Oral Communication

Semester 2 Module 4

Groups: 1, 2 & 3

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I. Defining Communication

The word ‘communication’ is derived from the Latin verb *communicare*, which means "to share" or "to make common".

Communication is generally defined as:
- the sharing of information
- the giving and receiving of messages
- the transfer of information from one or more people to one or more other people

Berelson and Steiner (1964: 527) define communication as “the transmission of information, ideas, emotions, skills, etc. by the use of symbols – words, pictures, figures, graphs, etc.”

According to Brown (1970: 56), “communication is the transmission and interchange of facts, ideas, feelings or course of action.”

According to Wood (2004: 9), communication is “a systemic process in which individuals interact with and through symbols to create and interpret meanings.”

Different dictionaries give different meanings to communication. In *Oxford Dictionary*, for example, we have about 12 different meanings. Some definitions say that communication is the transmission of a message or information by speaking or writing. Another definition declaresthat communication is giving or exchanging information, signals, messages by talk or gestures or writing. Yet another definition says that communication is social intercourse. Communication is all this and much more. A good definition should not only give the precise meaning but also throw light on the scope of the word / expression.

Dance and Larson (1973) found that there were more than 126 definitions of communication provided by eminent scholars, and since then, even more definitions have been produced and formulated.

The proliferation of definitions is an indication that there is no single approach to the study of communication. They define communication from different views.

In the scientific study of communication, there are three general and basic views about communication: technical, meaning-centered, and transactional.
- **Technical view** is concerned with how accurately and efficiently messages can be transferred from one person to another along a channel such as telephone wires or the air waves 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, faster computers. In this view, 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
- Transmission of messages
- Exchanging of messages

The technical point of view does not tell us about the complexity of communication or the human aspect of communication.

- **Meaning-centered** theorists, however, try to find answers to the following questions:

  - What motivates people to communicate?
  - What does happen between them during communication?
  - How do they give meaning to each other’s messages?
  - How do they use language to create and exchange meaningful messages?

The emphasis is on the interaction between the participants in communication, from meaning-centered point of view, communication can be defined as a dynamic process of exchanging meaningful messages.

In contrast to the technical point of view, considering communication as a process means that it is not fixed or static, but it is dynamic, never-ending and never-changing. In other words, it does not have a beginning or an end, nor does it follow a fixed sequence of events. We change others and we are changed by them when we communicate; our ideas, behavior, attitudes are gradually changing.

According to this view, communication is a process that is irreversible, 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.

For example, you have an argument with your brother before going to school, your feeling may cause you to lash out at a classmate who asks an innocent question. The problem is that the next day, you and your classmate are unable to communicate as comfortably as
before. Your reaction to the argument of the previous day has had an effect on your future communication with your classmate.

- Communication as a process is **transactional**. Communication theorist regard communication not only as an interactive process of changing information (meaningful messages) but also as a transaction between the participants during which a relationship develops between them (establishing messages and negotiating meaning to establish and maintain relationships).

The concept 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 the relationship to be satisfying.

## II. Elements of Communication

![Communication Process Diagram]

1- **Sender /Receiver**

The **sender** is the person who sends a **message**. A message is directed to a receiver, being the eventual recipient of the message. Communication is a matter of comprehending the sent message in its true essence and thus requires a certain level of **Knowledge**, **Skills** and **Abilities** — **KSA** on the part of the receiver to correctly interpret the message. The KSA of the receiver is therefore paramount in the successful comprehension of the message.
2- Message
The urge to satisfy a need necessitates expression. Without getting into the age old debate of whether first is the word or the thought, the expression has to take a comprehensible form so as to enable the receiver to decode or interpret it. This is done by using the different conventions. The expression can be through signs and symbols. **Symbols** here denote the **verbal mode**; or the use of words whereas the **signs** are **non-verbal**. Both symbols and signs together make the language we use to communicate. Language, both verbal and non-verbal, is thus employed to encode the message that is intended to be communicated. It is imperative that the encoding be done in a language that conveys or for that matter communicates.

3- Channel
**Channel** is the **means** through which the encoded message travels or gets transmitted. The channel is the **medium** such as e-mail, face to face or phone conversation, letter, presentation. The sending and feedback channels may not be necessarily the same. The type of communication viz. formal and informal communication is an important aspect in choosing the most appropriate channel for communicating effectively.

4- Feedback
It is the reaction of the receiver to the sender’s message. It tells the sender how to send the next message.

5- Encoding
How the sender decides to send the messages based on **PREDICTIONS** or prior knowledge about the receiver.

6- Decoding
Applying meaning and understanding the message that has been sent. Decoding of a message is as integral to communication as encoding it. Decoding is the process of giving meaning to the encoded message. It can also be referred to as extracting the embedded meaning or interpreting what was encoded by the sender. The ability of the receiver in decoding the message correctly is decisive in understanding the message in its holistic sense.

**Interference/Noise**
Noise is any force that interferes with effective communication. There are four types:

1- Psychological noise
2- Physiological noise
3- Physical noise

4- Semantic noise

1- **Physiological Noise** involves biological factors in the receiver or sender that interfere with accurate reception.

2- **Psychological Noise** involves mental forces within a receiver or sender that might inhibit his or her ability to either encode or decode a message correctly. Ex. If a receiver suffers from low self-esteem, they might interpret a sincere compliment as sarcastic or condescending even though it wasn’t. It is *mental interference* in the speaker or listener.

3- **Physical noise** refers to any physical phenomenon that might impair a receiver’s ability to decode a message.

4- **Semantic noise** is interference created when the speaker and listener have different meaning systems. Maybe when I use a word, you have a slightly different meaning in mind. This can cause confusion.

**Activity: Classify the following interferences according to the types of noise**

- articulation problems
- loud kids who don’t want to take their nap
- forgetting to breathe
- when your words and sentences are nebulous or ambiguous
- wandering thoughts
- mumbling
- talking too fast
- preconceived ideas
- irritating hum of your computer, air conditioner, or heater
- talking too slow
- forgetting to pause
- sarcasm
- loud party at the neighbors while you’re trying to record
- if listeners have different definitions of the terminology
III. Models of Communication

A model is widely used to depict any idea, thought or a concept in a more simpler way through diagrams, pictorial representations etc. Models go a long way in making the understanding of any concept easy and clear. Through a model one can easily understand a process and draw conclusions from it. In simpler words, a model makes the learning simple. In communication, models are categorised into linear, circular, and transactional.

