Personality Underwood 2000: <http://www.cultsock.ndirect.co.uk/MUHome/cshtml/index.html>

It is fairly easy to see what dangers are lurking behind an assumption that a dark-skinned male is hostile or that a bespectacled learner is intelligent - the dangers of stereotyping and of the self-fulfilling prophecy, the latter suggesting that if we per-

ceive someone as intelligent then we will treat them as if they are intelligent and, in due course, they will become intelligent.

### **Facial beauty**

Underwood 2000: <http://www.cultsock.ndirect.co.uk/MUHome/cshtml/index.html> states that what is interesting about this last report, as with the evidence that some facial expressions cross cultural divides, is the suggestion that conceivably there is rather more in our interpretation of faces that is hard-wired than we generally like to think. It seems to be part of the received wisdom of aspects of cultural studies that beauty is a cultural artefact. Indeed, that must almost inevitably be an article of faith of some currents of cultural studies, since it implies that our perception of physical beauty and the importance we attach to it is open to change and can therefore be contested.

### **THE JOHARI WINDOW**

Mersham and Skinner 2001a: 124 state that the self-disclosure is about revealing information about the private self to other people. It is essential in the development of close interpersonal relationships. Revealing information to another that he already knows is not self-disclosure. Self-disclosure relates to our deepest feelings or intimate thoughts. There are some relationships in which we are comfortable enough to allow people access to our most intimate thoughts, and others in which we keep our thoughts and emotions to ourselves.

A model, which helps to assess the amount of information we disclose, is the Johari window.

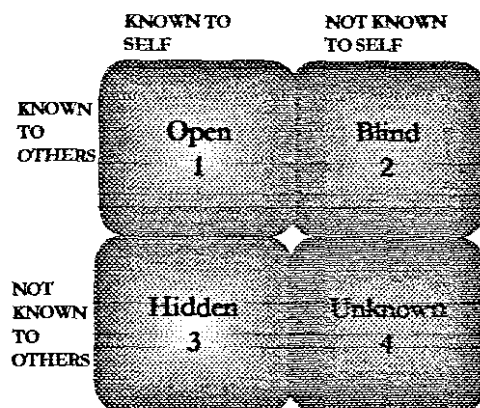


Figure 9: The Johari Window Steinberg 1999a: 87

The open pane is the most public area. It reflects openness to the world and a willingness to be known. It comprises all the aspects that are known to you and others.

#### **The Arena**

Mersham and Skinner 2001a: 124 state that the region most conducive to effective interpersonal relationships and communication is termed the Arena. In this setting all of the information necessary to carry on effective communication is known to both the communicator (self) and the receivers (others). For a communication attempt to be in the Arena region, the parties involved must share identical feelings, data, assumptions and skills. Since the Arena is the area of common understanding, the larger it becomes, the more effective communication is.

#### **The Blind spot**

According to Mersham and Skinner 2001a: 124 when others know relevant information but the self does not, a Blind spot area results. This constitutes a handicap for the self, since one can hardly understand the behaviours, decisions, and potentials of others if one does not have the information on which these are based. Others have the advantage of knowing their own reactions, feelings, perceptions and so forth, while the self is unaware of these consequently interpersonal relationships and communications suffer.

### **The façade**

Mersham and Skinner 2001a: 124 state that when the self knows information, but this information is unknown to others, a person (self) may react with superficial communication, that is, present a false front or façade. Information that we perceive as potentially prejudicial to a relationship or that we keep to ourselves out of fear, desire for power, or whatever makes up the façade. This protective front, in turn, serves a defensive function for the Self. Such a situation is particularly damaging when a subordinate 'knows' and an immediate supervisor 'does not know'. The Façade, like the Blind spot, diminishes the Arena and reduces the possibility of effective communication.

### **The unknown**

According to Mersham and Skinner 2001a: 125 this region constitutes that portion of the relationship where neither the self nor other parties know the relevant information. As is often stated: "I don't understand them, and they don't understand me." It is easy to see that interpersonal communication is poor under such circumstances. Circumstances of this kind occur in organisations when individuals in different specialties must communicate to co-ordinate what they do.

An individual can improve interpersonal communications by utilising two strategies, namely exposure and feedback.

### **Exposure**

Mersham and Skinner 2001a: 125 add that increasing the arena by reducing the façade requires that the individual be open and honest in sharing information with others. The process that the self uses to increase the information known to others is termed exposure because it sometimes leaves the self in a vulnerable position. Exposing one's true feelings by 'telling it like it is' often involves risks.

### **Feedback**

Mersham and Skinner 2001a: 125 state further when the self does not know or understand, more effective communications can be developed through feedback from those who know. Thus, the Blind spot can be reduced, with a corresponding in-

crease in the Arena. Of course, whether the use of feedback is possible depends on the individual's willingness to 'hear' it and on the willingness of others to give it. Thus, the individual is less able to control the provision of exposure. Obtaining feedback is dependent on the active cooperation of others, while exposure requires the active behaviour of the communicator and the passive listening of others.

The four panes of the Johari window are interdependent. A change in one pane will affect the others. You may discover things you did not know about yourself from others. This information then moves into the open area. The open pane enlarges and the hidden pane is reduced. It is rewarding and satisfying to learn more about you and therefore gain self-insight.

## **HAPTICS**

Williams 1992: 59 states that the use of touch to communicate – as in shaking hands, holding hands, patting someone on the back, putting your arm around a person's shoulder, and the like – is known as *haptics*. Touch may convey emphasis, affection, or greetings, and it varies greatly across cultures. For example, two men walking arm-in-arm in western culture may draw attention, whereas in the Arab world this behaviour is merely a common sign of friendship. Touch also varies by gender in our culture, as in who can slap whom on the back, when we can touch, and where we can touch.

According to Barker 1982: 103 instrumental or functional touches occur frequently particularly in classes where psychomotor skills are being taught, including shop courses, athletics, dance, art and even when learning such skills as handwriting. While the primary purpose of instrumental touch is purely task related, this form of tactile communication probably conveys immediacy as well. Educators should be aware that touch is not reinforcing or pleasurable to some learners. Educators who are themselves touch avoiders must find other ways of communicating immediacy and may wish to avoid teaching elementary grades, where touch is common if not inevitable.

## PARALANGUAGE

Williams 1992: 58 states that paralinguage is a kind of complementary language. Researchers have found that the tone, pitch, quality of voice, and rate of speaking convey emotions that can be accurately judged regardless of the content of the message. The important thing to gain from this is that the voice is *important*, not just as the conveyor of the message, but also as a complement to the message. As a communicator you should be sensitive to the influence of tone, pitch, and quality of your voice on the interpretation of your message by the receiver. On a more complex level, these properties are interpreted by listeners, as indicating emotionality, emphasis, nonchalance, certainty, or fear, to name a few.

## VOCALICS

Barker 1982: 103-104 states that vocalic or paralinguistic communication deals with the nonverbal elements of the human voice. When people talk they communicate verbally, or linguistically, through words, and nonverbally, or non-linguistically, through the way in which the words are spoken. Various nonverbal vocal utterances (e.g., uh-huh, mmm, eek) have meaning even though these utterances are not accompanied by any verbal communication

## POSTURE

Givens 2000: [nonverbal2@aol.com](mailto:nonverbal2@aol.com) states that posture is the degree of orientation between a speaker's torso and that of a listener (e.g., facing or angled away), as measured in the coronal plane (which divides the body into front and back. We show agreement, liking, and loyalty by aligning the upper body with that, e.g., of our boss. It is often possible to identify the most powerful (i.e., highest status) person seated at a conference table by the relative number of torsos aimed in her/his direction. While the less influential may glance freely about, and turn their heads towards colleagues as they speak, their torsos remain loyally oriented to the individual they most respect.

Givens 2000: [nonverbal2@aol.com](mailto:nonverbal2@aol.com) states further that angular distance reveals how we relate to (i.e., feel about) people sitting, standing, or waiting nearby. Our upper body unwittingly squares-up, addresses and 'aims' at those we like, admire and agree with, but angles away from disliked persons and people with whom we disagree. In a friendly conversation, formal interview or staff meeting, e.g., a greater angular distance (i.e., turning away) substitutes for greater linear distance. Angular distance may range from 0 degrees (directly facing) to 180 degrees (turning one's back). Our body's innate ability to show a superior, confident or haughty attitude through postures through postures, assuming a higher or lower stance upon the earthly plain evolved from paleocircuits of the amphibian brain. Antigravity extensor muscles of the neck, trunk, arms and legs contract when signals are received from cerebellar and vestibular centres responding to the pontine reticular nuclei. The latter brain-stem circuits may be exited by emotional stimuli from the limbic system.

## KINESICS

Williams 1992: 59 states that our facial expressions, eye movements and bodily postures also convey meanings. The study of such expressions and gestures is called kinesics.

Kinesics examines most of the normal gestures that humans are known to exhibit in different emotional states unless their culture has taught them to disguise their feelings. These basic emotions include pleasantness, arousal, fear, surprise, rage and affection. Hand and bodily gestures do not have as much cross-cultural generality, but the meanings that they signify do, as in explicit gestures denoting the shape of a circle or a focus on a certain object.

Most gestures, however, are culturally specific. You know their full meaning only if you are a member of the culture that uses them or have learned them from a member of that culture. Sexes and generations differ in their uses of gestures.

## PROXEMICS

Givens 2000: [nonverbal2@aol.com](mailto:nonverbal2@aol.com) explains that like facial expressions, gestures, and postures, space 'speaks'. The prime directive of proxemic space is that we may not come and go everywhere as we please. There are cultural rules and biological boundaries – explicit as well as implicit and subtle links to observe – everywhere.

According to Barker 1982: 101 proxemics is the use of interpersonal space and distance. Whenever anyone communicates, their distance and angle from the receiver communicate powerful messages, including varying degrees of warmth or immediacy. At least two proxemic cues that are thought to signal immediacy during communication are physical distance and the angle or orientation of the communicators.

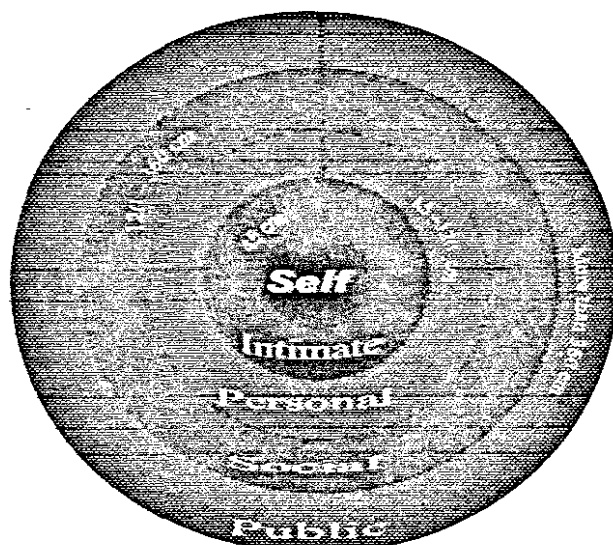


Figure 10: The Four Distance Zones Steinberg 1999a: 54

The distance between the people conveys information about their relationship. By looking at the distance zones, we can tell which people have formal relationships as well as which have close interpersonal relationships. The use of space is closely related to nationality and culture.



Figure 11: Conversational Distance Pease 1999: 24

*In the intimate zone people are in direct contact with one another. This zone is reserved for lovemaking, and only those who are very close are allowed into it. According to Pease 1999: 21 another person will enter our intimate zone for one of two reasons. First, the intruder is a close relative or friend, or he or she may be making sexual advances. Second, the intruder may be hostile and may be about to attack. While we will tolerate strangers moving with our personal and social zones, the intrusion of a stranger into our intimate zone causes physiological changes within our bodies. The heart pumps faster, adrenalin pours into the bloodstream and blood is pumped into the brain and the muscles as physical preparations for a possible fight or flight situation are made.*

The personal distance is reserved for friend and family members. It is close enough to see each other's reactions but far enough not to encroach on to their intimate zone.

When people do not know each other they tend to maintain a social distance of 120 - 360 cm. This can be seen at social gatherings, business meetings or interviews.

A distance more than 360 cm is used in public speaking situations. The public distance indicates a formal occasion such as when a politician is addressing an audience. There is little opportunity for interpersonal involvement in this situation.

According to Pease 1999: 24 Figure 11 depicts the negative reaction of a woman on whose territory a man is encroaching. She is leaning backwards, attempting to maintain a comfortable distance. The problem is, however, that the man may be from a country with a smaller personal zone and is moving forward to stand at a distance that is comfortable for him. The woman may interpret this as a sexual move.

### **Gestures**

According to Pease 1999: 11-19 most of the basic communication gestures are the same all over the world. When people are happy they smile; when they are sad or angry they frown or scowl. Nodding the head is almost universally used to indicate 'yes' or affirmation. It appears to be a form of head lowering and is probably an in-born gesture as deaf and blind people also use it.

Shaking the head from side to side to indicate 'no' or negation is also universal and may be a gesture that is learned in infancy. When a baby has had enough milk, he turns his head from side to side to reject his mother's breast.

The shoulder shrug is also a good example of a universal gesture that is used to show that a person does not know or understand what you are talking about. It is a multiple gesture that has three main parts: exposed palms, hunched shoulders and raised brow.

One of the most frequently observed, but least understood, cues is a hand movement. Most people use hand movements regularly when talking. While some gestures (e.g., a clenched fist) have universal meanings, most of the others are individually learned and idiosyncratic.

Pease goes on to say that that one of the most serious mistakes a novice in body language can make is to interpret a solitary gesture in isolation of other gestures or other circumstances. For example, scratching the head can mean a number of things

– dandruff, fleas, sweating, uncertainty, forgetfulness or lying, depending on the other gestures that occur at the same time, so we must always look at gesture clusters for a correct reading.

Like any other language, body language consists of words, sentences and punctuation. Each gesture is like a single word and a word may have several different meanings. It is only when you put the word into a sentence with other words that you can fully understand its meaning. Gestures come in ‘sentences’ and invariably tell the truth about a person’s feelings or attitudes. The perceptive person is one who can read the nonverbal sentences and accurately match them against the person’s verbal sentences.

### **Gaze behaviour**

According to Mersham and Skinner 1999: 20 a major feature of social communication is eye contact. It can convey emotion, signal when to talk or finish, or aversion. The frequency of contact may suggest either interest or boredom.

Both static features and dynamic features transmit important information from the sender to the receiver. Eye contact is a direct and powerful form of nonverbal communication. The superior in the organisation generally maintains eye contact longer than the subordinate. The direct stare of the sender of the message conveys candour and openness. It elicits a feeling of trust. Downward glances are generally associated with modesty. Eyes rolled upward are associated with fatigue.

### **Tactile communication**

According to Mersham and Skinner 1999: 20 tactile codes have to do with the sense of touch. Communication through touch is obviously non-verbal. Used properly it can create a more direct message than dozens of words; used improperly it can build barriers and cause mistrust. You can easily invade someone’s space through this type of communication. If it is used reciprocally, it indicates solidarity; if not used reciprocally, it tends to indicate differences in status. Touch not only facilitates the sending of the message, but the emotional impact of the message as well.

### **The meaning of silence during communication**

According to BizMove.com 1998-2001 <http://www.bizmove.com/skills/m8g.htm> in Japan, silence is just as important as speaking. It is a designated moment to understand what has just been communicated. It is a moment to think and an opportunity to respond in a well thought out manner. In the west, silence is considered as an awkward moment and we try to mask an uncomfortable feeling with words. It is best not to try to break the silence, as you might appear insincere. It would be better to relax and appear patient with your Japanese counterpart. You should be considering the value of what has been said.

Silence or what is not said can be just as important as what is said. If one point is said, the listener is expected to understand the others points that are not said. You must read in between the lines or notice what has been implied. Often the subject of a sentence is not stated in so many words; it is just understood "who" or "what" is being referred to.

Silence can be a positive or negative influence in the communications process. It can provide a link between messages or sever relationships. It can create tension and uneasiness or create a peaceful situation. Silence can also be judgemental by indicating favour or disfavour – agreement or disagreement.

### **Leakage**

Underwood 2000: <http://www.cultsock.ndirect.co.uk/MUHome/cshtml/index.html> states that leakage tends to occur mostly in the extremities, the hands and feet, which we are less accustomed to paying attention to than we are to our facial expression. Observe the apparently calm and self-confident learner giving a presentation to the rest of the class. There comes that dreadful moment when s/he has to show an overhead projector slide and use a pencil or other pointer to guide her/his audience through it. As s/he points to the slide, the slightest trembling of the hands is magnified a hundredfold. Alternatively, the nervous learner who adopts a deliberately informal approach is worthy of study. Establishing an informal approach at the outset gives her/him the opportunity to sit on the table, which means s/he can sit

on those nervously trembling hands. But keep an eye on the constantly swinging legs!

Leakage can also occur in the voice or in an odd 'out-of-synch' feel to the gestures and the verbal message. People may blush or perspire. They may avoid eye contact, with the result that we tend to interpret avoidance of eye contact as a signal for deceptiveness. On the other hand, almost constant eye contact may be interpreted as deliberate overcompensation, so may also be interpreted as a signal of deceptiveness. Much depends, as always, on our assessment of the context and of the other person.

## **PUBLIC COMMUNICATION**

Steinberg 1999b: 53, states that public communication refers to a situation where a communicator like a lecturer or an *entertainer* does most of the talking while several people do the listening. The public speaking context is different from that of the small group. Groups of people being addressed in the public speaking context are much larger than in the small group context. The result is that interaction between the members is severely limited or even impossible. However, the relatively face-to-face nature of public communication allows recipients actively to participate in the communication process through their occasional responses to what the communicator says. This allows the communicator to make on-the-spot adjustments to the message.

### **The purpose of public communication**

We use the same techniques that we use in our daily communication to get our message across. The purpose of the talk may be to increase the audience's knowledge of a topic (*informative speech*), to influence people (*persuasive speech*), or to increase the audience's feelings of enjoyment (*entertaining speech*).

### ***Persuasion***

Of all the types of public speaking, persuasion is the most difficult and the most challenging. Your success in any particular persuasive speech depends to a large ex-

tent on how well you understand your listeners' attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviour because it is exactly this that you want to influence and change.

In persuasive speeches we usually write a proposition as well as a specific purpose. The proposition is a statement that tells us what we want the audience to believe or do at the end of the speech. A proposition of policy concerns judgements of quality or morality, for example whether something is good or bad, right or wrong, desirable or undesirable.

These strategies developed by Aristotle more than two centuries ago, can be used to support persuasive speeches: *logos*, *pathos* and *ethos*. *Logos* appeals to the audience's reason, *pathos* appeals to the audience's emotions and *ethos* is concerned with how credible the audience perceives the speaker to be.

Kiesler 1978: 72 states that studies suggest that communicators consider the possibility of rejection when encoding messages and distort messages so as to please recipients. In addition, messages are more likely to be distorted when communicator and audience are dissimilar – in attitude, power, or experience.

Distorting a message so that it pleases an audience or making it seem less controversial may, of course, have the effect of producing **no change** in the audience at all, because the audience is not aware of a need **for change**. Whether this is a good or bad state of affairs depends on whether change is really desired (perhaps, as in politics, it is simple exposure that the speaker wants) and, if desired, whether it would benefit both or just one of the parties.

He states further that unclear messages make the audience more anxious. In contrast, the politicians who make clear a stand regardless of the audience's initial attitudes is taking a risk.

One difference between situations in which clear communications have positive or negative effects lies in the perceived intent of the communicator. When an audience perceives that the message is meant to benefit them and is sincere, a clear direct approach is effective. Even direct threats may be useful if the intent seems benevolent.

## **Distance**

In public speaking one person addresses an audience in a public setting such as a lecture hall or auditorium. As a communicator in a public context, you will find it difficult to maintain direct eye contact with your audience and to monitor body language such as facial expressions and body gestures. Your audience is also affected by such factors as their distance from you (the speaker), the lighting and the quality of the public system of the venue.

## **Feedback**

The public communication process has a formal structure. Usually the event is planned in advance. The speaker is introduced and s/he delivers a speech that has been prepared to meet the objectives of the particular situation. Often there will be a call for questions after the presentation by the speaker. So feedback or questions to the speaker are delayed, and not instant as in the interpersonal or small group context.

## **Audience anxiety**

Mersham and Skinner 1999: 131-132 explain that all of us participate in a form of public speaking when we contribute to a class discussion, when we make a suggestion at a club meeting or when we tell a story at a party. However, formal public speaking situations can be intimidating, even for people who are usually very talkative and outgoing. Although public speaking includes many of the same communication skills as other speaking situations, people who may be comfortable while speaking in small groups can feel anxious and experience communication apprehension in public speaking settings.

## **How public speaking differs from other forms of communication**

According to Mersham and Skinner 1999: 133 public speaking differs from other types of communication in two main ways. Firstly, a public speaking situation includes two distinct and separate roles: speaker and audience. Secondly, in this speaker-audience relationship, the speaker carries more responsibility for the communication interaction than does the audience.

Public communication, like other forms of communication, has several purposes. It can be used to instruct, put forward a point of view or persuade. Public communication can also be used to praise and to blame, to accuse and to defend. The exchange of information is basic to public communication. The speech to inform can take place in a variety of locations: on a soccer field, in a classroom or in a conference centre. The speech to inform can use a number of formats: instructions, reports, lectures and demonstrations.

Mersham and Skinner 1999: 135 say that the informative speaker's goal is to successfully transmit information. The speaker must therefore present information in a way that holds the attention of the audience. The success of an information speech depends on how well the material is understood. The audience may be motivated to listen and the speaker may be dynamic, but success must be based on what was learned by the audience. When a speaker's purpose is persuasion, he or she hopes to influence an audience's behaviour or way of thinking. In defining persuasion as a means of bringing about behaviour change, the Greek philosopher Aristotle said that a speaker could accomplish her/his end by using *logos* (logic or reasoning), *pathos* (an appeal to the emotions) and *ethos* (proof of the speaker's morality and credibility). So we can define the speech to persuade as a deliberate attempt to reinforce or change the attitudes, beliefs or behaviour of another person or group of people through communication.

Mersham and Skinner explain further that a speech that is intended to entertain is one that intends to bring pleasure to the audience. Such a speech is usually characterised by some degree of humour. A humorous speech may be gently amusing or boisterously funny. The effect depends on the speaker's personality, delivery and brand of humour. A speaker can use exaggeration, sarcasm, witticisms or burlesque humour when presenting a speech to entertain. Listeners expend much less effort during a speech to entertain than during an informative or persuasive speech. The nature of entertainment speech is generally more informal than other kinds of public speaking. It creates a strong rapport between the speaker and the audience.

## **Type of audience**

Mersham and Skinner 1999: 136-137 say that as a public speaker you have to assess the nature, needs and interests of the people who will be listening to your presentation.

Three factors that need to be fully investigated are:

- o The characteristics of the group ('demographics')
- o The psychological make-up of the listeners ('psychographics')
- o The place where the presentation will be made

The speaker has to pay attention to factors such as sex, age, nationality, occupation, marital status, educational level, income and/or residential area.

A psycho-graphic profile of a group takes factors into account such as their activities, interest as and opinions. Information about their interests, attitudes and beliefs may give you some indication of either positive or negative reactions to controversial issues you may be discussing with your audience.

## **Public speaking and nonverbal communication**

The impact that you make as a speaker depends on nonverbal communication as well as verbal communication.

According to King 1997: <http://www2.pstcc.cc.tn.us/~dking/nvcom.htm> Mehrabian points out that only 7% of our impact comes from the words that we speak (the verbal component), whereas 38% comes from our vocal qualities (vocal component) and 55% comes from how we look to others (the visual component). So on this nonverbal aspect of our communication – voice and body - make up a decisive 93% of our communication impact on others.

Here are some do's and don'ts' which may help with public speaking:

Do	Don't
Facial Expression	
Smile	Maintain a 'fixed' or 'deadpan' expres-

Use facial 'action' to enhance communication	sion
Eye Contact	
Seek eye contact with members of the audience	Keep your eyes on your notes
Posture	
Adopt a comfortable, relaxed pose	Attempt to be a 'still life'
Gesture	
Use the type of gestures used in normal conversation	Over dramatise Stand motionless
Body movements	
Move freely as and when necessary	Indulge in 'random activity' such as fiddling with clothing or ear pulling
Clothing	
Dress to suit the occasion, i.e. to blend in with the audience	Dress uncomfortably Dress to dazzle the audience
Tone of voice	
Vary tone, pitch, and volume to provide an interesting presentation	Use a monotone
Rate of speech	
Vary your rate to suit the needs of the audience – slow down or speed up according to the audience's response	Forget to keep an eye on the time
Length of talk	
Keep within the agreed limit Omit non-essential material if time runs out Leave time to sum up	Assume you have a 'captive audience' Forget to leave time for summing up

Figure 12: Do's and Don'ts' of appearing in public Mersham and Skinner 1999: 141-142

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter I discussed verbal and nonverbal communication. I looked at how encoding and decoding of symbols result in a set of perceptions. Gender differences affect communication patterns and styles. Goals provide focus and motivation for a group, while norms guide beliefs and behaviours in a group. I discussed the different roles played by members in a group. Networks represent the structure of channels through which messages pass from one person to another in groups. I looked at the use of groups and conflict management within groups. I discussed how public speaking differs from other forms of communication.

No matter what our position in an organisation, it is important for us to develop some sensitivity to nonverbal messages. Currently most courses include very little training in classroom management skills, including nonverbal skills and this needs to be increased. Learners also need more practice with nonverbal and other interactive skills to prepare them for adult life. In chapter 6 I will examine the role of communication in OBE.

## Chapter 6

### THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN OBE

#### PREVIEW

In this chapter, I will discuss communication as it occurs in the classroom. The components and processes of classroom communication are similar to those in other settings, but the functions and patterns of classroom communication are unique. Information sharing is the primary goal among educators and learners. The oral interaction that occurs in the classroom affects the personality development, intellectual development and social development of learners and educators alike. Levels of communication in the classroom include intrapersonal, interpersonal, group and cultural.

#### COMMUNICATION IN THE CLASSROOM

Barker 1982: 4 states that educator is the frequently the originator of the message. The communication cycle is usually initiated because of the originator-educator's need to impart information or the learner-originator's need to seek information. The need to communicate may result from a stimulus, which affects the originator. *Hunger, thirst, a headache, a sudden flash of an idea, the immediate environment, books, pictures, questions from other persons and physical action* all stimulate the communication act in the classroom.

Barker 1982: 4 explains that the encoding process transforms thoughts and ideas into word symbols, bodily movements, facial expression and/or gestures. On both cognitive and conditioned response levels, the encoding process interacts with the originator's individual communication climate. Such elements in the climate as hereditary influence, past experience and social development tend to mould the originator's encoding system into a particular pattern.

Levels of communication in the classroom include intrapersonal, interpersonal, group and cultural. Intrapersonal communication takes place within the individual. Interpersonal communication takes place on a one-to-one basis between an educator and a learner or between two learners. Group communication takes place in the classroom between an educator and several learners – or within a group of learners. Cultural communication reflects the influence of art, literature, laws and mores on individual communicators. In the classroom, this affects both educators and learners.

In intrapersonal communication, the channels are the neural pathways and smooth muscles, while in interpersonal, group and cultural communication the channels are frequently airwaves, which carry the visual and spoken messages to be received and decoded by the receiver. In the classroom some responses may be delayed for an extended period, while others may be transmitted immediately after the message has been received and decoded.

Barker 1982: 4 explains that in the classroom setting nonverbal responses are frequently used more than verbal responses. A nod of the head, a gesture of the hand, a stern look will often provide more effective feedback than will the verbal mode.

A good educator will be aware of what is taking place in the classroom situation. Perceiving and analysing occurs all the time. The educator has to adjust to the reactions of learners in the classroom. S/he has to analyse learner's reactions and take the best action possible. The educator may decide to change the technique being used based on the learners reactions. The loop begins all over again with the educator assessing feedback in the learner's tone of voice, body language and statements. Good educators will be flexible and be able to adjust to various different situations.

## **CONSTRUCTIVISM AND LEARNING**

OBE is an agent of change. Cates 1993: <http://www.faithchristianmin.org/articles/ohe.htm> states that the purpose of education and schools is to change the thoughts, feelings and actions of learners. School is a change agent - and the specific

focus is on changing people. The goal is to develop a new kind of educator who engages in teaching as clinical practice and functions as a responsible agent of social change.

Carvin 1998b: <http://edweb.gsn.org/constructivism.basics.html> explains that the basic tenet of constructivism is that learners learn by doing rather than observing.

Carvin 1998b: <http://edweb.gsn.org/constructivism.basics.html> learners bring prior knowledge into a learning situation in which they must critique and re-evaluate their understanding of it. This process of interpretation, articulation, and re-evaluation is repeated until they can demonstrate their comprehension of the subject. Constructivism often utilises collaboration and peer criticism as a way of provoking learners to reach a new level of understanding. Active practice is the key of any constructivist lesson. To make an analogy, if you want to learn how to play a piano, you don't pick a book on piano theory - you get a piano and practice it until you get it right. It is this repetition of practice and review that leads to the greatest retention of knowledge

Constructivism also can be used to illustrate a theory of communication. When you send a message by saying something or providing information, and you have no knowledge of the receiver, then you have no idea as to what message was received, and you cannot unambiguously interpret the response.

Dougiamas 1998: <http://dougiamas.com/writing/constructivism.html> states that if we view it in this way, teaching becomes the establishment and maintenance of a language and a means of communication between the educator and learners, as well as between learners. Simply presenting material, giving out problems, and accepting answers back is not a refined enough process of communication for efficient learning.

According to Carvin 1998a: <http://edweb.gsn.org/constructivism.html> as education has evolved so have the methods of teaching learners evolved with it. In general, reform-minded educators are now emphasising active learning over passive

learning. Traditionally, a vast amount of the school day is spent listening to unidirectional lectures in large groups where the educator acts as a public speaker, with learners completing workbooks and taking memorisation-driven tests. This form of passive education is extremely inefficient, for it fails to engage the learner within a given subject.

### COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Dirven and Verspoor 1998: 171, state that the exchange of information involves both giving and asking for information. In order to communicate as effectively as possible, it is important in both cases that the speaker and hearer can reasonably guess what s/he other already knows, and what can therefore be presupposed and implied by the speaker and what has to be inferred by the hearer.

Small group communication promotes cooperative learning. Learner participation through cooperative learning will not only lead to more meaningful learning taking place in classes, but will also provide educators with a possible means of coping with the question of how to teach large classes in the South African context.

Cooperative learning is an instructional design that stimulates peer interaction and learner-to-learner co-operation in the process of fostering successful learning by all. This model has two types of primary aims. The first is to improve learner understanding and skills in the learning areas being taught and the second is for the learners to develop cooperative group skills and to gain an appreciation for the different individuals and cultures found in our South African classrooms.

Three specific elements that are critical to the success of cooperative learning are:

- Face-to-face interaction
- A feeling of positive interdependence
- A feeling of individual accountability

Van der Horst and McDonald 1997: 128 state that face-to-face interaction requires placing learners in close physical proximity to each other in order to complete the assigned tasks while establishing a feeling of positive interdependence means that learners believe that each individual can achieve the particular learning objective.

Nofsinger 1991: 107 states that the most cooperative form of communication in the classroom is conversation. Conversation can be characterised as the most democratic form of communication because all participants have an equal chance to take a turn at expressing ideas about the theme under discussion. The turn system for conversation fosters orderliness with the way in which it organises turns to talk. Turns are constructed using any of several different size units - words, phrases, clauses and sentences. Participants, who then employ three basic practices for allocating the next turn to someone, can project the possible completion of a turn. These practices are, current speaker selects next, any listener self-selects and the *current speaker continues*. The set of practices through which turn coordination is achieved is not the only respect in which participants display to each other what they are doing and what they mean. Conversations are cooperatively brought to a close, mistakes are repaired and understandings are checked. This pattern allows for the development of more extended dyadic structures of conversation, such as elaborated arguments, dialogues and colloquies.

I will explain group work in greater detail later on in this chapter because I believe that group work becomes the trigger to accelerate life orientation skills. Knowledge is actively constructed in a communication environment because learners:

- o Work in a group
- o Defend their point of view
- o Debate

### **Developing cooperative work skills**

DeAvila 1987: [http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/classics/trg/\\_02\\_cooperative.htm](http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/classics/trg/_02_cooperative.htm) states that educators see interaction between learners as one of the chief

motivators of intellectual development. When experiencing the different perspectives of their peers, learners can examine their own environment more objectively. Cooperative learning activities require group work, and therefore proper steps must be taken to achieve learning and assimilation of new concepts in a group setting. Learners must have the opportunity to acquire the vocabulary and resources to achieve a requisite level of intellectual discourse. Furthermore, the experience must be structured so that learners will listen, explain, and provide feedback for one another. Practice in co-operation is essential.