In 300 BC, Aristotle spoke about 5 elements of communication: Speaker, Speech, Audience, Effect. In his rhetoric, Aristotle advised the speaker to construct a speech for different audiences on different occasions for different effects.

This model is most applicable for public speaking. The speaker is an orator to a large audience.

According to Aristotle, to be a good orator, six elements have to be remembered: 1- content, 2- manner of delivery, 3- pathos (emotion), 4- logos (reason), 5- ethos (credibility), 6- arguments.

This model is linear, one-way.
Harold Lasswell (1902-1978) is known for his studies in the field of politics. He is concerned with mass communication and propaganda. One of its major contributions of this model devised in 1948 was the concept of effect. Through the effect analysis, we try to know how a certain message has affected the receiver. Although Lasswell’s model was aimed to study mass communication, it is positively known for being suitable to different situations including interpersonal communication. The use of medium is very crucial in this model. Examples are radio, TV, and other gadgets. However, in this model, feedback and noise are not mentioned, and it remains a linear model.

The Shannon and Weaver model (1949) is especially designed to develop the effective communication between sender and receiver. Also Shannon and Weaver found factors which affect the communication process called “Noise”,...
whichisanotheradditionalelementthatfeaturesthis model. At first the model was developed to improve the technical communication as Shannon and Weaver were engineers who attempted to reduce the communication process to a set of mathematical formulas. Later it’s widely applied in the field of Communication.

This model is more effective in person-to-person communication than group or mass audience. It is based on “Sender and Receiver” and conveys that the sender plays the primary role and receiver plays the secondary role. Again, this model depicts communication as a one-way process.

**Osgood and Schramm Model (1954)**

The Osgood-Schramm model is built on the theory that communication is a two-way street, with a sender and a receiver. It emphasizes that communication is circular rather than linear, meaning that it requires two participants taking turns sending and receiving a message.

The image above shows how the Osgood-Schramm model works. It involves circular communication between two people. Each person is both a sender and a receiver. They are therefore able to communicate to one another, rather than only in one direction. This model is also called the interaction model.
This circular feature of the model is very different from other linear models of the time like the Aristotle, Lasswell, and Shannon-Weaver models of communication. When critiquing linear, also called one-way or transmission, models, Schramm (1955) argued: “In fact, it is misleading to think of the communication process as starting somewhere and ending somewhere. It is really endless. We are really switchboard centers handling and re-routing the great endless current of information.”

**Wood’s Model of communication**

Wood (2004) offers the following diagram to illustrate communications taking place between two people. In this model, messages are being sent backwards and forwards all the time, not just in one direction but simultaneously. The *transactional* model focuses on how we interpret meaning and how meanings are shared within our communication with other people.

The transactional model is a more accurate model of what really happens in face-to-face communication than the Shannon and Weaver model. The Transactional Model takes into consideration all the aspects of communication that we looked at earlier. It is also a better basis for any new communication system you might consider creating to help the people
you work with. What is it in the transactional model that makes it so much better at explaining what real-life communication is like. The answer lies in the channels of communication.

To review, each model incorporates a different understanding of what communication is and what communication does. The transmission model views communication as a thing, like an information packet, that is sent from one place to another. From this view, communication is defined as sending and receiving messages. The interaction model views communication as an interaction in which a message is sent and then followed by a reaction (feedback), which is then followed by another reaction, and so on. From this view, communication is defined as producing conversations and interactions within physical and psychological contexts. The transaction model views communication as integrated into our social realities in such a way that it helps us not only understand them but also create and change them.

IV. Levels of Communication

I. INTRAPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

It is language use or thought internal to the communicator. Intrapersonal communication is the active internal involvement of the individual in symbolic processing of messages. The individual becomes his or her own sender and receiver, providing feedback to him or herself in an ongoing internal process. It can be useful to envision intrapersonal communication occurring in the mind of the individual in a model which contains a sender, receiver, and feedback loop.

- Three aspects of intrapersonal communication:

1- **Self-concept** is the basis for intrapersonal communication, because it determines how a person sees him/herself and is oriented toward others. **Self-concept** (also called self-awareness) involves three factors: beliefs, values and attitudes.

1-1 **Beliefs** are basic personal orientation toward what is true or false, good or bad; beliefs can be descriptive or prescriptive.

1-2 **Values** are deep-seated orientations and ideals, generally based on and consistent with beliefs, about right and wrong ideas and actions.
1. **Attitudes** are learned predispositions toward or against a topic, ideals that stem from and generally are consistent with values. Attitudes often are global, typically emotional.

Beliefs, values and attitudes all influence behavior, which can be either spoken opinion or physical action. Some psychologists include body image as an aspect of intrapersonal communication, in that **body image** is a way of perceiving ourselves, positively or negatively, according to the social standards of our culture. Other things that can affect self-concept are personal attributes, talents, social role, even birth order.

2. **Perception.** Whereas self-concept focuses internally, perception looks outward. Perception of the outside world also is rooted in beliefs, values and attitudes. It is so closely intertwined with self-concept that one feeds off the other, creating a harmonious understanding of both oneself and one’s world.

3. **Expectations.** Meanwhile, expectations are future-oriented messages dealing with long-term roles, sometimes called **life scripts**. These sometimes are projections of learned relationships within the family or society.

**Intrapersonal communication** may involve different levels of communication activity: internal discourse, solo vocal communication, and solo written communication.

1. **Internal discourse** involves thinking, concentration and analysis. Psychologists include both daydreaming and nocturnal dreaming in this category. Prayer, contemplation and meditation also are part of this category, though from a theological point of view the argument may be made that this is not solely internal to one person. In Sufi tradition, this is similar to the concept of nafs, negotiating with the inner self. Example: Consciously appreciating the beauty of a sunset.

2. **Solo vocal communication** includes speaking aloud to oneself. This may be done to clarify thinking, to rehearse a message intended for others, or simply to let off steam. Example: Talking to yourself as you complain about your boss.

3. **Solo written communication** deals with writing not intended for others. Example: An entry in a diary or personal journal.

**Intrapersonal communication can encompass:**

- Day-dreaming
- Nocturnal dreaming, including and especially lucid dreaming
• Speaking aloud (talking to oneself), reading aloud, repeating what one hears; the additional activities of speaking and hearing, what one thinks, reads or hears may increase concentration and retention.