DeAvila continues to say that cooperative group work may involve a radical change for learners who have unconsciously internalised regular classroom behaviour in which they normally are told to do their own work, keep their eyes to the front, and stay quiet. In a cooperative learning classroom, learners are responsible for their own behaviour but also, to a large extent, for the group's behaviour. Learners learn to ask for help and to ask for each other's opinions, to listen to others, to explain, and to demonstrate how to do something.

To assist in the implementation of cooperative learning, educators can design activities in which learners work cooperatively in a group setting and increase their awareness of the effects of positive and negative behaviour on group problem solving.

### **Assigning roles and responsibilities**

#### ***Task roles***

According to Merham and Skinner 1999: 117-119 task roles reflect the work a group must do to accomplish its goals. Task roles are not limited to an individual but are often interchanged among the members. These roles are directly related to the group's goal, whether that goal is to gather information, make recommendations, solve a problem or complete a project. Such roles include the following:

- *The information or opinion giver:* In this role a group member provides content or well-considered opinions that will help the group move more smoothly toward the best decision

- *The information or opinion seeker:* The group member who takes on this role is usually the person who perceives that the group needs additional information
- *The expeditor:* The individual in this role helps the group stick to its agenda and often leads the group back on course when it goes off on a tangent
- *The idea person:* The idea person is an imaginative group member who comes up with several alternatives, and quite often an idea that serves as a basis for the final decision
- *The analyser:* This role is played by the individual who is highly skilled in problem solving, who moves the group rapidly to the core of the problem, and who, at times, examines the reasoning behind each contribution to the discussion

### ***Maintenance roles***

Task-orientated behaviour is essential in getting work done, but a group can only be productive if there is interaction among its members. Maintenance roles are concerned with the feelings of individual members and the emotional behaviour of the group. Maintenance roles reflect the group behaviours that keep the group working together smoothly. These include the following:

- *The active listener:* This role is played by the person who recognises the contributions of others and who responds with specific verbal or nonverbal reinforcement
- *The game leader:* The game leader is the individual who recognises when the process is becoming tedious, when fatigue is setting in or when the discussion is getting out of hand. Such a person has a timely and perceptive ability to create an appropriate joke, digression or comment to improve the spirits of the group

- *The harmoniser:* The harmoniser is the group member who is both considerate and empathetic, and who is able to reduce or reconcile differences and misunderstandings
- *The gatekeeper:* Gatekeepers make sure that channels of communication are open and that everyone has a chance to enter the discussion
- *The compromiser:* During the course of a discussion, in which two prominent positions emerge, it is often the compromiser who must act in order to make the decision
- *The front person or public relations person:* The front person is the person who is skilled at interacting with outside groups and individuals, and who is skilled in public speaking and interpersonal relations

Fundamental to cooperative learning group work is the recognition of each learner's role and responsibility in the group. The basic objective is to avoid the creation of status differences between groups and to foster recognition of interdependence. Typically, group assignments can be made weekly during the introduction to a theme; individual role assignments can be made daily or weekly.

According to DeVila 1987: <http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/classics/trg/02cooperative.htm> the first step in assigning roles is to form groups of four to six learners of varying academic and linguistic levels. Work groups should not consist of either high or lower achievers exclusively. In bilingual settings, groups should not be exclusively comprised of limited-English or English-proficient learners. It is also important that the procedure not result in ability groups in which one group dominates over another or is seen as the high-status group. Learners should be mixed by sex, reading level, and language proficiency.

According to DeVila 1987: <http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/classics/trg/02cooperative.htm> it is essential that the learners understand that their active participation is critical to the success of the group. Although some of them may be better at certain tasks, such as reading or math computation, the point remains that every

learner has something to contribute. Just as learners must learn to help one another they must also learn to help the educator in coordinating all aspects of the program. A cooperative learning classroom represents a complex social environment, one that requires delegation of authority and sharing of responsibility. The main purpose of teaching learners how to work cooperatively in groups is to demonstrate the value of collective enterprise in completing intricate tasks and to promote interaction between individuals acting as equals.

#### **THE EDUCATOR AS FACILITATOR**

DeAvila 1987: [http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/classics/trg\\_/02cooperative.htm](http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/classics/trg_/02cooperative.htm) states that the instructional role of the educator in a cooperative learning approach is cardinal. However, the educator's role in the cooperative learning classroom is slightly different from that in a conventional classroom. The role of the educator is to contribute to the development of learning sets and to focus learners' perceptual apparatus on the essential features of a task. Asking constructive questions and providing quick feedback effectively accomplish this. The best educator never tells the answer but instead asks another question, therefore unobtrusively guiding the learning process.

#### **Facilitating cooperative learning**

The cooperative learning educator is also a manager, chiefly responsible the smooth running of the classroom. The educator is the final arbiter. The educator is the learner's access to knowledge. Without the educator there is little, if any, learning that is meaningful in a modern society.

DeAvila 1987: [http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/classics/trg\\_/02\\_cooperative.htm](http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/classics/trg_/02_cooperative.htm) adds that with the exception of the initial orientation and the final wrap-up of each learning activity, the educator is not the focal point in the classroom. Moving from one learning centre to another, the educator is a supportive catalyst of the learning process rather than a source of expected answers. The educator generates learner interaction, asks questions; talks about problem solving strategies, role performance, and cooperative behaviours; and generalises concepts or principles.

### **Format of the facilitative lesson**

According to DeAvila an educator may structure a constructivist lesson to engage learner interest on a topic that has a broad concept. Doing a demonstration, presenting data or showing a short film may accomplish this. The educator can also ask open-ended questions that probe the learners' preconceptions on the topic. In order to present a constructivist lesson the educator has to make use of the public communication technique at the onset of the lesson

Next, s/he could present some information or data that does not fit with their existing understanding. The educator could let the learners take the bull by the horns and argue for and against the problematic information. Brainstorming such information has the hallmarks of the democratic form of communication during this phase of constructivist lessons.

Learners break into small groups to formulate their own hypotheses and experiments. These will reconcile their previous understanding with the discrepant information. The role of the educator during the small group interaction time is to circulate around the classroom to be a resource or to ask probing questions that aid the learners in coming to an understanding of the principle being studied. Learners assume various roles as they engage in their discussions, emulating organisational communication. After sufficient time for experimentation, the small groups share their ideas and conclusions with the rest of the class, which will try to come to a consensus about what they learned. Learners could use verbal, written or electronic communication in the discussion of their findings.

### **Facilitating the development of problem solving and critical thinking skills**

DeAvila 1987: [http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/classics/trg/\\_02\\_cooperative.htm](http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/classics/trg/_02_cooperative.htm) states that to maximise the development of problem solving skills and to increase interdependence among learners, the educator must let learners find out and learn by themselves. Learners should not be given readymade answers or asked to repeat and memorise things they do not really understand. Interactions will depend on the educator's knowledge of the learning process and decision making in a particular situation. This educator guide suggests two general guidelines for educa-

tor learner interaction to help support the development of problem-solving skills: assisting and giving feedback.

In the first guideline, the educator assists learning by sharing information, helping learners analyse phenomena or problems, and extending and generalising concepts or relationships. In sharing information, the educator describes in detail her/his observation of learners' actions with the learning materials.

The educator also helps learners to examine a problem in terms of its parts and interrelationship without giving the answer. When experiments do not follow the predicted path, there is good opportunity for learners to attempt to discover why, to think more, to plan better, and to learn more. In a truly scientific sense, every experiment "works" even though it may not take the anticipated course. It is equally important that learners be given opportunities to react to a situation. This allows them to think aloud and to hear how others plan, organise, predict, and interpret information.

In extending, the educator helps learners apply experiences to general concepts, principles, or rules. Generalisations come because of many experiences, observations, and experiments.

Educators have the responsibility to teach learners to think critically and to solve problems in their specific learning areas. Furthermore, the learners must be taught in terms of cultural contexts that they can relate to and are familiar with.

Thinking skills and problem-solving skills can be taught by using a number of different models of these processes. I will refer to De Bono: 1985 and his discussion of the six thinking hats.

Van der Horst and McDonald 1997 give a succinct exposition of how De Bono's six thinking hats schema can be applied in OBE classrooms. The purpose of using the idea of the six thinking hats is actually to unscramble thinking so that a person is able to use one thinking mode at a time – instead of trying to solve a problem in one go.

### ***White-hat thinking***

According to De Bono 1985: 34-54 the colour white symbolises purity and is used to refer to pure facts, figures and information white-hat thinking can be compared to that of a computer, which provides facts, or figures objectively. White-hat thinking requires discipline and direction. The thinker strives to be neutral and present information objectively. The educator could present the class with statistics and request exact facts and figures from the learners. The white-hat thinker must imitate a computer in the presentation of answers.

### ***Red-hat thinking***

De Bono 1985: 56-78, states that the colour red symbolises emotions and feelings, also intuitive feelings or hunches. Wearing the colour red therefore allows the thinker to say how s/he feels about the matter. The red hat legitimises emotions and feelings as an important part to thinking. It is important that underlying feelings are made visible as part of the thinking map, and also as part of the value system that chooses the route on the map. When a thinker uses a red-hat view there should never be an attempt to justify the feelings or provide a logical basis for them. The class discussing the crime situation in South Africa is allowed free reigns to describe exactly how they feel about the criminals, the victims, and their personal safety.

### ***Black-hat thinking***

According to De Bono 1985: 80-108, the colour black symbolises negativity and pessimism. It is used in the form of negative judgement and indicates why something will not work. Black-hat thinking is specifically concerned with negative assessment. The black-hat thinker indicates what is wrong or incorrect, or how something does not fit the accepted knowledge or experience. The learner who points out the dangers of promiscuity in the discussion concerning boy-girl relationships is donning the black hat. The black-hat thinker points out the risks and dangers in permissive relationships.

### ***Yellow-hat thinking***

De Bono 1985: 110-133 states the colour yellow symbolises sunshine, brightness and optimism. It further indicates what is positive and constructive. It is concerned

with positive assessment. The values, advantages and benefits of a thing or a principle are explored. In the discussion about a forthcoming fundraising-event, the yellow-hat thinker explores the positive side of having a Fun Run. S/he questions what the potential benefits are.

### ***Green-hat thinking***

According to De Bono 1985: 135-168, the colour green symbolises fertility, creativity and new growth. The green-hat thinker therefore thinks creatively. A fundamental ingredient of green-hat thinking is finding alternatives. There is a need for originality – to go beyond the known, the obvious and the satisfactory. A green-hat thinker is not impulsive, but *pauses to consider options and alternatives*. A green-hat thinker can also elaborate on ideas by going beyond the obvious and including new dimensions. The green-hat thinker will look at other alternatives in coping with stress rather than turning to drugs. S/he objectively assesses various options that promote new growth.

### ***Blue-hat thinking***

De Bono 1985: 170-195, states that the colour blue symbolises coolness. It is used for purposes of objective assessment and control. It is sometimes called the “control”-hat. The blue-hat thinker calls for the use of the different hats. It involves monitoring the whole thinking process and ensures that the rules of the game are adhered to. Blue-hat thinking can also be used for making summaries, overviews and conclusions.

## **ACTIVE LEARNING**

Communication Science promotes the process of active learning. According to Bell 1999: <http://bbll.com>, active listening is just as effective and important with teenagers and younger children as it is with adults. Active learning involves learners *doing* something and taking the lead to *think* about what they are doing. Examples include discussions, surveys, laboratory exercises, in-class writing, role-playing, small group or individual learner presentations, and field trips. Active learning therefore requires

learners to take a participatory role in learning, rather than to adopt a receptive, passive posture.

Forms of active learning like discussion, surveys, role-playing, small group or individual learner presentations all emphasise the crucial role of communication in the new approach to learning.

Marsh 1997a: 43, quotes the following as important exit outcomes for all learners:

- Ability to communicate (reading, writing, speaking, listening and numeracy skills)
- Facilitate in social interaction
- Analytical capabilities
- Problem-solving skills
- Skills in making value judgements and decisions
- Skills in creative expression and in responding to the creative work of others
- Civic responsibility
- Responsible participation in a global environment
- Skill in developing and maintaining wellness
- Skill in using technology as a tool for learning
- Skill in life and career planning

According to a summary by Bonwell 1995: <http://s.psych.uiuc.edu/~jshenker/> active learning often involves one or more of the following characteristics:

- There is less emphasis on the transmission of information and greater emphasis on developing analytical and critical thinking skills
- Learners do something other than simply listen passively
- Learners are engaged in activities
- There is more emphasis on exploring attitudes and values held about course material
- Learners generally must adopt "higher order" thinking - critical thinking, analysis, evaluation
- Both learners and educators receive more and faster feedback

McKeachie et al 1987 <http://s.psych.uiuc.edu/~jshenker/active.html> state that active learning requires a greater depth of processing and more elaborative, semantic encoding as compared to passive learning. Such cognitive processes should result in greater comprehension and better retention. In studies comparing classrooms using active learning versus passive learning. Active learning methods generally result in greater retention of material at the end of a class, superior problem solving skills, more positive attitudes, and higher motivation for future learning. Learners must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences, apply it to their daily lives. Chickering and Gamson 1987: <http://s.psych.uiuc.edu/~jshenker/active.html>, state that learners must make what they learn part of themselves.

Active communication and learning increases learner interest and attention. Active learning may benefit learners by providing greater and richer enjoyment of class meetings. Learners *like* classrooms that involve active learning, and educators typically find such classes more fun and less boring as well.

Active learning involves various departures from classroom norms and expectations: educators may ask questions rather than state conclusions, learners may be

physically move around while participating in an exercise or making a presentation, learner input may drive class content with the educator following the learners' lead. Therefore, deciding to involve learners actively in the classroom requires a willingness from both educator and learner to break social norms. As in other settings, social norms can be powerful in the extent to which they demand adherence, and breaking social norms can therefore be a stressful experience for the uninitiated. By contrast, passive learning methods are easier and less threatening, providing a comfort much like that felt by young learners returning to the safety and familiarity of their home after the torment of the real world's greater uncertainty.

### **ACTIVE LISTENING**

According to HCI Information Development Organisation 2000: <http://www.hci.com.au/hcisite/toolkit/smallgro.htm> communication is a two-way thing and if a discussion is to be productive, each person's position must be understood clearly along the way. Unfortunately, since most of our efforts in discussion go into being heard, rather than listening to the others' points of view, progress is often slow. This natural tendency needs to be countered by active listening. This involves:

- Consciously concentrating on what the other person is saying.
- Waiting until the other person has clearly indicated that they have finished getting their message across.
- Then, before putting your own view, getting the other person to confirm your understanding of what they have said by reflecting their message back to them. Active listening is not simply a matter of restraining the urge to speak and listening instead, it involves both listening and making a conscious attempt to understand the other person's view.

According to Woods 1997: <http://www.inov8.psu.edu/puzzle/sections/t.htm> listening is very different from hearing. Hearing is a passive physical process involving sound waves and the inner ear. Listening is an active physiological process in which we analyse and interpret what we hear. In order to engage in effective, productive,

interactive discussion, we must actively listen to the ideas of the other group members in order to provide feedback and formulate intelligent, informed arguments. We can easily become good listeners by avoiding negative listening behaviours.

*Listening is hindered when we:*

- Jump to conclusions before a person has finished speaking
- Focus on how people are communicating rather than what they are communicating
- Concentrate on our own responses before the other person is done speaking
- Allow ourselves to go off on mental tangents
- Make the choice not to listen

*Listening is aided when we:*

- Concentrate on what a person is saying rather than how they look or talk
- Make mental connections between our own lives and the ideas being presented
- Listen with an open mind rather than assuming the person speaking is wrong or uninformed
- Focus on the ways in which we agree with the speaker rather than the ways we disagree
- Remind ourselves to provide the speaker with positive feedback
- Restate, in our minds, what we think the person is saying in our own words
- Remember how frustrated we feel when people don't listen to us

### USING PAUSES EFFECTIVELY

According to Tobin 1987: <http://spsych.uiuc.edu/~jshenker/active.html> educators are often uncomfortable with silence in the classroom. Indeed, part of the social norm of a classroom often includes an expectation that an educator should be speaking, and therefore silence feels like "something is wrong." But educators and learners, as with speakers and their audiences, *need time to think*--time to analyse and evaluate what has been said, time to generate questions or comments. Learners generally need time to think through what has been covered in the last few minutes of class, pull together ideas, consider their reactions, discover what they want to ask, and formulate how they want to ask it. This cognitive sequence is generally not *over* when an educator asks a question. Rather, an educator's question acts to *initiate* these analyses in a learner's head. Therefore, a speaker must pause long enough for listeners to go through these mental steps to produce the critical, analytical thinking upon which good questions rest. After asking a question of the class, silently count to "5" and look left and right making eye contact across the room before saying anything at all. Be prepared that this can be uncomfortable for the uninitiated, which includes even some very experienced educators. Indeed, a typical lecturer educator pauses an average of less than a second after asking a question!