• Sense-making e.g. interpreting maps, texts, signs, and symbols

• Interpreting non-verbal communication e.g. gestures, eye contact

• Communication between body parts; e.g. "My stomach is telling me it's time for lunch."

• Writing (by hand, or with a word processor, etc.) one's thoughts or observations: the additional activities, on top of thinking, of writing and reading back may again increase self-understanding ("How do I know what I mean until I see what I say?") and concentration. It aids ordering one's thoughts; in addition it produces a record that can be used later again. Copying text to aid memorizing also falls in this category.

• Making gestures while thinking: the additional activity, on top of thinking, of body motions, may again increase concentration, assist in problem solving, and assist memory.

**Intrapersonal Communication**

**Ideas about the Development of the Self and Personality**

We will certainly want to define the notion of personality if we are to understand communication.

For Freud the personality consists of three parts: the id, the ego, and the superego.

**The id** responds directly to the instinct, it contains everything that is present at birth. **The ego** represents the conscious self responding to the physical needs of the id. The ego operates according to the reality principles, bringing the outside world to bear on the desires of the id. The ego is reason, whereas the id is passion.

**The super-ego** is the moral aspect of the personality and thus the last fully to develop the super-ego is in constant conflict with the id, for one is moral and the other is amoral.

**The Id**: Ahmed saw 1000 DH in the cash register; he took the money and slipped it into his pocket, glancing around to make sure no one was looking.

**The Ego**: Even though Ahmed needed money, he decided not to steal the money from the cash register because he didn’t want to get in trouble.
The Super-ego: Ahmed knew that he could steal the money, and no one would know about it. However, he knew that stealing was wrong, so he decided not to take anything even though he would probably never get caught.

The id, ego, and super-ego work together in creating a behavior. The id creates the demands, the ego adds the needs of reality with the super-ego adds morality to the action which is taken.

Activity:
1- If you were walking home and found a wallet containing money lying on the ground.
2- You find yourself attracted to your best friend’s husband/wife.
   What does your id say?
   What does your ego say?
   What does your superego say?

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Interpersonal communication is defined by communication scholars in numerous ways, though most definitions involve participants who are interdependent on one another, have a shared history. Communication channels are the medium chosen to convey the message from sender to receiver. Communication channels can be categorized into two main categories: Direct and Indirect channels of communication.

1- Direct Interpersonal Communication

Direct interpersonal communication involves a direct face-to-face relationship between the sender and receiver of a message, who are in an interdependent relationship. Because of interpersonal communication’s immediacy (it is taking place now) and primacy (it is taking place here), it is characterized by a strong feedback component. Communication is enhanced when the relationship exists over a long period of time. Interpersonal communication involves not only the words used but also the various elements of nonverbal communication. The purposes of interpersonal communication are to influence, help and discover, as well as to share and play together.

Interpersonal communication involves not only the words used, but also various elements of non-verbal communication. The purposes of interpersonal communication are to influence, help and discover — as well as to share and perhaps even play together.
The main benefits of interpersonal communication include the transfer of knowledge and assisting changes in attitudes and behaviour. It may also be used to teach new skills such as problem solving. The communication takes place in both directions from the source to the receiver and vice versa. There is a chance to raise questions and start a discussion so that the idea is understood by both parties. Since the communication is interactive there is a high chance of utilising more than two senses such as seeing, hearing and touching.

Interpersonal communication can be categorized by the number of participants.

1-1 Dyadic communication
1-2 Group communication
1-3 Public communication

1-1 Dyadic communication involves two people. Example: Two friends talking.

1-2 Group communication refers to the nature of communication that occurs in groups that are between 3 and 12 individuals. Small group communication generally takes place in a context that mixes interpersonal communication interactions with social clustering.

1-3 Public communication is at the heart of our economy, society, and politics. Studios use it to promote their films. Politicians use it to get elected. Businesses use it to burnish their image. Advocates use it to promote social causes. It's a field built on ideas and images, persuasion and information, strategy and tactics. No policy or product can succeed without a smart message targeted to the right audience in creative and innovative ways.

Another way of categorizing interpersonal communication is on the function or setting of the communication.

A. Organizational communication deals with communication within large organizations such as businesses. This is sometimes considered part of group communication, but communication scholars have built up a body of knowledge focused primarily on organizations. Example: Work-focused discussion between employer and employee. In this part, communication usually takes place on vertical lines. For instance, a company director is passing on instructions to managers.

B. Family communication focuses on communication patterns within nuclear, extended and blended families. Like organizational communication, this too is sometimes seen as part of the general category of group communication, but much research has been focused specifically on communication within a family.
relationship. Family communication can be enhanced by the long-standing and close relationships among participants as well as the likelihood that families have shared heritage, similar values, and social rituals. Patterns differ in communication between spouses, between parent and child, among siblings, and within the wider family context. Example: Conversation during a holiday meal.

2- Mediated Interpersonal Communication

Mediated interpersonal communication involves technology that assists or links the sender and receiver of messages. This may involve immediacy (live, or so-called real time). It does not involve a primary context but instead uses technology to link the various parties in communication.

2-1 Dyadic communication includes two people, with some of the elements of interpersonal, but the context is not face-to-face. Example: Two business colleagues using the telephone or e-mail.

2-2 Group communication includes a small group of people. Example: Teleconference in a distance learning class.

2-3 Mass communication is a means of transmitting messages to a large segment of a population. Electronic and print media are commonly used for this. The word ‘media’ is currently used to refer not only to broadcast media such as radio, the internet and television — but also to print media such as papers, magazines, leaflets and wall posters. The powerful advantage of mass media over face-to-face contact is the rapid spread of simple facts to a large population at a low cost. The main effects of mass communication are the increased knowledge or awareness of an issue, the potential influence on behaviours at the early stages and the possibility to communicate new ideas to early adopters (opinion leaders).

Mediated communication offers the advantage that it allows people to communicate over a distance or throughout a time span that would not be possible in direct communication. E-mail offers instantaneous global communication, and cell phones are highly mobile. Computer technology makes it possible for people to do their job without being physically present, allowing them to work from their home or from across the world.

Like direct communication, mediated communication may be formal or informal, personal or public. Feedback may be immediate or delayed. Machines even can assist in communication. Mediated communication has several inherent limitations, including the
ability of telephone or Internet users to mask or disguise the source of the message, or the susceptibility of machines to various mechanical or technological noise sources.

**Impersonal Communication**

Additionally, some scholars identify a category of impersonal communication. This is a distinction between impersonal and interpersonal communication on the basis of the quality of the interaction. Impersonal communication is that which involves functional short-term exchanges such as might occur between a shopper and a salesman; the label of interpersonal is reserved for communication that functions in deeper and more meaningful relationships.

**V. Communicative Competence**

Although competence has been examined from different disciplines and perspectives, it can be simply conceptualized as an individual’s ability to interact appropriately and effectively with another person in a specific context. As a basic need of human beings, competence can be understood as the extent to which a person produces the intended effect in the process of interaction. The concept is usually discussed by social scientists and communication scholars under several generic categories, including fundamental competence, linguistic competence, social competence, interpersonal competence, and relational competence. *Fundamental competence* concerns the cognitive ability that helps individuals communicate effectively in different situations; *social competence* emphasizes a person’s specific skills that lead to an effective interaction; *linguistic competence* focuses more on the knowledge of and the ability to execute language and messages in the process of interaction; *interpersonal competence* is more goal oriented and concerned with the individual’s ability to accomplish tasks by demonstrating certain successful communication skills; and *relational competence* highlights the importance of the reciprocal process of interaction, in which the interactants are able to establish relationships with each other to achieve goals. However, all these generic categories can be put under the concept of *communication competence*.

**Debates About Communication Competence**

Although the definition of competence is commonly accepted, debates continue to exist among scholars regarding whether competence is a trait, state, or perception. The trait approach argues that competence is an inherent predisposition or ability; thus some people are
born to be more competent than others. The state approach argues that competence is based on performance or behavioral skills, which are influenced by the particular context, time, or place of interaction. The perception approach argues that competence is neither an intrinsic trait nor extrinsic skills but is the perception or impression resulting from the characteristics and behaviors of the interactants within the relational or interactional context of a communication interaction. In addition to these debates about the essential nature of competence, another conceptual ambiguity related to defining competence is the use of competence and effectiveness in similar and overlapping ways. Because effectiveness mainly refers to behavioral performance, and competence requires appropriateness, which is based more on individual knowledge about or motivation toward the situation to complete its meaning, competence and effectiveness should not be used interchangeably. Instead, effectiveness should be considered one of the criteria in conceptualizing competence.

**Theoretical Approaches**

An array of theories have been developed to conceptualize the diversity of approaches to competence, including psychological, social, and critical. Theories of communication competence from the psychological perspective basically focus on message processing and production. The psychological perspective of communication competence emphasizes the individual’s mental process underlying behaviors. In 2003, Steven Wilson and Christina Sabee specified expectancy theories and attribution theories as the two categories of communication competence theories for message processing; these theories concern how people attend to, interpret, and evaluate communicative behaviors in interaction. Wilson and Sabee described goals–plans–action theories and hierarchical theories as the two categories of theories for message production; they concern goal attainment through the process of generating and enacting communicative behaviors. Theories of communication competence from the social perspective emphasize the relational, functional, and contextual nature of competence. Represented by dialectic theories of human relationship, the social perspective of communication competence takes a dialectical and dialogical stance to examine the change and multiplicity of communicative behaviors in interaction. The critical perspective for studying communication competence is a less advanced area, drawing on the critical metatheoretical approach developed by Jürgen Habermas. Based on the belief that truth is embedded in the universal pragmatic relations between speech acts, between speakers, and between speech situations, this perspective claims that the emancipated form of life must be anticipated in every act of communication. Thus, competence can be reached only in an open
and unconstrained communication context. In other words, communication competence refers to the authentic, accurate, and appropriate exchange of messages in the absence of a dominance–subordination hierarchical structure of social relationship. This approach shows its potential strength when identifying competence in the context of intercultural communication.

**Common Themes**

The theories contained within each of these perspectives are often incompatible in terms of approaches to communication competence; nonetheless, examining the common themes that cut across these differences is important to a comprehensive understanding of competence. These common themes, based on the criteria of effectiveness and appropriateness as valid indicators of competence, dictate that communication competence should comprise three dimensions: cognitive, affective, and behavioral abilities.

**Cognitive Ability**

Cognitive abilities are reflected in the individual awareness of relevant communication situations and their requirements. This situational understanding may include knowing the verbal context, in which one should know how to make sense in terms of expression; knowing the relationship context, in which one should know how to match the messages to the particular relationship at hand; and knowing the environmental context, in which one should know the constraints imposed by the symbolic and physical environments on message making. This cognitive knowledge is equivalent to self-awareness or self-monitoring in the process of communication. Self-awareness or self-monitoring helps one detect the social appropriateness of self-presentation and to further control and modify one’s own expressive behaviors to meet the requirements of particular situations.

**Affective Elements**

The affective perspective of competence mainly concerns personal emotions or changes in feelings caused by different communication contexts or people involved in the interaction. In other words, to be competent in communication, the individual must be able to project and receive positive emotional responses in the process of interaction and demonstrate respect for differences between interactants. Scholars have identified five common personal attributes that reflect affective ability: self-concept, empathy, open-mindedness, social relaxation, and nonjudgment. **Self-concept** is the way we see ourselves, which directly impacts how a person communicates and relates to the surrounding world. A person with positive self-concept, especially self-esteem, is more likely not only to think well of himself or herself and be
accepted by others, but also to feel more comfortable and perform better in an ambiguous situation. Other aspects of self-concept, including optimism, extroverted personality, and self-reliance, also contribute to the enhancement of communication competence. **Empathy**, or **perspective taking**, is the ability to see the event from one’s counterpart’s perspective during the interaction. Empathic persons are able to project themselves into another person’s point of view and feel the same feelings and think the same thoughts as that person. Being able to step into another person’s shoes in order to sense what is inside another person’s mind helps the individual adopt different roles as required by different communication contexts, which in turn leads to reciprocity, active listening, and the establishment of rapport between the interactants. **Open-mindedness** is the willingness to share with others what is on one’s mind. It is also the willingness to recognize, appreciate, and accept different views and ideas from others. This process of mutual validation and confirmation of each other’s identity is key to fostering a favorable impression in an interaction. **Social relaxation** is the ability to regulate anxiety in interactions. A feeling of uneasiness is caused by the uncertainty or unpredictability that is created by an ambiguous situation during an initial encounter. A less competent person tends to feel insecure psychologically when entering a new situation, in which the social anxiety may lead to rigid posture, hesitation, speech disturbances, and limited communication. Finally, being **nonjudgmental** is an effective way to avoid stereotypes and prejudices that prevent a person from listening sincerely and actively to others during the interaction. In this regard, a lack of communication competence is reflected in a person’s tendency to hastily jump to conclusions in conversation without sufficient information. Such evaluative messages often lead to defensive reaction from one’s counterparts, putting the interaction and the relationship in jeopardy. In contrast, being nonjudgmental fosters a feeling of enjoyment of personal differences and allows for the development of a satisfactory and supportive communication climate.