### DISCIPLINARY STYLES

With the introduction of OBE learning programmes, it does not mean that order is substituted by anarchy, and using various forms of communication at various stages during the mastery of a learning theme help to manage and structure the progression of orderly process in the learning programme. Educators essentially are managers of the process of knowledge construction by coordinating the information to be transmitted, the time frames according to which it must be transmitted and the type of activities that learners must engage in during the process of knowledge construction.

Mersham and Skinner 2001a: 125 state that the day-to-day activities of managers place a high value on effective interpersonal communication. Managers provide information – which must be understood; they give commands and instructions

which must be obeyed and learned and they make efforts to influence and persuade – which must be accepted and acted on.

Therefore, the way in which managers communicate, both as senders and receivers, is crucial for obtaining effective performance. Theoretically, managers who desire to communicate effectively can use both exposure and feedback to enlarge the area of common understanding, the Arena. In practice, this is not often the case. Managers differ in their ability and willingness to use exposure and feedback. At least four different managerial styles can be identified.

Jackson 1991: 42 states that traditionally, four styles of discipline are distinguished: dictatorial, autocratic, democratic and *laissez-faire*. The dictatorial and *laissez-faire* styles are at the opposite ends of the scale with the *laissez-faire* style, giving learners almost free reign to destroy themselves, the educator and the classroom property. Both ends of the scale are in fact destructive, not only for educators, but also for the learners. The dictatorial educator reduces the learners to tears, while the educator who adopts the *laissez-faire* approach ends up being reduced to tears by the learners. Angry educators or angry learners are no solution to the discipline problem.

The democratic approach is the one recommended by most educationists, psychologists and parents, and is also the most popular with the learners.

Jackson 1991: 46 continues to say that the body language of the unassertive educator is in it-self a give-away. The educator tends to lean backwards when giving commands, which virtually tells the learners that no action will follow the command. This well-meaning and often dedicated educator becomes the focus of the learners' anger because they find it difficult to respect a leader who is afraid to assume the mantle of legitimate authority. When there is a power vacuum in a group situation, someone will step forward to fill it. If the educator does not assume the role of authority, then the learners or a learner surely will.

The aggressive educator generally lacks empathy and understanding. In some cases aggressive educators become paranoid about opposition to their authority. They

tend to be sarcastic, often insult the learners, and break the policy of the school by inflicting corporal punishment. Their body language too conveys pent-up anger and aggression.

Learners tend to fear this kind of educator. They become timid and afraid to express opinions. They often suffer from achievement anxiety, develop psychosomatic symptoms, and may refuse to go to school. Conflict and anger pervade the classroom and learners are frequently reduced to tears.

Jackson 1991: 48 states that without being petty, the assertive educator reacts timeously to disruption, nipping it in the bud before chaos can develop. The assertive educator has a sense of humour and will laugh at a joke even if it is at her expense. In addition, the assertive educator is alert and his/her body language conveys that command will be followed by action. Such educators never have to scream or shout and seldom to even raise their voices. Their body language says it all, sometimes by just a disapproving look or the raising of an eyebrow.

Examination conditions require that an educator be assertive and in control. If the educator does not assume the role of authority the examination session will become a mockery.

One of the educator's primary tasks is to impart an interest, a love of learning to learners. If an educator does not genuinely enjoy acquiring knowledge, or lacks academic commitment, then a love of learning is hardly likely to flourish in that educator's classroom. The educator who is comfortable and fulfilled as a person, has a positive self-image, is well-prepared and projects the image of a dedicated, competent, confident, pleasant personality will have little difficulty in coping with the classroom situation.

Even well prepared lessons can become monotonous if the educator is inclined to focus on one type of activity or use the same tone of voice. Explanations on the part of the educator are essential, but he/she must try to make a habit of not talking for more than 10 minutes at a time, even if there is a great deal of material to im-

part. After 10 minutes vary the lesson by including some form of learner activity, even if it is for a short duration. The educator can then continue with the explanation allowing for another break in some form of learner activity.

When speaking, even for a few minutes, the pace and tone of your voice should fluctuate appropriately. The volume of your voice should also vary – talk quietly at times, even whispering when appropriate, and then increase the volume, possibly to the level of a shout for a split second.

Jackson 1991: 31 states that variety is vital. Pepper your explanations with questions and encourage your learners to ask *you* questions.

For successful classroom management, the educator must bear in mind that the child's understanding of mind is different from the adult's.

#### **THE IMPACT OF BELIEFS AND DESIRES ON LEARNING**

No learner comes into the classroom only with knowledge constructed during school lessons. Learners bring with them memories of recent and long past events. Such knowledge, amongst others, informs their beliefs and stimulates their desires.

According to Wellman 1992: 101 we typically try to predict what people do in terms of their wishes, knowledge, wants, misconceptions, fears, expectations and doubts. These constructs can roughly be divided into two complementary groups: beliefs (understood broadly as including the actor's knowledge, convictions, suppositions, ideas and opinions) and desires (understood broadly as including all the actor's pro and con attitudes, such as lusts, wants, wishes, preferences, goals, and hopes, as well as self-imposed obligations, values and aspirations).

Both beliefs and desires are needed for the full explanation of intentional actions, but often one or the other of these constructs is clearly more informative in a given situation. Beliefs and desires in some sense span the meta-physical divide. Hence, they can be said to provide an appropriately mental cause (a belief-desire reason) for a physical event (a manifest action). Beliefs and desires are causally recursive; beliefs

cause other beliefs and desires cause other desires. Beliefs and desires can also be nested in other beliefs and desires. Beliefs also rationally constrain other beliefs. To believe bats are mammals is to believe a host of other things about bats as well.

Wellman 1992: 118 states that adults and young children possess distinctly different belief-desire psychologies. The child's understanding of mind itself is different from the adult's. Children have an entity notion of mind, adults more a process one. In the figure below the mind actively interprets and construes perceptual information to construct its ideas, beliefs and impressions. Thinking frames desires, biases perception and produces such cognitive emotions as curiosity. If the mind is viewed as constructive in these ways, then the possibilities of error and individuation become more characteristic.

*For young children, actions are purposeful; they are caused by beliefs and desires. The child's belief-desire reasoning is not the same as the adults.*

Wellman 1992: 118 explains that traits such as intelligence, cleverness, vanity, integrity, shyness, selfishness and rebelliousness are more enduring aspects of one's psyche. As such they ground many of one's specific beliefs, desires and emotions. Such traits can characterise the thinking rationale aspects of the mind (intelligence), the basic emotional and physiological influences on mental life (fearfulness, agedness), or clusters of more specific desires (lustiness, timidity, introversion). They can also be derived from the cognitive emotions (curiosity).

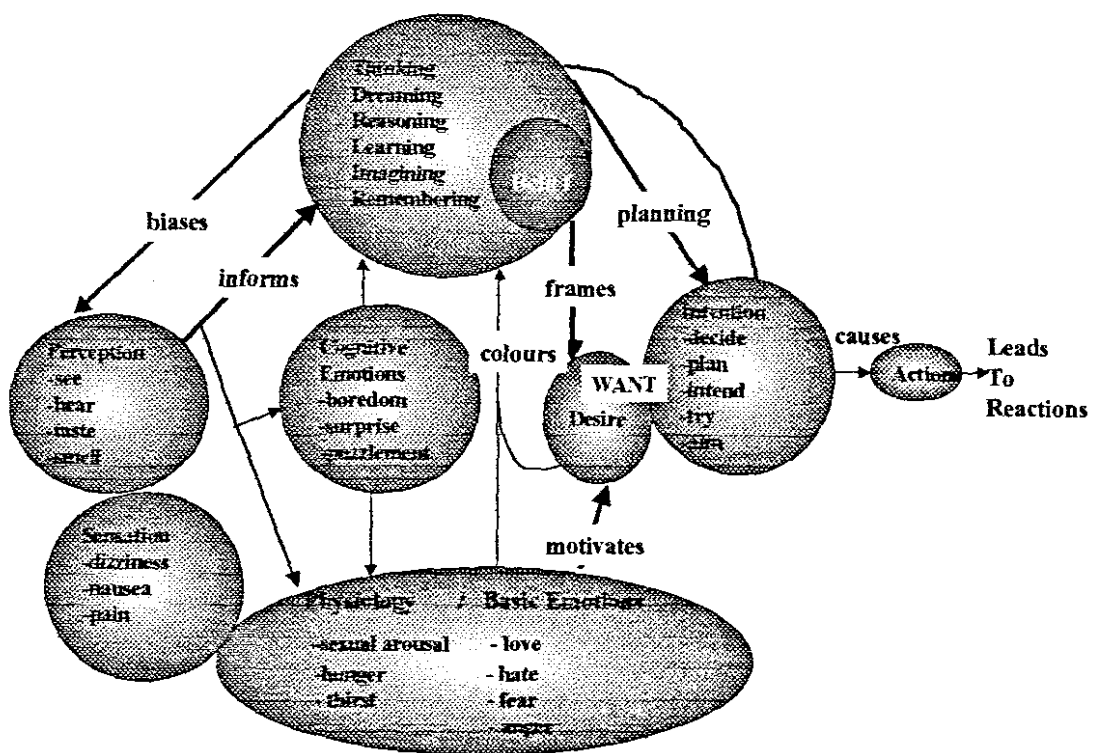


Figure 13: Commonsense belief-desire psychology Wellman 1992: 109

Perceptions as well as physiological states and basic emotions provide input to the mind from extra-mental sources. Perceptions, according to naïve psychology, tell us about the external world of real objects, spaces and events. One's knowledge and credible beliefs are thus forged in part from perceptions (and in part from one's other beliefs).

#### NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION IN THE CLASSROOM

According to Neill 1991: 11 nonverbal communication is an underrated form of communication. Educators educate on two levels - both verbally and nonverbally. Mersham and Skinner 1999: 19 state that nonverbal codes include visual, sound and tactile codes, and chronemics.

Nonverbal communication is important in the classroom because the educator and learner may believe the nonverbal rather than the spoken message, and because some messages can be conveyed implicitly by nonverbal means which would be un-

acceptable if they were sent through more explicit channels. In some cases nonverbal signals may be the only ones available – if a learner is working at the other side of the room, the educator is working with a class group and cannot talk to individuals.

Enthusiastic educators use more marked nonverbal signals, such as gestures and range of intonation, than would be normal in informal social interaction. This appears to be due to the inequality of educator and learner and the educator's need to compensate for the lack of feedback characteristic of most large audience groups.

Neill 1991: 79 continues to say that gestures appear to parallel and supplement verbal output. In some cases, especially iconic gestures that refer to objects or movements, they carry part of the meaning. Metaphoric gestures, which refer to abstract ideas, often indicate how the listeners should respond to an idea. Therefore, the development of an educator's argument may be supported by gestures, facial expressions and intonation indicating the development stages of an argument, and where potential problems arise. These contribute to the clear structuring of the material, which is necessary for the children to learn readily.

*When things go wrong.* No matter how well behaved your learner is, there will be times when things do not go according to plan. The way the learner communicates this will depend on the specific circumstances and the perceived outcomes.

*Open admission.* His spoken language gives you all the information you need about why he is upset.

*Partial admission.* When the learner may be reluctant to give the full account of the story the body language reveals that there is more to the story than what he has said verbally.

*Lying.* The learner may know that he has done something wrong, but he may hide the truth in order to escape the consequences. The body language will reveal that he is not telling the truth.

## **Genuine denial**

According to Woolfson 1996: 116-117 when the learner is troubled and unhappy and he may not know why – the educator may have to pick up the nonverbal cues to find out why the learner is unhappy. There are many factors that can disturb a learner's normal emotional development:

- *Fighting with his best friend.* Friendships are fragile in childhood, but then the learner may not be content to stop playing with the learner he previously liked a lot
- *Struggling to complete assignments in school.* Work that is too challenging can depress a learner
- *Poor self-confidence.* If the learner does not feel good about himself, others will not like him either and this adds to his despair and agony
- *Fights between mum and dad.* Learners do not like to witness fights between parents, whether they be overt or subtler
- *Abuse.* Learners who are physically, emotionally or sexually abused appear troubled and unsettled. Learners may have great difficulty in acknowledging what is happening, and may prefer to remain silent about it

Woolfson 1996:117-118 mentions five ways the learner uses body language to tell you 'I'm unhappy deep down inside, even though I've not said anything to you about it':

1. *Reluctance to play with friends:* unhappy learners find it difficult maintaining existing friendships and making new ones.
2. *Loss of appetite:* loss of appetite can indicate ill health in learners and can also be a sign of desolation.

3. *General apathy*: unhappiness has the effect of driving out a learner's liveliness and sparkle.
4. *Disrupted sleep patterns*: unhappy learners find difficulty falling asleep and each morning they look as if they are ready to go to bed again.
5. *Irritability*: a learner who feels miserable will not have the patience to listen to others or to tolerate their presence. His temper will be triggered easily without much provocation. In reality his anger is directed towards himself.

Barker 1982: 106-107 states that eye contact is an invitation to communicate and a powerful immediacy clue. Educators who use more eye contact can more easily monitor and regulate their classes, and they also communicate more warmth and involvement to their learners. Increased eye contact increases the opportunity for communication to occur and enables the educator to respond to the nonverbal behaviour of learners. Educators should position themselves so that they can and do establish eye contact with every learner in the class.

#### ONGOING CLASSROOM MOTIVATION

According to Jackson 1991: 34 interesting, well-prepared lessons given by an enthusiastic, motivated educator will inspire and stimulate the learners. Goals should be clearly and unambiguously defined. If the goal is not sufficiently challenging, the learners will soon become bored and spend their time disrupting the class. If the goals are beyond the capabilities of the learners, however, they will become despondent, or subject to so much stress that their will to achieve may be affected. Psychologists use the term 'achievement anxiety' to describe the attitude of learners who are afraid to attempt anything for fear of being unable to meet the demand made upon them. Since all the learners in a class will not have the aptitude or sense of challenge the perceptive educator will not expect the same standard from every learner in the class and will set individual goals for each learner.

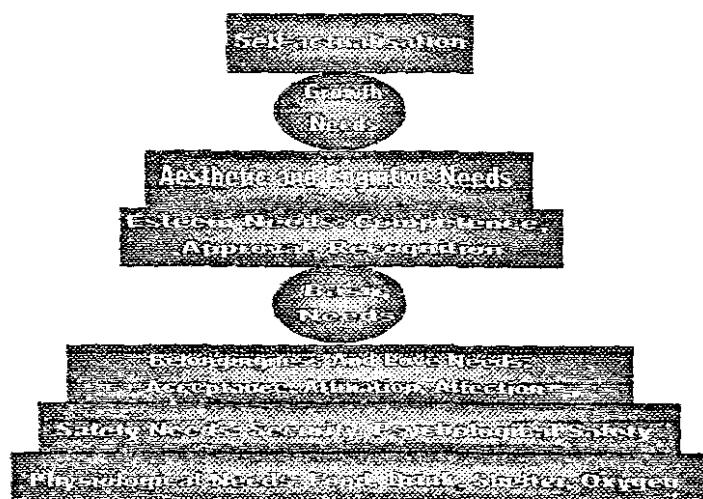


Figure 14: The Maslow Hierarchy: Williams 1992: 74

Williams 1992: 66 states that we can identify some degree of motivation and function in our human behaviours. We think of *motivation* as the “why” in behaviour, and *function* as the “how”. Motivation refers to how our sense of needs prompts communication as a strategy for satisfying those needs. Function refers to what purposes various types of communication serve in fulfilling those needs.