**Behavioral Aspect**

The behavioral aspect of competence is a dimension that concerns the ability to attain communication goals through effective application of behavioral skills. Such skills are demonstrated by adroit verbal and nonverbal behaviors that enable an individual to get the job done effectively and appropriately in communication. Five key factors of competent behavioral skills have been identified by scholars: message skills, interaction management, behavioral flexibility, identity management, and relationship cultivation.

**Message skills** form the foundation of linguistic competence in communication. They demand the knowledge of linguistic rules and the ability to skillfully use verbal and nonverbal
language during the interaction. For example, the effective use of communication codes, the ability to identify and distinguish main ideas and message types, and the capacity for organizing, expressing, and evaluating ideas clearly and precisely are important behavioral skills that lead to a competent communication.

**Interaction management** is the ability to implement the interactional rules of verbal and nonverbal messages, which mainly refers to conversational turn taking. A competent person is able to make an accurate assessment of the needs of others in order to appropriately initiate, terminate, and take turns in interaction. In other words, in the process of initiating and terminating a conversation, a competent person indicates interest, tolerance, and the ability to orient toward the others in the interaction. A successful interaction management also involves affiliation and support through speech alternation, eye contact, head nods, smiling, and physical proximity, which will naturally manifest the personal abilities of attentiveness, perceptiveness, and responsiveness in terms of communication.

**Behavioral flexibility** shows a person’s ability to adapt to different communication situations by selecting appropriate and effective strategies to achieve personal goals in interaction. Behavioral flexibility is accompanied by a comfortable feeling when interacting with different people in different contexts. In addition to feeling easy and relaxed about getting along with new people and fitting in with different groups of people, a person with behavioral flexibility is also good at making choices in terms of messages to mark the status and relationship of the people involved in the interaction.

**Identity management** is based on the ability of knowing oneself as an entity, and at the same time being able to inform the counterparts about who they are. Identity cannot be developed alone by oneself; instead, it is formed through the process of negotiation and reinforcement between the interactants in communication, which reflects a dynamic and multifaceted process. Thus, how to display the salience and intensity of each other’s identity in different temporal and spatial situations is the sine qua non of being competent in communication. The last factor of the behavioral aspect of communication competence is the ability to develop a positive relationship with others.

**Relationship cultivation** is dictated by the independent and reciprocal interactions between the two parties; only through this dimension can one’s needs be satisfied and a positive outcome of interaction be attained. Usually, being friendly, showing concern and commitment, and displaying courtesy and cooperativeness during the interaction will ensure the development of a beneficent relationship.
Assessment of Communication Competence

A final issue for the study of communication competence that needs to be addressed is how to assess communication competence. Scholars have taken three approaches to resolving this problem: (1) soliciting data from individuals through self-assessment of their own abilities, (2) training raters to provide objective and reliable observations of interactants’ behaviors, and (3) soliciting interactants’ views of their counterparts’ communication abilities in communication. The issues and methods of the assessment of communication competence were organized and discussed in depth by Brian Spitzberg in 2003, providing clear direction for future researchers interested in pursuing this specific area of study.

By Guo-Ming Chen (Encyclopedia of Communication Theory)

VI. Listening skills

Listening is the skill that is the least taught formally. Unless you have a hearing disability, everybody assumes that just because you have ears, you can listen. This is a wrong assumption as listening and hearing are different sets of skills. Hearing, which is merely the physical ability to hear sounds, occurs unconsciously. Listening is to hear something mindfully. Effective listening requires you to listen intently and pay close attention to the speaker. If you do not pay full attention or miss part of the message, you cannot replay what has been said unless you have recorded the message or lecture. According to Devito (2009), effective listening comprises five components as shown in Figure 2.2 below:

![Figure 1: A Model of Listening](image)

(i) Receiving

Hearing begins and ends when one receives a sound stimuli. Listening is different. Listening does not begin and end just with hearing a sound as it involves deriving meaning from the
sound. When you listen, you concentrate on the verbal as well as non-verbal message. This involves reading gestures, body movements and facial expressions.

(ii) Understanding
This is the stage where you learn to decipher the meaning of the message as well as pick up cues from the emotional tone of the speaker.

(iii) Remembering
Listening also involves remembering interpreted sounds or messages and saving them for use later on. However, you may not be able to remember exactly what you hear. Your mind deciphers and reinterprets messages and sometimes, you just cannot recall 100% of the message.

(iv) Evaluating
Evaluating a message means that you make some judgement about it. This process is often done unconsciously by the listener. In some cases, you might want to identify the speaker’s intention or motive. This judgement might be critical or analytical and cause you to wonder whether what you hear is based on facts or emotion. You may need to decide whether the speaker has a personal agenda, or is biased and prejudiced.

(v) Responding
Responses are feedback based on what you have heard. You respond in two ways. First, you respond while the speaker is talking and, second, you respond after the speaker has stopped speaking. In responding you allow the speaker to know what you think or feel about what he has said.

Types of Listening
There are two types of listening – passive and active. The difference between them is the level of involvement of the listener. In passive listening, you listen passively, at a low level of concentration and absorb the minimum number of words. Very often, you remember, or understand, very little of what has been said. You may respond to the speaker’s voice by smiling or nodding but do not pay full attention to him/her. This kind of listening happens when you are on holiday or relaxing. You may be lazing on the beach, listening vaguely to music or voices in the background. You only begin to listen attentively when you hear something that interests you, for instance, the call to go for lunch. Active listening involves a higher level of concentration. You listen actively at school, university or work, when you need to obtain information.
You can improve your active listening skills through various techniques:

(i) Paraphrasing the speaker’s message and ideas, using simpler words without changing the meaning.

(ii) Identifying your weaknesses, e.g. are you hearing-impaired, mentally unprepared, or easily distracted?

(iii) Preparing yourself mentally and physically to listen, using various listening strategies, e.g. the Memory Helper (see Figure 1.2).

(iv) Setting priorities, e.g. what are the important things you want to listen to?

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**The Memory Helper**

This method helps you remember the speaker’s message better. Use the strategies represented by the letters “IS A FACT”:

- Identify the speaker’s ideas and connection between ideas.
- Summarise the main ideas.
- Assess whether the ideas are true or correct.
- Formulate questions.
- Associate speaker’s ideas with other known concepts.
- Consider ways in which the ideas might be used.
- Take notes to help you recall the information.

(Camp and Satterwhite, 2002)

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**VII. Speaking Skills**

This is the skill that you will use most in oral communication. Wood (2009) lists three principles that explain oral communication and how they affect us. The fourth, concerning speech quality, is obtained from Camp & Satterwhite (2002).

a. **Interpretation of Symbols Create Meaning**

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Symbols, like words, which are used in communication do not have meanings on their own. Their meanings are derived from people. This means that you have to look into people to uncover the meaning. Every word has a dictionary meaning but when used by a person in an expression, you have to look into the person and the context in which the word is used to get the actual meaning. For example, "go out" is literally a command or directive. You say these words when you want someone to physically move from the inside of a building to the outside. However, if a man says to a woman, "Let's go out," he is not necessarily asking her to go outside. He might actually be asking her to go on a date. Also the meanings attached to words change from time to time. Words which used to have a positive or neutral connotation may now have a negative connotation, and vice-versa.

b. There are Rules in Communication
Verbal communication has its own set of unspoken but widely understood rules. "Communication rules are shared understandings of what communication means and what kinds of communication are and are not appropriate in various situations" (Wood, 2009). These rules are not formalised or intentionally formed but are unconsciously developed as we interact with family, friends and people at work. There are two sets of rules that guide communication:

(i) Regulative Rules
These unwritten rules tell you when, where, how and with whom you can have a conversation. An example is turn-taking when talking with someone. You know that you should not interrupt the person speaking but you also need to look out for signals that will tell you when to enter into a conversation and when to end it. Regulative rules also define when, where, and with whom you can communicate in a particular way. For example, traditionally, in Asian homes, the elders speak first while the youngsters listen without interruption or contradiction. At work, junior officers are expected not to interrupt superior officers when they speak. However, superior officers can interrupt their junior officer any time. Employees are also expected to show respect and interest when their employers speak to them.

(ii) Constitutive Rules
These rules "define what communication means by showing us the meaning behind certain kinds of symbols used in communication." For example, head bowing in Asia is a symbol of respect, kissing and hugging denotes love and affection while yawning and shouting during a conversation denotes rudeness. Another example of a constitutive rule is to clap after a speaker has given a talk even though we may have found the talk absolutely boring.

(c) Punctuation Affects Meaning
Punctuation in communication affects meaning. The full stop, for instance, marks the end of one sentence or idea and the beginning of another. Similarly, punctuation can signal the beginning or the end of a particular interaction. For example, when a professor enters the lecture hall, his entry marks the beginning of the lecture. When he switches off the overhead projector, takes off his reading glasses and says "That’s all for today", it signals the end of the lecture. Tension is created when people disagree on punctuation.

(d) Voice Attributes

To be an effective speaker, you need to pay attention to the following voice attributes as they affect the quality of your speech.

(i) **Volume**

Your voice must be heard clearly for effective oral communication. You need to have good breath control in order to speak with sufficient volume. If you speak too softly, the audience will not be able to hear and understand what you are saying.

(ii) **Pitch**

You should speak with a pleasing pitch that is neither too high nor too low. Your voice will be shrill if it is pitched too high, and deep if it is pitched too low. Speakers need to learn to vary the pitch of their voices when they speak so as to get the right intonation.

(iii) **Intonation**

Intonation is the rhythm, or the rise and fall of your voice when you speak. For example, the intonation rises at the end of the utterance when you ask a question. The intonation remains level at the end of the utterance when you make a statement. Subtle nuances in meaning can arise when you vary the pitch.

(iv) **Tone**

The tone of your voice reflects your emotions and attitude. A cheerful and pleasant tone is usually appreciated by your listeners. Telephone operators and frontline people who man phones need to develop a polite, cheerful and pleasant tone. The tone that you use must also be suitable for the words and the message that you intend to convey.
(v) **Tempo**

Tempo refers to the speed at which you speak. Do not speak too fast or too slowly. If you speak too fast, your listeners will not be able to catch what you are saying. However, if you speak too slowly, your listeners may get bored and their attention may wander. Worse still, you may end up making them sleepy. A recommended speaking rate is 125 words per minute.

(vi) **Enunciation**

This refers to the clarity or distinctiveness with which you articulate each part of a word. Clear enunciation of words will help your listener to better understand your message.

Many speakers do not enunciate the end sounds of words, for example, dropping the /g/ sound in "walking" to sound like "walkin". When they speak fast, they run the sounds of a group of words together and drop some sounds, e.g., "Whadijado?" for "What did you do?"

(vii) **Pronunciation**

Pronunciation refers to the reproduction of the sound of individual letters or group of letters that make up a word. It also includes speaking with the correct stress and emphasis.

**VIII. Roles of Speaker and Listener**

Both the speaker and the listener are responsible for ensuring that effective communication takes place. Remember that the speaker is the sender of the message while the listener is the receiver. Let us look at some of the responsibilities of both the speaker and the listener in the communication process (Camp & Satterwhite, 2002).

1. **Evaluate the Situation**

Effective communication can only take place when the speaker is clear about his own views and interpretation of ideas and experiences. Communication with yourself must take place before you can communicate effectively with others. The speaker needs to evaluate the communication situation and try to do the following:

(a) **Avoid Miscommunication**
The ideal situation is when the intended message, actual message, and interpreted message are the same. This is what Carl Rogers meant when he defined communication way back in 1952. The speaker needs to choose his words precisely and the receiver should listen with full attention so that the message is understood correctly. There should be no room for miscommunication.

(b) Give and Receive Feedback

Misinterpretation and breakdown in communication can be avoided if the sender gets feedback. In a dialogue, the speaker can observe signals given out by the listener (e.g. body language, gestures, and facial expression) to see whether his message has been interpreted correctly. Another technique is to ask questions. The speaker can ask the receiver questions to determine whether his message is getting across accurately. As communication is a continuous two-way process involving sender and receiver, the receiver can, in turn, ask questions to clarify what is unclear.