Williams states further that all theories of motivation assume that we humans have a range of needs to be fulfilled and that much of our daily behaviour involves this fulfilment process. A distinction is made between physical and psychological needs. The former are life supporting, such as the need to eat. The latter refer to our social existence, such as the need to love. These approaches to motivation are often called drive-reduction theories, as if our needs, when in a state of fulfilment, set up drives (behaviours) toward the promised satisfaction. When a need is satisfied, the drive is “reduced”.

Williams 1992: 74 states that much of what Maslow has proposed as a psychology of motivation has direct implications for *motivation* and communication. Maslow has identified a list of psychological traits, or qualities, that are especially characteristics of well-adjusted people. In his theory was the idea that, given satisfaction of ba-

sic physiological and psychological needs; we go on to seek fulfilment of still higher needs of beauty, knowledge, and order. We are capable of even higher levels of psychological striving and growth. The best psychological reward is a feeling of self-actualisation, of total fulfilment, of full "humanness".

Communication between parent and learner is essential. Decisions concerning learners and such things as placements and grades should always be made in consultation with parents.

Jackson 1991: 18 states that insulting or inaccurate remarks and vague generalisations written in books or in report cards are unprofessional. Educators must try to express dissatisfaction in a positive manner. Instead of saying: "Zoleka never comes to school on time", which is a negative and surely inaccurate generalisation, try to make a more positive remark like: "If Zoleka were to come to school to time every day, she would be more likely to settle down and get more work done in class."

#### **COMMUNICATION AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

Empowering learners to utilise the full range of the different forms of communication stimulates the development of emotional intelligence. Some educators fear that making emotional intelligence part of the learning process will complicate the learning process. But as long as people have been learning, emotion has been part of learning. Emotional states form part of long-term memory. When learners are forming long-term memory about any subject, their emotive states are co-indexed as part of long-term memory. Educators must empower learners to deal with the emotive parts of learning. One commonly hears learners as that they get the sinking feeling when they think about a particular subject or educator.

One possible solution, if such essential skills prove too difficult to develop in schools, would be to start by introducing them in the spaces around school. This could be done during the breaks for example.

Goleman 1995: <http://www.funderstanding.com/eq.cfm> describes how appointed learner mediators, once all involved know the rules of the game, resolve conflicts in

the playground. Such a "school for emotions" could be a local, community-based activity in conjunction with other activities like scouts, parent-educators associations, artistic expression groups, clubs etc.

In his book, Goleman gives a considerable list. Here are some indications inspired by a list quoted by him:

- *Self-awareness*: Anyone who communicates in public becomes self-aware. As a public speaker you are both a speaker and a listener. Learners are very aware of what educators are saying through the tone of voice they use. They easily pick whether educators are genuinely interested or not. Educators therefore have to be aware of the nonverbal messages that transmit to learners as well as the feedback that they receive from learners. Conversation on the other hand, is a more relaxed form of communication. One of the basic emotional skills involves being able to recognise feelings and put a name on them. It is also important to be aware of the relationship between thoughts, feelings and actions.
- *Managing emotions*: It is important to realise what is behind feelings. Beliefs have a fundamental effect on the ability to act and on how things are done. Many people continually give themselves negative messages. Hope can be a useful asset. In addition, finding ways to deal with anger, fear, anxiety and sadness are essential: learning how to soothe oneself when upset, for example. Understanding what happens when emotions get the upper hand and how to gain time to judge if what is about to be said or done in the heat of the moment is really the best thing to do. Being able to channel emotions to a positive end is a key aptitude.
- *Empathy*: Empathy involves recognising feelings in others and tuning into their verbal and nonverbal cues. Getting the measure of a situation and being able to act appropriately requires understanding the feelings of the others involved and being able to take their perspective. It is important to be able to listen to them without being carried away by personal emotions.

There's a need to be able to distinguish between what others do or say and personal reactions and judgements.

- *Communicating*: Developing quality relationships has a very positive effect on all involved. What feelings are being communicated to others? Enthusiasm and optimism are contagious as are pessimism and negativity. Being able to express personal concerns without anger or passivity is a key asset.
- *Cooperation*: Knowing how and when to take the lead and when to follow is essential for effective co-operation. Effective leadership is not built on domination but the art of helping people work together on common goals. Recognising the value of the contribution of others and encouraging their participation can often do more good than giving orders or complaining. At the same time, there is a need to take responsibilities and recognise the consequences of decisions and acts and follow through on commitments.
- *Self-motivation*: "Gathering up" your feelings and directing yourself towards a goal, despite self-doubt, inertia, and impulsiveness

## NEGOTIATION

According to C2005 (rev languages) 2001: 108 one of the primary means of learning is that learners must negotiate meaning in the process of knowledge construction. The term negotiation relates to an array of cognitive events where there is resistance to the transfer of information, with concessions being made. This is a form of intrapersonal communication. Negotiation implies that two parties are involved, each one with their own set of objectives.

Learners are always involved in dialectic with what they know and what appears in the text. Learners will always defend their knowledge first before they accept the other point of view. The dialectic entails negotiating meaning with the text, which in fact represents the author.

In the public domain learners, as part of community of learning, have to test their ideas against others. This is commonly done in the brainstorming phase. When a learner accepts the point of view, he may again negotiate and begin looking for common ground. None of this can happen if communication is not taking place.

Bond and Gasser 1988: <http://tecfa.unige.ch/tecfa/research/lhm/ESF-Chap5.text> state that in the context of joint problem-solving, we can view negotiation as a process by which learners attempt (more or less overtly or consciously) to attain agreement on aspects of the task domain (how to represent the problem, what sub-problem to consider, what methods to use, common referents, etc.), and on certain aspects of the interaction itself (who will do and say what and when). In communication “protocols” based on negotiation between artificial agents have been developed for resolving resource allocation conflicts.

According to Sycara 1988: <http://tecfa.unige.ch/tecfa/research/lhm/ESF-Chap5.text> two main negotiation strategies may be used: mutual adjustment, or refinement of the positions of each agent, and competitive argumentation where one agent attempts to convince the other to adopt his proposition. This illustrates the fact that quite specific conditions are necessary in order for negotiation to be used as a strategy: the agents must be able and willing to relax their individual constraints, and the task must possess the required ‘latitude’ (if the answer is as clear and determinate as “ $2+2=4$ ”, there is no space for negotiation).

We can see at least three different types of negotiation behaviours, where each may be hypothesised to give different learning outcomes:

- o Co-constructing problem solutions by mutual refinement
- o Exploring different opposed alternatives in argumentation
- o One learner using the other as a resource

There is, however, another type of negotiation that is common to any verbal interaction, and which takes place at the communicative, rather than the task, level: ne-

gotiation of meaning. The general idea is that the meaning of utterances in verbal interaction (or at least, the aspect of meaning that plays a determining role) is not something that is fixed by speakers and their utterances, but is rather something to be jointly constructed throughout the interaction by both speakers. This continuous process of adjustment of meaning will be a major determinant of what will be internalised at an individual level.

According to Clark and Schaefer 1989: <http://www.uky.edu/~drlane/groups/ch02.htm> speakers generate units of conversation called "contributions". "Contributions" have two phases: a presentation phase and an acceptance phase. They are recursive structures in that each acceptance is itself a new presentation, which the hearer is invited to consider. In acceptance phases, speakers provide evidence of continued understanding, to a greater or lesser degree. The recursion terminates when evidence has been provided of the weakest form sufficient for current purposes at a given level of embedding. Types of evidence provided are conditional on the adjacency pair, which constitutes a contribution. They include continued attention, initiation of the relevant next contribution, acknowledgement (feedback such as nods, or utterances such as "uh-huh", "yeah", etc.), demonstration (hearer demonstrates all or part of what he has understood speaker to mean), and display (hearer displays verbatim all or part of speaker's presentation). Contributions may be generated in one of a number of contribution patterns, such as "contributions by turns" or "episodes" and by collaborative completion of utterances. The latter pattern is an indicator par excellence of collaboration in verbal interactions.

I have outlined an array of forms of communication that learners and educators must be in command of to succeed in OBE. As formulated now the GET band of OBE accommodates a number of forms of communication that are dispersed over multiple years in the curriculum. With the laissez-faire knowledge that they have gained about communication in the GET band it only makes sense that in the FET band learners be permitted to systematically study the range of forms of communication processes that together constitute the discipline Communication Science in order to prepare learners for Higher Education or for post matric careers.

## RESOLVING CONFLICT

Balson 1984: 62-63 states that educators make a great mistake when they concentrate on learner behaviour rather than on the purpose of learner behaviour. When asked what types of problems they experienced in classrooms, educators will indicate a variety of learner behaviours such as disobedience, stealing, stubbornness, cheating, clowning and so on. These are behaviours and concentration on them is futile. Learners who engage in these behaviours are cautioned, rebuked, punished, and advised to mend their ways. By attempting to suppress these behaviours, educators are responding exactly as the learners would want them to respond. The inappropriate ways of behaving will continue because they are effective in achieving their purpose. It is only when educators are aware of the purpose of the misbehaviour that they will be in a position to cope with them constructively.

If educators are to assist learners, they must stop fighting with them. One of the most important lessons, which an educator must learn, is to sidestep the struggle for power. Whenever they feel personally challenged, frustrated by a learner's behaviour, or provoked by a particular incident, they must refuse to become involved and withdraw from the situation. Do not be drawn into a power contest but look for methods of dealing with the incident, which takes into account the needs of the situation rather than your own personal desire. Educators should not hesitate to admit to learners that they could not make them do anything. That is the truth of the situation but it is very disarming for power-conscious learners to be told that nobody can make them do anything. Their primary motivating factor is to seek personal victories, to put educators down, and to control others. Suddenly there are no opponents. Educators can invite cooperation, establish quality, state what they intend to do, and look to encourage the problem learner. However, in the final analysis, it is only the individual who can decide what he or she will or will not do.

The process of conflict resolution does not entail that learners must be prohibited being in conflict with one another for people who are not permitted to experience the conflict situation never learn how to resolve conflicts in life.

## **GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

### **Learner centred discussions**

The educator sits in the discussion but plays a minor role and encourages the group to take over the leadership functions. The educator models thinking skills and reinforces learners who think.

### **Developmental discussions**

According to McKeachie 1994: <http://www.howardcc.edu/profdev/resources/learning/groups1.htm> the educator divides the discussion into four clear categories so that discussion is focused on one step at a time. The steps include formulating the problem (clarifying what the problem is), suggesting hypotheses, obtaining relevant data and evaluating various solutions (critical thinking).

### **The inner circle (the fishbowl technique)**

McKeachie 1994: explains says that with classes up to 30, half of the class moves into a small circle in the middle of the classroom with the rest of the class in a larger circle. The inner group then discusses the topic with the outside group listening. The groups can then be changed so that the outside group has to listen carefully to be able to carry on the discussion. The focus can be on applying thinking skills to whatever topic is being discussed. Or the class can be divided into several groups (4 to 8 learners) and groups take turns being in the inner circle.

### **Leaderless small group discussions**

McKeachie goes on to say that the class is divided into several small discussion groups (4 to 6 learners), which are given a task and then allowed to function on their own. The educator does not belong to any one group. Learners can learn to think and later apply what they have learned. Some educators move around the classroom listening to groups, some drop into groups and participate a little, while other educators let the groups function on their own. Some educators answer questions after the group activities but do not monitor the group activities.

**Buzz groups**

According to McKeachie 1994: <http://www.howardcc.edu/profdev/resources/learning/groups1.htm> the class is divided into small groups (4 to 8) who are given a short period of time to discuss a problem and come up with one or two ideas to report to the full class. This type of group is used often with problem solving and creativity. The buzz group can be used with critical thinking skills.

**Circle of knowledge or round robin or roundtable**

According to Kagan 1987: <http://www.howardcc.edu/profdev/resources/learning/groups1.htm> the class is divided into small groups (4 to 6) with one person appointed as the recorder who writes down the answers of the group members. A question with many answers is posed to all groups. The person next to the recorder starts and each person in the group in order gives an answer until time is called. Ordinarily a short time period is used since this approach is best used with reviewing of previous knowledge (from a handout with no name or date). In the roundtable each learner writes her/his own answers in turn. The round robin for older learners is called Share-around with answers being given verbally with no recording.

**Brainstorming**

The class is divided into small groups with a recorder. Group members are asked to produce ideas as fast as possible. Evaluation of ideas is not allowed, only the production of ideas. Brainstorming is used for creativity and problem solving. It is a small group technique that helps learners to focus on a topic. It allows for the stimulation of ideas and helps pose alternative solutions to problems. Learners can develop alternative solutions to questions. The activity provides a safe framework for participation, analysis of ideas, and isolation of solutions. The technique creates a team environment to generate new ideas. The educator may elect a learner to act as recorder of the different ideas, thereby making use of written communication.

Brainstorming can help focus learners as they come into a class and review or introduce information. Regular use of brainstorming in a class can increase vocabulary and help develop learners' skills for end of course tests by giving them practice in quickly focusing in on a prompt and generating ideas.

**Case studies**

The class is divided into small groups with a leader and recorder. A single event, incident, situation, or story is used. Learners are given a set of questions to answer, which involves both recall of facts and application of thinking skills. The leader keeps the group on track and the recorder writes down the answers.

**Group retellings**

Wood 1987: <http://www.howardcc.edu/profdev/resources/learning/groups1.htm> states that groups of 2, 3, or more each read a different selection on the same topic. Learners then retell what they have read to their group.

**Cooperative learning-pairs**

Wood states that learners work in pairs over specified material. Learners both read and study the material. Prompts indicate when to talk and summarise. One partner verbally summarises what was studied while the other partner with the material available corrects errors, clarifies concepts, and helps the partner elaborate. Then on the next material the roles change.

**Research grouping**

Wood explains further that groups of 4 or 5 learners are assigned a topic, which involves research. The group leader helps the group decide who will do what part of the research so that the topic is covered.

**Cooperative teaching**

This approach requires learners to work in pairs over specified material. One partner reads one-half of the material while the other partner reads the other one-half. Each partner then teaches her partner.

**Jigsaw method**

In this approach groups with five learners are set up. Each group member is assigned some unique material to learn and then to teach to her/his group members. To help in the learning learners across the class working on the same sub-section get together to decide what is important and how to teach it. Hauserman 1992:

<http://spsych.uiuc.edu/~jshenker/active.html> states that this technique facilitates small group activities. In this method, each group member has some information in common with others, but each member also has some information that no one else has. Therefore, the group's problem solving task requires that everyone works together. After practice in these "expert" groups the original groups reform and learners teach each other. Tests or assessment follows.

### **Numbered heads**

The team of four members is each given numbers of 1, 2, 3, and 4. The group is asked questions. The group works together to answer the question so that all can verbally answer the question. The educator calls out a number (two) and each two is asked to give the answer.

### **The interview**

The team consists of four members. A question is asked which allows for different responses:

- A talks to B while C talks to D.
- Then B talks to A while D talks to C.
- Each learner then reports to the other two what he heard from his partner.

### **Paraphrase passport**

Before a speaker can give his own ideas, he must summarise the ideas of the previous speaker.

### **Think-pair-share**

According to Kagan 1987: <http://www.howardcc.edu/profdev/resources/learning/groups1.htm> the class is asked questions. Time is given for individual thinking. Learners discuss in pairs. Pairs then share with the class.

## **Partners**

The class is divided into teams of four. Partners (two of each team) move to one side of the room. Half of each team is given an assignment to master to be able to teach the other half. Partners work to learn and can consult with other partners working on the same material. The teams go back together with each set of partners teaching the other set. Partners then quiz and tutor team-mates. The team reviews (processes) how well they learned and taught and how they might improve the process. Educator gives a quiz for individual assessment.

## **Assessment and groups**

There are a variety of ways educators use assessment and groups. OBE promotes transparency. Learners have to be informed about when and how assessment will take place. According to Klopper 2000: 33, authentic assessment presents learners with real-world challenges that require them to apply their relevant skills and knowledge. Educators could adopt the following methods:

- o Some discussions or group outcomes are not assessed. The idea is to promote group work
- o Some assess both group outcomes (the group takes a test together) and individual outcomes. The individuals each take a test and turn in the answers. Then the group takes the same test and one answer sheet is turned in. The percentage given varies with many using 50% for individual work and 50% for the group score. Other percentages can be used
- o Some grade primarily on tests, quizzes, and papers which have been done with the help of others
- o Some grade on how well the group works together with a group grade. Some grade on how each individual participates
- o Some educators handle the entire group grading, some ask each learner to rate their participation, which is combined with the educator's grade, while

other educators give a grade, ask the individual to give a grade, and ask group members to grade the participation of each other

- o Most educators include in the final grade at least some individual assessment

## **Play**

According to Daiute 1989: [http://www.ilt.columbia.edu/k12/livertext/docs/\\_construct.html](http://www.ilt.columbia.edu/k12/livertext/docs/_construct.html) play involves the consideration of novel combinations of ideas, and the hypothetical outcomes of imagined situations and events. It is a form of mental exploration in which learners create, reflect on, and work out their understanding.

Actual experimentation, the manipulation and testing of ideas in reality, provides learners with direct, concrete feedback about the accuracy of their ideas as they work them out. Both play and exploration are self-structured and self-motivated processes of learning. Both also encourage learners to reflect on their ideas in ways generally not promoted by current school curricula.

Play and experimentation are powerful forces in the development of the individual mind, but constructivism has led to the additional discovery that powerful gains are made when learners work together, as well. A growing body of research on collaborative or cooperative learning has demonstrated the benefits of learners working with other learners in collective learning efforts. The advantages of this collective effort are that learners are able to reflect on and elaborate not just their own ideas, but those of their peers as well. Learners come to view their peers not as competitors but as resources. Mutual tutoring, a sense of shared progress and shared goals, and a feeling of teamwork are the natural outcomes of cooperative problem-solving, and these processes have been shown to produce substantial advances in learning.

## **EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK**

Mersham and Skinner 2001a: 13-14 define feedback as a response by the recipient to the source's message. Feedback may be thought of as a measure of the effectiveness of a previous communication. The source may take account of feedback in

modifying subsequent messages; therefore feedback makes communication a dynamic, two-way process.

Positive feedback informs the source that the intended effect of a message was achieved; negative feedback informs the source the intended effect of a message was not achieved. In organisational communication such negative feedback may be seen as disruptive of the source – recipient relationship and it can generate hostility between source and receiver. A danger arises when the source reacts authoritatively, imposing a management decision while breaking off further communication. The correct approach sees negative feedback as a signal to the source that more rather than less communication is required.

From the point of view of achieving effective communication negative feedback is more important than positive feedback. Yet it is more likely to be unrewarded or even punished because of its disruptive nature. In general, the more feedback oriented a communication process, the more effective it is. Attention to feedback implies an orientation to the recipient, a concern with whether he or she is 'getting the message'.

Providing learners with specific, evaluative information on their performance is an essential component of the learning process. The educator confirms or verifies the learners' accomplishments, needs, or social behaviour. Feedback may focus on the learner's performance on a task, worksheet, skill, or general progress.

According to DeVila 1987: <http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/classics/trg/02cooperative.htm> the concept of effective feedback is derived from socio-psychological and organisational theories that propose that effective feedback increases the level of satisfaction, as well as the amount of effort one is willing to put into work. However, in order for feedback to be effective it must be frequent, well timed, specific, authentic, and sincere.

Neill 1991: 83 states that learners have a better awareness of the course of the lesson than the educator does. He concludes that educators are so involved in their

teaching that they fail to take in as much information about what is happening around them. Learners therefore have the opportunity to manipulate the course of the lesson. More positively, they can encourage the educator by their responsiveness; learners could be either positive (smiling, nodding, looking at the educator, and taking notes when requested), or negative (frowning, looking out of the window, slumping in their seats, talking and disregarding the educator). In negative conditions educators tend to be more directive and critical. Positive feedback resulted in more positive nonverbal behaviour by the educator.

#### **CLASSROOM ORGANISATION: WORK SPACES**

According to Van der Horst and McDonald 1997: 95, a positive classroom is not developed and maintained by chance. It arises from careful planning and thought.

Learners need clearly defined and sufficient workspaces. Cooperative learning activities require ample workspace for materials and groups of four to six learners to work together. Since the majority of activities involve physical movement and conversation, learners might need even more space than the materials require for a particular activity. Therefore, the educator must carefully plan workspaces.

According to Wilson 1994: [http://www.geocities.com/~education\\_place/room.html](http://www.geocities.com/~education_place/room.html) one of the foremost interventions that can be used by the classroom educator to accommodate individual learning styles of learners is change in classroom design. Many classrooms are formal in design with all learners facing the front in rows in desks. For the learners whose preference is informal this often is a barrier to learning. Offering optional seating in groups, pairs, and on couches often accommodates individual learning preferences and boost learner success. Lighting in the traditional classroom is often overhead fluorescent lights that illuminate the entire room equally. Covers can be bought to dim areas of room and for learners who need more light simply moving them closer to the window can accommodate their preferences.

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I discussed communication as it occurs in the classroom. I discussed the school as a part of society. Our society requires that individuals play different roles, experience achievement as a joint effort, and learn to deal with interpersonal conflict, develop social skills and deal with social diversity. I looked at the levels of communication in the classroom and explained the need for the educator to be aware of nonverbal responses. I stated that active learning is the key to any constructivist lesson. I discussed information sharing as the primary goal among educators and learners. The cooperative method of teaching brings democracy into the OBE classroom. I explained how task-orientated behaviour and maintenance roles reflect what a group must do in getting work done. I stressed that the instructional role of the educator in a cooperative learning approach is cardinal. I looked at ways in which an educator may structure a constructivist lesson to engage learner interest. Active listening and appropriate disciplinary styles are crucial for obtaining effective performance. I outlined an array of forms of communication that learners and educators must be in command of to succeed in OBE. In the next chapter, I will discuss the need for direct small group Communication and public communication in a Communication Science curriculum in the FET band.

## *Chapter 7*

### **DIRECT SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATION IN A COMMUNICATION SCIENCE CURRICULUM IN THE FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING BAND**

#### **PREVIEW**

In this chapter I will discuss the need to introduce Direct Small Group communication and public communication as part of a Communication Science curriculum in the senior phase classrooms. Communication not only is at the heart of our humanity but is also the vehicle of our intentions toward others. Only through communication can we realise our social potential. Without communication we would all be misfits in society. Communication Science caters for both young and old to gain knowledge in order to lead fulfilling lives. I will therefore show why Communication Science should be formalised as a discipline within the languages Learning Area.

#### **PRINCIPLES OF CURRICULUM CONSTRUCTION**

I am constructing the curriculum according to C2005 (rev overview-doc) 2001: 7-9, the key principles that guide the development of the Revised National Curriculum Statement:

- Outcomes-Based Education
- Human rights, and social and environmental justice
- A high level of skills and knowledge for all
- A balance of progression and integration
- Clarity and understanding

## COMMUNICATION

Myers and Myers 1985: 18-19, describe communication as a sharing of meaning purpose. To communicate is to process stimuli from raw data into meaningful information. This creative act of generating meaning performs the function of reducing uncertainty. The cues you select out of your internal, physical, and social environment all serve the purpose of clarifying what an encountered situation is all about so that you can adapt to it.

Meaning may not be the same in two individuals because they may select different areas and may have different classification systems; and thus they may have different experiences. Communication is an attempt to call up inside yourself a meaning which has a close relationship with what is going on around you and to share meanings with others by providing them with stimuli or cues to which they will assign meaning, and which you hope will be similar to yours.

## AREAS OF STUDY

According to Myers and Myers 1985: 10 one of the most popular areas of study in colleges in the United States today is that of the mass media or "communication" to indicate a broadened content of what once was called simply "journalism."

Myers and Myers explain that at one time it was believed that audiences were a sort of homogenous blob. It was believed that they could be reached through a "magic bullet" shot from a media source. This very simplified view of audiences was useful to some mass media practitioners but did not explain how complicated are both the process of communicating and the character of audiences. There are many ties between interpersonal and mass communication. As the mechanical and technological limits to communicating disappear, there will still be the human limits, different meanings in different people with different needs and desires and levels of understanding.

"Interactive" systems now being put into use in mass media include computers linked by modems and other long-range systems, teletext information systems,

banking or shopping by television-supported devices, and a wide variety of ways in which people can “talk back to” their mass media sources.

One-way transmission over mass media is no longer the only way to view information and entertainment access. As the significance of two-way (or interactive) communication grows, people studying and working in mass media will have to take into account many of the theories and principles of interpersonal communication; and we can predict a further merging of such fields of study.

Success in some professions (like advertising, public relations, teaching, and sales) is even more dependent on good communication skills. But our performance in virtually every activity—from sports to academics, from art to engineering, from cooking to car repair—will benefit from an ability to write, speak, and present ourselves effectively, and to read and listen with care to the information we receive. Officers almost always look for evidence of good communication skills when they review applications and interview candidates.

The Revised National Curriculum Statement for the General Education and Training (GET) band has distributed through it most of the components required to serve as the foundation for introducing Communication Science as a coherent career focused discipline in the Further Education and Training (FET) band within the Language, Literacy and Communication Learning Area. The same is true for the Adult and Basic Education and Training (ABET) band. I will however not present any motivation in this regard because the utility of Communication Science in the ABET bands forms the focus of another student’s research.

According to C2005 (rev languages-doc) 2001: 10 the Developmental Outcomes for the GET band aim to enable learners to:

1. Reflect on and explore a variety of strategies to learn more effectively.
2. Participate as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and global communities.

3. Be culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts.
4. Explore education and career opportunities.
5. Develop business opportunities.

The first outcome relates to the development of meta-cognitive skills to assure effective learning. The subsequent two outcomes relate to the development of social, cultural and aesthetic values and skills that will enable the learner to effectively participate and contribute to life at the local, national and international level. The last two outcomes relate to preparing the learner for possible education beyond general education and training—essentially Further Education—or to develop entrepreneurial skills if s/he should opt not to continue with education beyond the General Education and Training band.

If a learner chooses to pursue a career immediately after completing her/ his studies in the GET band, the question is whether the communication-related knowledge and skills acquired in the course of their studies will be enough to enable them to participate in life at the social, national and international levels, and to pursue careers at the lower end of the professional range. Only the demands of the workplace will be able to supply the answer to this question after the practical impact of OBE Language, Literacy and Communication training in the GET band has been in practice for a number of years.

If a learner however wishes to enter the Further Education and Training band to enhance her/his professional career opportunities, or to pursue higher education after school to prepare for a specific career, it is clear that the forms of communication that are distributed throughout the Revised National Curriculum Statement, C2005, can form the basis for a formalised curriculum in Communication Science to prepare learners for professions that require interpersonal, public, organisational and digital electronic communication skills. It would therefore make sense to consolidate the communication-related learning themes of the intermediate phase as

basis for formal Communication Science studies in the Language, Literacy and Communication Learning Area.

Educators will be able to find information for such a Communication Science curriculum in the following resources:

- The Internet: This emphasises the need for educators to acquire digital electronic skills
- Fuller, G. 1991. *The Negotiator's Handbook*. Prentice Hall
- Givens, D.B. 2000. *The Nonverbal Dictionary of gestures, signs and body languages*. [nonverbal2@aol.com](mailto:nonverbal2@aol.com) Washington: Centre for Nonverbal Studies
- Mersham, G. M., R. S. Rensburg and J. C. Skinner. 1995. *Public relations, Development and Social Investment. A South African Perspective*. J. L. van Schaik. Pretoria
- Mersham, Gary and Chris Skinner. 1999. *New Insights into Communication and Public Relations*. Sandton: Heinemann
- Mersham, Gary and Chris Skinner. 2001a. *New Insights into Business and Organisational Communication*. Sandton: Heinemann
- Mersham, Gary and Chris Skinner. 2001b. *New Insights into Communication & Media*. Sandton: Heinemann
- Steinberg, S. 1999b. *Persuasive communication skills*. Cape Town: Juta and Co. Ltd
- De Beer, A. S. 1998. *Mass Media Towards the Millennium: The South African Handbook of Mass Communication*. J.L. van Schaik

- Williams, Frederick. 1992. *The New Communications*. Wadsworth Publishing Company (Currently out of print, but still available in many university libraries, and at <http://www.amazon.com>'s second hand books section)

Communication Science is an important discipline as can be seen in the various guises that it is presented at the various universities, as I demonstrated in some detail in chapter 4. Modules offered at the various universities include interpersonal communication, intrapersonal communication, mass communication, public communication and organisational communication, marketing communication, media studies content, audiences and production, new media technology, international communication, communication research, political and government communication, communication ethics, public relations practice, applied advertising, audiovisual production management, corporate communication, journalism, marketing communication and sport communication.

#### **THE PERVASIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION IN THE GET CURRICULUM**

The General Education and Training (GET) band (Grades R to 9) is divided into three phases: Foundation Phase (Grades R -3), Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 - 6) and Senior Phase (Grades 7 - 9). The learning areas are presented in different combinations in the three phases of GET. The combinations are known as learning programmes.

According to C2005 (rev languages) 2001: 116 the learner should be able to communicate confidently and effectively in spoken language in a wide range of situations. We know this when the learner uses verbal and nonverbal communication and presentation skills and strategies and follows the conventions of group work, for example:

- Takes turns
- Stays on the topic
- Asks relevant questions

- Maintains discussion
- Responds to others' ideas with empathy and respect
- Gives balance and constructive feedback
- Uses appropriate intonation and facial expressions.

The learner uses appropriate body language, posture, tone and volume of voice, gestures and facial expressions in different oral presentations (e.g. telling a story, reading stories aloud, reciting poems and participating in plays).

The learner communicates experiences, ideas and information in different contexts for different audiences and purposes:

- Uses language or interpersonal communication (e.g. conversations, greetings)
- Uses language or creative and imaginative self expression (e.g. tells a story, performs simple plays)

These communication patterns allow learners to interact and negotiate meaning with the sources of knowledge and with fellow learners.

The social world of a learner includes the people that directly affect that person, including educators, friends, students, administrators, and participants in all forms of activity. This takes into account the social nature of both the local processes in collaborative learning and in the discussion of wider social collaboration in a given subject, such as science.

Many of the authors that identify with social constructivism trace their ideas back to Vygotsky, a pioneering theorist in psychology who focused on the roles that society played in the development of an individual.

Meadows 1993: 3 states that children's thinking begins with the ways that they remember and organise information in general with the generally applicable cognitive skills of reading, writing and arithmetic and going on to what may be less general areas such as drawing, spatial reasoning and ideas about socio-economic systems. While the foundation phase must foster the fundamentals of learning, the intermediate phase must foster critical thinking and the senior phase relates to abstract thinking. Meadows' model states that the learners engage in:

1. Critical thinking
2. Debating
3. Teaching
4. Having the class as an audience
5. Having the class adjudicate

Critical thinking forms the root of all the activities mentioned above. The first three activities relate to the development of critical skills of the learner who is presenting information. The last two relate to the capacity to be assessed by one's peers. Critical thinking is the basis of preparing any learning material. Critical thinking also underlies debating. Learner have to adjust the arguments that are being made and adjust their arguments based on new information emerging in the debate. The preparatory phase cannot be in a very rigid frame and therefore has to be very flexible.

When engaging in teach-back the learner has to gauge the nonverbal feedback cues from the audience to determine what needs to be emphasised, restated and reformulated. The flexibility is the difference between being authoritative and being authoritarian.

The class as an audience will reflect, critical response will follow and the learner takes her/his cues from the audience. The class is engaged in peer review when the class adjudicates. In the FET band, critical thinking is subsumed in abstract thinking, comprehension of systemic relationships and modelling of concepts.

### **MORE ABOUT THE UTILITY OF THE SYSTEMIC APPROACH IN THE FET BAND**

A systemic approach to whatever the learner studies in the FET band will help her/him to understand entities, processes and events in the world as a set of related systems.

A systemic approach to language study in the FET band would entail that the learner needs to analyse language basic patterned interrelationships between phonology, morphology, syntax, textual coherence (anaphora) and the role of figurative language in a variety of texts.

In Communication Science a systemic approach would help the learner to critically analyse aspects of communication such as theories of communication, the nature of communication networks, the interrelationship between cognition and communication, the conceptual nature of persuasive and confrontational communication.

Cobb 1994: [martin@dougiamas.com](mailto:martin@dougiamas.com) examines whether the "mind" is located in the head or in social action, and argues that both perspectives should be used in concert, as they are each as useful as the other. What is seen from one perspective as reasoning of a collection of individuals mutually adapting to each other's actions can be seen in another as the norms and practices of a classroom community (Cobb 1998: [martin@dougiamas.com](mailto:martin@dougiamas.com)).