(c) Maintain Goodwill

Effective communication is more easily achieved if the listener accepts and receives the speaker’s message with an open mind. An effective communicator needs to be good at public relations so as to maintain goodwill between sender and receiver. Do not offend or anger people with what you say or you will make enemies. This will affect how your message is received and interpreted.

2. Understand Needs

As an effective communicator, you will try to fulfil your own needs as well as the needs of the receiver of your message. Abraham Maslow categorised human needs into five levels. Figure 2.8 shows Maslow’s hierarchy of needs:

![Figure 3: Maslow’s hierarchy of needs](image)
Physical Needs | These are basic needs like food, clothing, and shelter. These basic needs must be satisfied before receivers can think of other things.
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Security Needs | These include the desire for a safe and secure environment that is free from physical harm and emotional or mental abuse.
---|---
Social Needs | Everyone wants to have a sense of belonging and be part of a group. These needs are satisfied by being part of a family, social circle or workforce.
---|---
Esteem Needs | These needs are actualised through feelings of self-worth, self-respect, prestige, power and recognition.
---|---
Self-acualisation Needs | These are higher level needs which are met through a sense of achievement and helping other people realise their goals.

IX. Non-verbal Communication

Nonverbal communication is expressed through nonlinguistic means. It is the actions or attributes of humans, including their appearance, use of objects, sound, time, smell, and space, that have socially shared significance and stimulate meaning in others. It includes visual/kinesic cues such as facial expressions, eye movements, gestures, and body orientation; vocal/paralinguistic cues such as volume, pitch, rate, and inflection; proxemic cues such as space and distance; olfactory or smell cues; cues provided via artifactual communication and appearance; cues sent via color; and chronemic or time cues.

Although we may send nonverbal messages deliberately or accidentally, their meaning depends on how they are interpreted. Consequently, they fulfill metacommunicative functions, and communicate about communication, clarifying both the nature of our relationship, and/or the meaning of our verbal messages. In fact, researchers conclude that nonverbal cues carry approximately two-thirds of a message’s communicative value. Even when used independently of words, as long as an observer derives meaning from them,
nonverbal messages speak volumes. Of course, the amount of information conveyed varies according to their clarity, and how receptive and perceptive the receiver is. Based on interpretations of our nonverbal cues, others may decide if they like us, will or will listen to our ideas, or want to sustain or terminate our relationship. The ability to understand and respond to nonverbal messages helps unlock meaning’s door.

(a) The Functions and Characteristics of Non-verbal Communication
As we noted, for us to fully understand the meaning of verbal messages, we also need to understand the meaning of the nonverbal messages that accompany them or occur in their absence. After all, we can change the meaning of our words with the wink of an eye, a certain facial expression, voice tone, bodily movement, use of space, or touch. As our ability to use and interpret nonverbal behavior and contextual cues improves, so will our understanding of interpersonal relationships. Let’s see how this works.

What do you make of these examples?

- The little boy who hides behind his mother as he says, “I’m not afraid of the dog.”
- The teacher who asks, “Any questions?” and fails to wait for a response before moving on to the next point.
- The child whose eyes are downcast and shoulders are rounded as she says, “I’m sorry for breaking the vase.”
- The supervisor who, when asked a question by an employee, leans forward with a hand cupped behind one ear.

Each message contains nonverbal cues that help reveal what a person is feeling. As we see, nonverbal cues are integral to communication. As the preceding situations illustrate, they may (1) contradict words, (2) emphasize or underscore words, (3) regulate their flow, (4) complement words, or (5) substitute for or take the place of spoken words (See the Table 1 below). Whereas words are best at conveying thoughts or ideas, nonverbal cues are best at conveying information about relational matters such as liking, respect, and social control. To be sure, the meaning of neither verbal nor nonverbal messages should be interpreted without carefully considering the other. Let us review each of the identified functions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contradicting</td>
<td>Your face is contorted into a grimace. Your eyes are narrowed and eyebrows furrowed. Yet, you are yelling, “I am not upset!” You are sending a mixed/double</td>
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Emphasizing
You wave your finger accusingly and raise your voice to demonstrate your anger as you say, “It is your fault, not mine.” Your behavior provides the italics.

Regulating
After explaining your stance on an issue, you raise and then lower your intonation as you say, “And that’s why I feel the way I do.” This, together with your silence, signals you are finished speaking and another person may comment. Your behavior influences the flow of verbal interaction.

Complementing
Your head is bowed and your body posture is slouched as your boss tells you how unhappy she is with your job performance. Your nonverbal cues provide clues to the relationship you and your boss share; they also help convey your attitude toward your boss.

Substituting
You run into a friend who asks, “So, how do you like your new job?” You just roll your eyes, using nonverbal cues in place of words.

(b) Reading Non-verbal Messages
To improve your ability to read another person, we explore eight nonverbal message categories including (1) kinesics, (2) paralinguistics, (3) proxemics, (4) haptics, (5) olfactics, (6) artifacts and appearance, (7) color, and (8) chronemics. Though for purposes of examination we will discuss each category separately, the meanings stimulated by behavioral cues falling within these categories do not occur in isolation. Instead, they interact with each other, whether reinforcing or diminishing the impact of the perceived cues (see Table 2).

(2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Messages are Sent by</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kinesics</td>
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<td>Proxemics</td>
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<td>Clothing and artifacts</td>
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<td>Colour</td>
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<td>Chronemics</td>
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(c) Gaining Communication Competence in Non-verbal Communication
It is important to learn to use nonverbal messages to enhance your personal credibility, likability, and attractiveness, and, at times, to establish dominance. By using nonverbal cues appropriately, you can create a more favorable impression and aid in the development of your relationships. If we are to enhance our abilities to develop
effective interpersonal relationships, we need to be fully aware of the nonverbal messages we send and receive. By tuning in to nonverbal messages, we can enhance our awareness of how others respond to us. Nonverbal communication is a “relationship language.” It expresses how we feel about one another. Even though it may be a challenge to interpret how people really feel, if only because they may not want us to know, the key to understanding people is to observe them in action and listen to the sound of their voices as they interact with you. For example, when in your company, do other people lean toward you or pull away? Face you directly or indicate a desire to avoid interpersonal involvement by facing away from you? Do their facial expressions suggest they are happy you are around, interested in pursuing a relationship, fearful to approach you, or angry with you? Is their posture relaxed, indicating they feel comfortable, or uptight, indicating that they feel you or the situation pose a threat? What do their voices reveal? Do they speak in a friendly manner? Are they trying to use their voices to hide what they are really feeling? Similarly, what does their use of touch, space, and distance suggest about your relationship? What about their use of clothing, color, and time? As you observe others, you pick up and interpret nonverbal cues that reveal their attitudes and feelings.