### **WHY THE INTRODUCTION OF COMMUNICATION SCIENCE WOULD ENHANCE THE LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION LEARNING AREA IN THE FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING BAND**

#### **Background information on Further Education and Training band**

To date the specific learning contents of the FET band is still under consideration. According to Van der Horst and McDonald 1997: 75, it will include Grades 10 - 12 in school education. Essentially it will constitute the matriculation system at the end of twelve years of schooling.

The Further Education and Training (FET) band level is the nodal point for the development of an integrated approach to education. This band is central to our

entire economic activity and the way it is structured will have major impact on the attainment of growth and redistribution. The development of the FET band will require close links with public works, youth development and Adult Basic Education and Training programmes.

Currently, learning in the precursor to this band is offered at two types of public institutions, namely secondary schools and technical colleges. It is mainly through attendance and achievement at these two institutions that nationally recognised and accredited school leaving certificates can be issued. However, a number of non-governmental organisations, private colleges, companies, industry training boards, and special state-funded providers, such as the unemployment-training scheme, also operate in this band.

The generation and implementation of standards at the proposed NQF levels in this band, is critical for the success of the integrated approach to education and training. It is also crucial to ensure that the current fragmentation is avoided and that coherent, meaningful and relevant, quality education and training is provided.

To ensure portability, mobility and access in the Further Education and Training band and to promote meaningful career paths and lifelong learning through the NQF, special attention must be given to the development of new institutional forms for and provision of learning in this band. For example, technical colleges could be transformed into community colleges and provision at secondary schools could be adapted to allow learners to do courses of their choice with other accredited providers.

### **The potential unique contribution of Communication Science in the FET band**

Earlier in this chapter I took Meadows 1993 as point of departure and showed that as a macro-objective learning should progress from the study of fundamentals at the onset of education, to the study forms of knowledge that promote critical thinking in the intermediate phase of education, through to the study of knowledge that promotes abstract, systemic model-theoretic thinking in the senior phase.

Communication Science is an ideal area of study that can promote abstract, systemic model-theoretic thinking in the humanities. One reason for my claim is that learners learn to understand and analyse forms of communication that people utilise sub-consciously on a daily basis, namely the use of facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice and body motion during inter-personal communication, as well as the covert nature of persuasive communication, and the relationship between persuasion and propaganda.

**The study and particular languages of Communication Science in the FET band in a notional time context**

The DoE policy framework 1997, suggests the concept of ‘notional time’ to guide ‘the relative weighting of learning programmes within a Phase’. The weighting relates to the percentage of hours per week that have to be spent on a particular learning areas. These guidelines are presented in the following table extracted from the above-mentioned guidelines:

Foundation Phase							
LLC	MLMMS		Life Skills	Flexible Time			
25%	25%		25%	25%			
Intermediate Phase							
LLC	MLMMS	Natural Science and Technology	HSS and EMS	Arts and Culture and Life Orientation			
35%	15%	15%	15%	15%			
Senior Phase*							
LLC	MLMMS	Natural Science	Technology	HSS	EMS	Arts and Culture	Life Orientation
20%	13%	12%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
Legend: LLC = Language Literacy and Communication, MLMMS = Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences, HSS = Human and Social Sciences, EMS = Economic and Management Sciences							

Figure 15: Guidelines for the Weighting of Learning Programmes in C2005

\*Flexible time 5%

I want to highlight the concept of notional time as in the Revised National Curriculum Statement. Notional time includes class contact time, time taken to complete homework and the time taken to look up research materials and complete research.

Notional time is therefore the overall time that a learner spends, in a particular learning area. The relationship between the educator introducing the topic and all of the learning activities and the time it takes to construct knowledge is notional time.

The idea of notional time has been borrowed from Higher Education where it refers to the overall credit over and above lesson contact time for the student to meet the learning outcomes of a specific programme or module within a programme or task within a module. For a particular assignment this may mean that the educator may use 30 minutes to explain the background of the task. Learners will be allocated 20 minutes to discuss the task. Two hours of library research time may be allocated for researching the theme. Two hours may be allocated for the rough draft of the project and a further two hours for drafting the final version.

Documents from the Department of Education have reinterpreted notional time to mean the percentage of time allocated to a particular learning area in the course of a school week. There are apparent contradictions in the percentage of time allocated to particular learning areas. There is not enough clarity on what the percentages should be. As it stands, the DoE conceptualisation of notional time means that in the senior phase the following percentages of classroom time will be allocated to the learning areas listed below:

Learning area	% Time
Language, Literacy, Communication	20
Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences	13
Natural Science	12
Technology	10
Human and Social Sciences	10
Economic and Management Sciences	10
Arts & Culture	10
Life Orientation	10
Flexitime	5
Total classroom notional hours for all subjects	100

Figure 16: Notional time allocated for learning areas in senior phase classrooms

Telephonic enquiries with the KwaZulu-Natal department of Education reveal that there is no firm policy from the national DoE on how the 20% of notional time

allocated in the LLC learning area is to be divided if two, or if three languages are taken in the present matriculation system. Apparently it is left up to individual schools to subdivide the 20% among the two or three languages that are being studied.

### **Core and elective modules in the LLC learning area in the FET band**

I propose a smorgasbord approach at the FET level where learners have to take a set number of core modules, supplemented by a set number of elective modules from a more comprehensive list of modules. While core modules are the fundamental modules, elective modules are the additional modules. I am not making a detailed proposal, but merely stating the general principles because the nature of language studies in the FET band warrants further research.

Learners should be able to choose modules according to their planned career paths. This allows learners the flexibility to select modules to enhance a career path or to give them access to specific disciplines in higher education.

Learners should be able to exercise their preferences from a blend of first language, second language, and Communication Science. The system could allow learners to choose either a first language and second language, or a first language and Communication Science or Communication Science in the first language and a second language.

The core modules for Communication Science could be verbal as well as written communication. The interrelationship between nonverbal and verbal communication will make learners aware of subliminal aspects of every-day communication that affect people's lives without us being aware of them. For instance, when human beings in small groups directly communicate, they do so in two parallel channels simultaneously. In the auditory channel word memories are evoked at the phonological level. While conscious decoding takes place by means of phonological codes, we are subconsciously decoding gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice and a range of Kinesic codes that affect the attitudes that we have towards the speaker and her/ his message. Hand gestures serve a range of subtle mood setting function

during face-to-face communication. They colour our impressions of the speaker's frame of mind, mood and attitude towards listeners and the topic under discussion. In fact, listeners take into account the information conveyed by gesture, even when this information is not redundant to the information conveyed in speech.

In comparison with hand gestures pantomimes convey meanings as specific as the words used in a sentence. For instance, pulling up one's nose could convey distaste. While gestures signal an attitude towards a message, pantomimes significantly contribute to the meaning of the message.

Learners engage in abstract thinking in the sciences. Communication Science could entail a study of those aspects of the communication process that take place subconsciously. This could include a model of the communication process. Communication Science entails the same level of development as that of Mathematics and the Natural Sciences. The language component should be strengthened to include the study of elements that give coherence to texts (anaphora). Other areas of study could include:

- Sentence patterns
- Sound patterns
- Role of categorisation in language structure
- Literal and figurative language

This must clearly be done to prevent language studies becoming a soft option that is cognitively inferior to the Natural Sciences and Mathematics.

Communication Science could study the forms of communication that humans use consciously and subconsciously. According to Williams 1992: 184, interaction analysis can tell us much about the general nature of how people communicate when they are in a group. A systemic approach to group communication could focus on

*communication networks*. This could include the study of core and extended family networks, a variety of organisational networks and peer networks.

Although the FET band gives access to tertiary education, it does not mean that the learners will proceed to study at tertiary institutions. It is therefore important that those that exit the learning process in Grade 12 will have the communication training skills that they will require in their careers.

It is known that learners sometimes express preference to do another language rather than the home language in the senior phase because they believe it will enhance their career opportunities. This has a detrimental effect on indigenous languages in our country. Because Communication Science is a language-neutral discipline it could be offered in any language and will therefore optimise the career opportunities for learners exiting at the FET band and give practical expression to the imperative that learners must learn to express themselves in their home languages. According to C2005 (rev languages) 2001: 14 learners must become competent in their additional language, while their home language is maintained and developed. The learner's home language should be used for learning and teaching wherever possible.

80 % of our Black learners are compelled to do English as their first language. It is a pretension that these learners will be more competent in English as their first language rather than their home language. I therefore propose the following combinations for the purposes of matriculation:

- The Language, Literacy and Communication learning area could be kept intact
- Modularise the Language, Literacy and Communication and Communication Science and allow the learners to make a selection of modules from the Language, Literacy and Communication and Communication Science learning area to make up the overall number of hours that are required for Language and Communication studies

Under this proposed model learners will be able to select most modules from their first language or equal numbers of modules from Communication Science complemented with language specific modules. It would be possible for a learner to select a module in:

- English poetry
- Afrikaans writing
- IsiZulu grammar
- Small group communication, etc.

Educators must have the prerogative to emphasise particular aspects of Communication Science at the level of syllabus and this could be done in detail. Now South African education is transfixed at the level of curriculum with nothing being done at the level of syllabus and lesson planning.

The curriculum for Communication Science for teaching Direct Small Group Communication and Public Communication could look like the following:

#### **SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION**

For a detailed exposition on small group communication, nonverbal communication and public communication see chapter 10.

#### **The communication process**

- Groups large and small
- Communication transactions between equals or up-and-down
- Goals
- Norms
- Stages of group formation

- Types of groups
- Roles in groups
- Leadership
- Interpersonal processes
- Active listening
- Communication networks
- Teamwork in small groups
- Brainstorming
- Types of skills required
- Tension and defensiveness
- Conflict
  - The nature of conflict
  - The causes of conflict
  - Negotiation
  - Compromise
  - Mediation
- Feedback
- Disruptive behaviours
- Recognition

- The workplace
- Life cycle of a group

## **NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION (KINESICS)**

### **Categories and features**

- Physical
- Aesthetic
- Signs and symbols

### **Static features**

- Orientation
- Posture.
- Physical Contact

### **Dynamic features**

- Facial Expressions
- Gestures
- Pantomime
- Gaze
- Face and personality
- Facial beauty
- Tactile Communication
- Personal Space

- Environment
- Paralanguage
- Chronemics (Silence and Time)
- Partings
- Bodily cues
- The Johari window
- Feedback
- Paralanguage
- Vocalics
- Proxemics
- Tactile communication (Communication through touch)
- Leakage
- Silence and response time

#### **Public communication**

- The purpose of public communication
- Distance between speaker and audience
- Feedback between audience and speaker
- Type of Audience
- Audience anxiety

- Public Speaking and Nonverbal Communication
- Different forms of public communication
  - Public speaking
  - Preaching
  - Teaching /Lecturing
  - Oral learner presentations in class (teach-backs)
- Public communication techniques
  - Persuasion
  - Rhetoric
  - Demonstrating procedures or processes

#### **Current issues in communication**

- Gender
- Political correctness, jargon
- Cross-cultural issues: semantics, word connotations, tone differences, differences among perceptions
- Electronic communications: e-mail, GDSS, pagers, cellular phones, Internet and World Wide Web

#### **Communication by objectives**

- The system of communication by objectives
- The stages of the communication process

- Our needs and how they are satisfied directly or indirectly through communication
- Reasons for communication
- Formulating objectives and applying them to communication activities such as public relations, marketing, advertising and organisational communication
- CBO and the four-step problem-solving process used by public relations practitioners

### **Analysing the destination and identifying barriers**

- The principle of congruence
- Barriers which may impede communication and factors that will increase the possibility of success
- The destination
- The dangers of applying stereotyping
- Specific South African cultural influences that may affect the success of communication
- Individual communication needs
- Circumstances in which communication is received
- Tools for feed and evaluation in a public relations or communication context

### **Direct digital electronic communications**

- Voicemail
- Web cam communication

- o Videoconferencing

## **THEORIES OF COMMUNICATION**

There are about 75 significant theories of communication. I will briefly outline a few.

### **Action assembly theory**

According to Greene 1991: [www.afirstlook.com](http://www.afirstlook.com), just as parts of a model plane, come in different sizes and importance, procedural records have different levels of strength. Some are mere scratches that barely leave a trace in our minds, while others are well-worn paths in long-term memory. According to action assembly theory, the more a procedural record has been exercised, particularly in the recent past, the stronger it gets. Greene's interest is the output end of the black box we call the mind. Specifically, he wants to describe the link between cognition and behaviour, how thoughts get transformed into actions, the way we assemble our verbal behaviour, how we put together what we plan to say.

Green compares his theory of action assembly to building a model airplane from a deluxe kit that contains more pieces than are needed for a single plane. The project involves two structures and two corresponding processes. You start with an imposing assortment of plastic pieces (structure) and select which ones you'll use to build the P-51 Spitfire (process). You then take those parts and glue them in place (process), and end up with the completed model airplane (structure). Greene believes information retrieval isn't random. Just as the hobbyist has a method of selecting the pieces when there are too many parts in the box, so the mind has a systematic and predictable selection process through which some procedural records are activated while others remain dormant.

### **Agenda-setting theory**

According to McCombs and Shaw, undated: [www.sfirsllook.com/manual4/ed4man27.cfm?2#](http://www.sfirsllook.com/manual4/ed4man27.cfm?2#) agenda-setting theory contrasted with the prevailing selective exposure hypothesis, reaffirming the power of the press while maintaining individual freedom. It represented a back-to-basics approach to mass communica-

tion research, with a focus on election campaigns. The hypothesis predicts a cause-and-effect relationship between media content and voter perception, particularly to show a match between the media's agenda and the public's agenda later on.

### **Attribution theory**

Heider 1994: <http://www.afirstlook.com/archther.cfm> states that attribution is a three-step process through which we perceive others as causal agents. Suppose you are stopped at a red light, and the driver in the car ahead flips an empty soda can into the gutter. Before the light turns green, you mutter the three thoughts that cross your mind:

I saw that! (Perception of the action)

You meant to do that! (Judgment of intention)

You're a slob! (Attribution of disposition)

### **Cognitive dissonance theory**

Festinger 1957: [www.sfirstlook.com](http://www.sfirstlook.com), considered the human need to avoid dissonance as basic as the need for safety or the need to satisfy hunger. It is an aversive drive that goads us to be consistent. The tension of dissonance motivates us to change either our behaviour or our belief in an effort to avoid a distressing feeling. The more important the issue, and the greater the discrepancy between behaviour and belief, the higher the magnitude of dissonance that we will feel. In extreme cases cognitive dissonance is like our cringing response, to fingernails being scraped on a blackboard - we will do anything to get away from the awful sound.

### **Constructivism**

My thesis focuses on constructivism relating to cognition, the input while this theory relates to human interaction, the output. According to Delia, undated: [www.sfirstlook.com](http://www.sfirstlook.com), constructivism focuses on individuals rather than interactions. It tries to account for why people make the certain communicative choices. Constructs are the basis of constructivism. They are dimensions of judgment and can be thought of as filters, files, templates, or interpretive schemas. They are domain spe-

cific, almost exclusively focusing on interpersonal message variations. Constructs are assumed to change over time. Constructivist research uses the Role Category Question to find constructs embedded in free response writing, often about a person the writer likes and a person the writer dislikes. The more constructs a person uses the more cognitively differentiated they are. Cognitive differentiation is a subset of cognitive complexity, which measures the organisation, quantity, and level of abstractness of the constructs a person holds about another person. Constructivist research shows moderately strong correlations between the organisational level of a person and cognitive differentiation, persuasive ability, and perspective taking.

### **Critical theory of communication approach to organisations**

According to Deetz, undated: [http://www.sfirstlook.com/manual\\_4/ed4man19.cfm?2#](http://www.sfirstlook.com/manual_4/ed4man19.cfm?2#) critical communication theory seeks to balance corporate and human interests. His work is based on the premise that corporations are political as well as economic institutions. Communication theory can be used to diagnose distorted corporate decision-making. Workplaces can be made more productive and democratic through communication reforms.

### **Discourse and dialogic ethics**

According to Habermas, undated: [www.sfirstlook.com](http://www.sfirstlook.com), a German philosopher and social theorist, discourse ethics suggests a rational process through which people can determine right from wrong. According to Habermas' characterisation of optimal deliberation, the ideal speech situation is one in which participants are free to listen to reason and speak their minds without fear of constraint or control. Buber and Nilsen, undated: [www.sfirstlook.com](http://www.sfirstlook.com), state that the ethical approach focuses on relationships between people rather than on moral codes of conduct.

### **Elaboration likelihood model**

Petty and Cacioppo, undated: [www.sfirstlook.com](http://www.sfirstlook.com) posit two basic routes for persuasion. The central route involves message elaboration, defined as the extent to which a person carefully thinks about issue-relevant arguments contained in a persuasive communication. The peripheral route processes the message without any

active thinking about the attributes of the issue or the object of consideration. Recipients rely on a variety of cues to make quick decisions. Six such cues are:

- Reciprocation
- Consistency
- Social proof
- Liking
- Authority
- Scarcity

Although Petty and Cacioppo's model seems to suggest that the routes are mutually exclusive, they stress that the central route and the peripheral route are poles on a cognitive processing continuum that shows the degree of mental effort a person exerts when evaluating a message. The more listeners work to evaluate a message, the less they will be influenced by content-irrelevant factors; the greater the effect of content-irrelevant factors, the less impact the message carries.

### **Expectancy violations theory**

Burgoon, undated: [www.sfirstlook.com](http://www.sfirstlook.com), defines personal space as the invisible, variable volume of space surrounding an individual that defines that individual's preferred distance from others. The size and shape of our personal space depends upon cultural norms and individual preferences. Personal space is always a compromise between the conflicting approach-avoidance needs that we as humans have for affiliation and privacy. According to Burgoon crossing over the "threat threshold" that forms the boundary of the intimate distance causes physical and psychological discomfort.

### **Hierarchy of needs**

According to Maslow's theory, there are four types of needs that must be satisfied before a person can act unselfishly. The needs are arranged in a hierarchical order.

Maslow 1991: [www.sfirstlook.com](http://www.sfirstlook.com) stated that the upward climb is made, by satisfying one set of needs at a time. The most basic drives are physiological. After that comes the need for safety, then the desire for love, and then the quest for esteem. Note the softening of terminology used to describe the move up the ladder. We're driven to satisfy the lower needs, but we're drawn to meet the higher one. Maslow referred to the four lower needs as "deficiency needs" because their lack creates a tension within us. He saw nothing wrong with the human desire to scratch where we itch. As long as we can work to satisfy the cravings, we're moving toward growth. It's when a repressive society or a warped individual curtails our freedom to satisfy our needs that we become ill. Satisfying needs is healthy. Blocking gratification makes us sick.

### **Information theory**

Shannon and Weaver 1997: [www.sfirstlook.com](http://www.sfirstlook.com) applied the model to the interpersonal features of conversation. Your brain is the information source, your voice the transmitter. Noise could include a hoarse throat from yelling at the campers, background chatter of those waiting to use the phone, or the distraction of mosquitoes drawing blood. An ear that's been overexposed to hard rock may diminish the received signal, and your friend is quite capable of altering the message as it moves from ear to brain. Although Shannon's mathematical model of signal transmission helped Bell Labs solve technological problems, the theory has limited application in the field of speech communication. Information theory did, however, foster modest advances in the study of the redundancy inherent in language, an issue of syntax.

### **Interpersonal deception theory**

Buller and Burgoon, undated: [www.sfirstlook.com](http://www.sfirstlook.com), explain that people often find themselves in situations where they make statements that are less than completely honest. There are three deception strategies: falsification, concealment, and equivocation. Most people are confident that they could spot deception, but interpersonal deception theory says most cannot. In contrast to common assumptions, deception research shows that various nonverbal cues are not reliable indicators of deception. Almost all communication is intentional, goal directed, and mindful; deceptive

communication is simply more so. Interpersonal deception theory suggests that the outcome depends not only on the quality of the message, but also on the non-strategic cues a deceiver cannot control. Interaction, rather than individuality, is at the core of the theory.

### **Proxemic theory**

Hall 1991: [www.sfirstlook.com](http://www.sfirstlook.com) states that people have boundaries that mark their personal space. It's as if we walk around in an invisible bubble. Those with whom we are intimate may enter into the sphere without harm to either party. Invasion by others causes distress. Because of our animal nature, we all have a zone of personal space, but the area of personal space differs greatly from culture to culture. According to Hall our ego extends approximately a foot and a half out from our body. We feel an aversion to casual touch and resent spatial intrusion. Hall identified four proxemic zones.

- Intimate Distance (0 to 18 inches)
- Personal Distance (18 inches to 4 feet)
- Social Distance (to 4 10 feet)
- Public Distance (10 feet to infinity)

### **Spiral of silence theory**

Noelle-Neumann 1984: [www.sfirstlook.com](http://www.sfirstlook.com) states that the term *spiral of silence* refers to the increasing pressure people feel to conceal their views when they think they are in the minority. Noelle-Neumann believes that television accelerates the spiral, but to grasp the role of the mass media in the process we first must understand people's extraordinary sensitivity to the ever-changing standard of what society will tolerate.

## **INTRAPERSONAL COMMUNICATION**

Cronkhite 1986: [www.usm.maine.edu/~com/intrabook/founda~1htm#Shedletsky](http://www.usm.maine.edu/~com/intrabook/founda~1htm#Shedletsky) states that intrapersonal communication concerns the processes of assigning meaning (e.g., the mental structures and the retrieval processes of memory) and the products of assigned meaning (e.g., schemata, labels, and memories or more generally, representations). This view of communication places emphasis on the interpreter (the receiver). No interactant is required. Nothing is implied about the intentions of the sender or the source of stimuli, the type of stimuli, the relationship between the stimuli and the idea, or the level of consciousness of either the sender or receiver. According to this view, if you think something like, "I have to get the laundry done," you have experienced (intrapersonal) communication. Or, when you think that a scene is beautiful, you have experienced (intrapersonal) communication.

## **COMMUNICATION IN THE CLASSROOM**

- Kinesics (nonverbal communication)
  - ◇ Position in Space
  - ◇ Touch and Body Motion
  - ◇ Gaze
  - ◇ Facial Expressions
  - ◇ Gestures
- Direct Small group communication
  - ◇ Conversation
  - ◇ Consultation
  - ◇ Cross questioning
  - ◇ Purposeful listening (active listening)

- Public communication
  - ◇ Debating
  - ◇ Oral presentations in class (teach-backs)
  - ◇ Mime

According to C2005 (rev languages) 2001: 9-10 the *Critical Outcomes* describe the kind of citizen the education and training system should aim to produce. I have discussed this in chapter 11.

The critical outcomes are set out for Grades K – 9 and these provide a good foundation for formalising Communication Science as a discipline in the Language, Literacy and Communication learning area.

The Developmental Outcomes aim to enable learners to:

- Reflect on and explore a variety of strategies to learn more effectively
- Participate as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and global communities
- Be culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts
- Explore education and career opportunities
- Develop business opportunities

In order for learners to have these skills, these are the components that must be dealt with in the curriculum. Dealing with these aspects helps to overcome gender stereotypes. Audiences have basic expectations of the sort of communication they will encounter in specific communication instances.

### **An observation regarding Further Education and Training and ABET**

The FET band should educate the learners in abstract thinking, systemic thinking and modelling. The FET band cannot be held ransom to the acquisition of practical skills only. Further Education and Training is a narrow and focused system. Learners have the same basis of prior learning and have gone through the GET band. With some degree of latitude, they are young people. A proportion of them are aiming to enter the HET band while the majority is heading to join the work force. They are a homogenous group and they all would have formally been certified. There are vast differences in the group:

- They have vastly different levels of learning
- They come from a range of vocational backgrounds

The Department of Education 1997: <http://www.saide.org.za/SABCadult/bibliography.htm> states that the focus of Further Education and Training is to:

- Foster mid-level skills
- Lay the foundation for higher education
- Facilitate the transition from school to the world of work
- Develop well-educated autonomous citizens
- Provide opportunities for continuous learning, through the articulation of education and training programmes

The ideal that the Department of Education is stating for the Further Education and Training must include the ability for abstract thinking, systems thinking and modelling. The objective should be to foster critical thinking in line with the general objectives that should be set for the General Education and Training band.

## STRATEGIC ALLIANCES BETWEEN COMMUNICATION SCIENCE AND SUBJECTS IN OTHER LEARNING AREAS

Due to the nature of human cognition, all knowledge is integrated in configurations of synaptic settings in the human brain to form a nexus of concepts that are conceptually conflated to form a semiotic web of human knowledge.

Discussing the interrelatedness of human knowledge Klopper 1999b: 248-251 states:

*... We cannot come to any conclusions about anything at all if we do not apply the same process of association, between apparently unrelated entities, that is used to form scientific hypotheses and theories. All knowledge - simple or complex - is based on an associative process of concept formation, concept conflation and categorisation, which in each individual culminates in an extensive associative theory of mind that entails the sum total of her/his ideas about how things coexist in the world.*

*... Regardless of whether we deal with so called hard science, the human sciences, or a person's everyday precepts of himself, his mind and nature, we use the same process of associating apparently unrelated entities, which actually do have a significant, but non-obvious relationship with one another, to form new insights about those entities.*

The central implications of Klopper's analysis are that all forms of knowledge are integrated in the individual mind, and that disciplinary boundaries, including the demarcations between learning areas in school curricula, are necessary fictions, posited for heuristic convenience, rather for how the human minds organises and integrates knowledge when people learn.

For the purposes of this study, Kloppe's analysis entails that due to the interrelatedness of forms of learning, it is possible to determine strategic alliances between learning areas in school curricula. The determination of such alliances will enhance the learning process because learning will be based on a comprehension of the interrelationships of knowledge, rather than on memorisation (rote learning).

According to Edelman 1989: 70, one of the most striking properties of the brain is its ability to coordinate and integrate the operations of multiple functionally segregated areas.

Small group communication is the prototype of human communication. This consists of nonverbal as well as verbal communication. This predates all other forms of human communication, including writing. Language and communication allow the learners to negotiate meaning from the curriculum. The learner weighs his ideas and adjusts them in small group communication. Small group communication is therefore an integrating learning process.

Language itself as a system of cognition and communication is important. The problem that South African education now faces is developing vocabulary in the different indigenous languages to study the different learning areas. Vocabulary has to be developed to teach Mathematics and the Sciences. While particular learning areas may present a problem in this respect, there is a strong strategic alliance between the empowered language and the discourse (communication aspect). We therefore see the strong strategic alliances between Communication Science and the learning areas.

Communication Science could form an integral part of the school syllabus. The development of knowledge, skills and values is a lifelong process, and occurs in many places besides school. Outcomes which all learners need to attain in order to become lifelong learners, achieve their potential in their personal and working lives and play an active part in civic and economic life apply across all learning areas and are the responsibility of all educators. The outcomes for each learning area contribute to the achievement of the overarching learning outcomes.

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter I discussed the need to introduce Direct Small group Communication and Public Communication as part of a Communication Science Curriculum in the senior phase classrooms. As people begin to realise the importance of communication, people studying and working will have to take into account the various theories and principles, of interpersonal communication. As fields of study begin to merge success in professions is very much dependent on good communication skills. An analysis of the Revised National Curriculum shows that most of the components required for offering Communication Science can be found in the FET band within the Language, Literacy and Communication learning area.

I stated where educators could find information for such a Communication Science syllabus. I suggested what the curriculum for Communication Science for teaching direct small group communication and public communication could look like. Communication Science offers all, young and old, the opportunity to gain knowledge. It is therefore logical to conclude that Communication Science should be formalised as a discipline within the Language, Literacy and Communication learning area. A study of the courses at the various universities reveals that too many people could probably be training for jobs that can only be offered to a few. The GET and the FET bands at school therefore have to guide learners to fit into society. Communication Science offers all, young and old, the opportunity to gain knowledge. In chapter 8 I present my conclusions and recommendations.

## *Chapter 8*

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **PREVIEW**

In this chapter I will present my conclusions and recommendations regarding the role of direct small group communication and public communication in an envisaged Communication Science curriculum within the Language, Literacy and Communication learning area in the Further Education and Training band.

#### **THIS THESIS IN THE REAR VIEW MIRROR**

While the first chapter served as a roadmap for the reader through an untraversed educational landscape, this chapter affords glances in the rear view mirror alternated by focusing our attention on the road ahead for introducing Communication Science as a school subject in the FET band.

In chapter 2, I outlined four substantive problems relating to the role of communication in the new revised national curriculum statement. I showed that the fundamental switch from the traditional educator-centred teaching to learner-centred teaching in OBE required that both educators and learners be in command of a range of communication strategies in order to construct meaning in real-world social contexts. I also showed that the before-mentioned communication strategies had to take into account the relationship between verbal communication and non-verbal communication.

In chapter 3, I defined the key concepts relating to my research regarding direct small group communication in an envisaged Communication Science curriculum for the Further Education and Training (FET) band.

In chapter 4, I stated my intention of presenting direct small group communication and public communication as part of a newly developed communication Science learning programme in the Further Education and Training (FET) band. I added further that a study of the courses offered at the various universities reveals that too many people could probably be training for jobs that can only be offered to a few.

In chapter 5, I looked at how humans communicate by the use of verbal as well as nonverbal skills in direct small group communication and public communication. I discussed the different roles played by members in a group and stated the need for courses to include classroom management skills as well as nonverbal skills. These and other interactive skills will help learners prepare for adult life.

In chapter 6, I looked at Communication as it occurs in OBE classrooms. I looked at how the encoding process transforms thoughts and ideas into word symbols, bodily movements, facial expression and/or gestures. I looked at how interpersonal communication, group communication and cultural communication affect both learners and educators. I explained the basic tenet of constructivism and showed how active practice is the key of any constructivist lesson. I explained that the co-operative method of teaching brings democracy into the OBE classroom and outlined the different forms of discussions that the educator can engage learner in. I explained that educators must empower learners to deal with the emotive parts of learning.

In chapter 7, I discussed the need to introduce direct small group communication and public communication as part of a Communication Science curriculum in senior phase classrooms. I outlined the potential unique contribution of Communication Science in the FET band and stated where educators could find information for such a Communication Science syllabus. As fields of study begin to merge, success in professions is very much dependent on good communication skills.

In this, the final chapter of my thesis, I present my conclusions and recommendations regarding the role of direct small group communication and public communication in an envisaged Communication Science curriculum within the Language,

Literacy and Communication learning area in the Further Education and Training band.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Further research needs to be done regarding in which of the 11 official languages Communication Science should be offered because it is language neutral. Learners could be given a choice whether they want to do a second language besides the first language of their choice, or Communication Science in English or any of the indigenous languages.

This must be followed by a concerted programme for providing learning in the languages that have been identified as target languages, for offering Communication Science as a subject in the Language, Literacy and Communication learning area. Both the curricular learning materials and educators' manuals should be printed in the language as determined by the need.

The introduction of Communication Science as part of teacher training curricular should also be implemented.

Communication Science can assist in implementing the principle of mother-tongue education. While there is a goal in Mathematics and Physical Science, it can much more easily be achieved by offering this discipline in the indigenous languages. For this reason, I have worked extensively and drawn data from the Internet to assist individuals who will be tasked to prepare texts. I have consciously included a wide range of materials so that the relevant materials can be at hand for individuals who have to translate the curriculum and provide Communication Science in the languages, which are in demand.

The smorgasbord approach could be adopted after proper linkages have been worked out to determine which core modules should form predeterminate modules. For non-core modules it should be possible to afford learners the opportunity of selecting from a range of core modules to make any language or Communication Science the 'first language' of choice, and which elective modules could be taken to

constitute the rest of the modules to fill the 20% notional study time as mandated in the DoE 1997 policy document.

A Zulu speaker can select IsiZulu as first language. Communication Science could be offered in English as second language, or the learner can select Communication Science as the primary discipline in the LLC learning area with any other language as the alternate language.

Of the three types of OBE, traditional OBE, transitional OBE and transformational OBE, I believe that the South African education system should be based on principles of transformational OBE because it emphasises the opposite of rote learning, subject divisions, content-based knowledge and summative assessment. Learning is shaped by outcomes, integrated knowledge and formative assessment.

Because of the two-language policy, language educators teaching Zulu or Afrikaans are compelled to offer another subject, for which they are not trained. They can be retrained to offer Communication Science, which forms a discipline within the Language, Literacy, and Communication learning area. Specialised honours level qualifications allow educators to build on prior knowledge.

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter I presented my conclusions and recommendations regarding the role of direct small group communication and public communication in an envisaged Communication Science curriculum within the Language, Literacy and Communication learning area in the Further Education and Training band.

Given the comprehensiveness of Communication Science and its multifaceted nature, and the seamless integration of theory and application, the question is not whether Communication Science should be introduced in the FET band, but rather whether South Africa can afford not to introduce it.

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