X. The Affective Side of Communication

The Importance of being Assertive

Assertiveness is a vital communication and life skill. Learning how to be assertive can:
• increase people’s confidence and self-esteem
• help gain the respect of others
• improve decision-making and problem-solving abilities
• enable people to handle conflict if it occurs.

Lack of assertiveness can affect relationships and quality of life because people end up not getting what they want and have a right to expect.

What is assertiveness?
An assertive attitude says: ‘I matter and you do too.’
Assertiveness is a way of relating to the outside world, backed up by specific oral communication skills. To be truly assertive a person needs to see themselves as being of worth and having a right to enjoy life. At the same time they value others equally and respect their right to have an opinion and to enjoy themselves. Assertiveness is the ability to express feelings, opinions, beliefs and needs directly, openly and honestly. It means doing this in a way that does not violate other people’s personal rights or humiliate them in any way.

**Basic rights**

Before someone can be assertive and comfortably express their opinions, needs and wishes they must believe that they have a legitimate right to do so. This means that they must believe:

- 'I have the right to do anything which does not affect the rights of others.'
- 'I have the right to ask for what I want.'
- 'I have the right to my own values, beliefs and opinions.'
- 'I have the right to say I don’t understand.'
- 'I have the right to tell others how I wish to be treated.'
- 'I have the right to make mistakes.'
- 'I have the right to change my mind.'
- 'I have the right to say “No”.'
- 'I have the right to like myself – even though I’m not perfect.'

**Other ways of relating to others**

There are two other main ways of relating to others: being passive or being aggressive.

**Being passive** means allowing the needs, opinions and judgments of others to become more important than your own. People sometimes think that asserting their rights and needs means being selfish, but this is not true.

**Being aggressive** means expressing your rights at the expense of others and not recognizing that they have equal rights. Aggression can result from bottling up feelings which eventually explode – leaving no space for communication.

Assertiveness is a path through the middle of these two extremes: neither overbearing nor weedy, this attitude to communication is characterized by directness, clarity and firmness, anchored in respect for others and for yourself.

**How to be assertive**
No one can become assertive overnight. Knowing what it is and how it can benefit us or deciding to become more assertive is only the starting point. Becoming more assertive involves changing behaviour patterns that have built up over years. It can be frightening the first time we react differently to a situation – even something small like saying that you can’t work late can be daunting.

**Body language**

An important part of assertiveness is open, secure body language. Actually practicing standing in an assertive way can make it much easier for people to be assertive. Passive body language is the classic ‘victim’ stance of hunched shoulders, avoiding eye contact. An aggressive stance could involve clenched fists, pointing fingers, staring eyes or standing too close to the other person’s ‘comfort zone’. Assertive people generally stand upright but in a relaxed manner, looking people calmly in the eyes with an open posture.

**Assertive behavior**

There is still a lot of misunderstanding about what assertiveness actually is. Many people either confuse the term with aggressiveness or think that it is only for quiet types who need to be more outspoken. So it is worth running through what assertiveness really is and how it works. There are three simple rules for assertive behaviour.

- **Be direct** – you can’t expect others to read your mind or understand how you’re feeling if you don’t tell them. Don’t pad your statements out with excuses or apologies.
- **Stay calm** – don’t allow yourself to become angry or feel bullied – remind yourself of your rights.
- **Stick to your guns** – if you are met with a refusal, or even abuse, repeat your statement or request calmly until the other person understands.

**Activity: How Assertive Are You?**

Fill in this questionnaire to assess your current level of assertiveness. Circle the response that most nearly describes what you would do in the situation described. Then count up how many a’s, b’s and c’s you have scored.

| 1. You work with someone who is really chatty. They are stopping you from finishing an important piece of work. | a. Let them carry on because you don’t want to upset them and finish what you are doing after work?  
| | b. Explain that you need to finish your work and ask that you finish the conversation another time?  
| | c. Tell the person to shut up and stop bothering you?  
| 2. You have chosen to sit in the non-smoking area of a pub, when another customer lights up a cigarette. | a. Feel annoyed and wait for someone else to say something?  
| | b. Politely ask the smoker to move or put their cigarette out?  
<p>| | c. Speak to the smoker loudly and rudely, saying that you will report them to the pub manager?  |</p>
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| **3. A helpful sales assistant has shown you every pair of shoes in the shop in your size, but there is still nothing you really like.** | a. Buy something anyway so as not to hurt the assistant’s feelings?  
b. Thank them for being so helpful but decide not to buy anything today?  
c. Blame the shop for not stocking shoes that fit your requirements? |   |
| **4. Someone who is important to you is being gossiped about nastily in a group of friends.** | a. Pretend not to hear?  
b. Say how upset you feel and ask them to stop?  
c. Shout at them and put them all in their place? |   |
| **5. A friend who’s always telling you his/her problems rings you up just as you are settling down to watch your favorite TV programme.** | a. Listen patiently wishing you could see the programme?  
b. Say it’s not convenient right now but you’ll ring back later?  
c. Get annoyed, saying this is your precious free time, and asking him/her not to phone again? |   |
| **6. Everyone at home blames you for making all the mess.** | a. Agree to clear up all the mess, but feel resentful and unfairly treated?  
b. Tell the family how you feel and get them to see that other people make a mess too?  
c. Lose your temper and refuse to clear up ever again? |   |
| **7. Your elder brother makes an unkind joke about you.** | a. Pretend not to hear?  
b. Tell your boss that this upsets you and ask them to stop?  
c. Launch into a tirade about not being taken seriously? |   |
| **8. A friend you see occasionally wants to visit you when you are really busy.** | a. Tell them you would love to see them?  
b. Say it’s not convenient this weekend and try to arrange it for  
c. Let them know how annoyed you are to be bothered when you are so busy? |   |