

Chapter 1

1. _____ is the process by which individuals use symbols and behaviors to exchange information

- ☐ A. Encoding
- ☐ B. Decoding
- ☐ C. Communication
- ☐ D. Perception

Answer: C

2. A(n) _____ perspective on communication examines how communication behaviors work (or don't work) to accomplish our goals in personal, group, organizational, or public situations.

- ☐ A. interdependent
- ☐ B. interdisciplinary
- ☐ C. interpersonal
- ☐ D. functional

Answer: D

3. The best definition of *interdependence* from the list below is

- ☐ A. what we do affects others, and what they do affects us.
- ☐ B. a person's self-esteem is dependent on whether another person needs him or her.
- ☐ C. being able to communicate effectively to meet one's needs.
- ☐ D. a reluctance to communicate with others.

Answer: A

4. All of the following have been identified as the primary reasons why we communicate except for which one?

- ☐ A. to express affiliation
- ☐ B. to exchange information
- ☐ C. to achieve goals
- ☐ D. to influence others

Answer: B

5. While on a first date, you notice your date leaning in toward you, meeting your gaze, smiling when you make eye contact, and laughing at your jokes—you infer from your date's behavior that he or she likes you. This scenario best represents the use of communication to express

- ☐ A. control.
- ☐ B. affiliation.
- ☐ C. goal achievement.
- ☐ D. influence over another person.

Answer: B

6. The ability of one person, group, or organization to influence others, and the manner in which their relationships are conducted is called

- ☐ A. control.
- ☐ B. affiliation.
- ☐ C. interdependence.
- ☐ D. goal achievement.

Answer: A

7. The word "dog" is a _____, which arbitrarily refers to the canine companion that sleeps at the foot of your bed.

- ☐ A. code
- ☐ B. channel
- ☐ C. symbol
- ☐ D. behavior

Answer: C

8. After looking in your book bag and realizing you forgot to grab a pen, you lean over to one of your classmates and you say, "Do you have a pen I can borrow for class today?" You have just engaged in what mental process as you constructed your message?

- ☐ A. encoding
- ☐ B. decoding
- ☐ C. coding
- ☐ D. symbolizing

Answer: A

9. The process of receiving a message by interpreting and assigning meaning to it is referred to as

- ☐ A. encoding.
- ☐ B. decoding.
- ☐ C. translating.
- ☐ D. inquiring.

Answer: B

10. The shared beliefs, values, and practices of a group of people is their

- ☐ A. communication relationship.
- ☐ B. culture.
- ☐ C. norms.
- ☐ D. co-culture.

Answer: B

11. The Amish, African Americans, Catholics, and Goths are all groups we might refer to as members of a/an

- ☐ A. enclave.
- ☐ B. student group.
- ☐ C. co-culture.
- ☐ D. code-community.

Answer: C

12. That communication involves two or more people acting in both sender and receiver roles, and that their messages are dependent on and influenced by those of their partner, means that communication is

- ☐ A. symbolic.
- ☐ B. cultural.
- ☐ C. transactional.
- ☐ D. interdependent.

Answer: C

13. _____ refers to the study of morals, specifically the moral choices individuals make in their relationships with others.

- ☐ A. Religion
- ☐ B. Culture
- ☐ C. Communication
- ☐ D. Ethics

Answer: D

14. When communication is appropriate, it

- ☐ A. helps you meet your goals.
- ☐ B. meets the demands of the situation, as well as the expectations of one's communication partner and any other people present.
- ☐ C. has little or no potential for being misunderstood.
- ☐ D. produces some kind of product as a result of the exchange between the communicators.

Answer: B

15. In which model of communication do we see a sender who originates a message, and sends it through a channel to a receiver, without any kind of feedback taken into consideration?

- ☐ A. interaction model
- ☐ B. linear model
- ☐ C. transactional model
- ☐ D. competent communication model

Answer: B

16. In the interaction model of communication, we refer to the receiver's responses as

- ☐ A. noise.
- ☐ B. message.
- ☐ C. feedback.
- ☐ D. code.

Answer: C

17. The _____ model of communication presents a transactional perspective, in which individuals simultaneously send and receive messages within a relational context, a situational context, and a cultural context.

- ☐ A. linear
- ☐ B. interaction
- ☐ C. competent communication
- ☐ D. cultural

Answer: C

18. _____ are the thoughts a communicator has about himself or herself and others.

- ☐ A. Feelings
- ☐ B. Cognitions
- ☐ C. Emotions
- ☐ D. Behaviors

Answer: B

19. Human beings are born with the capacity to communicate.

Answer: True

20. We sometimes express emotions to help fulfill our practical needs.

Answer: True

21. While communication is helpful, we do not need to be able to communicate to get the things we want and need in life.

Answer: False

22. Communication offers us multiple ways to accomplish a goal.

Answer: True

23. The more control one person has in a communication relationship, the less the other person has.

Answer: True

24. In healthy relationships, there is usually equally shared control—both parties have about even levels of control over one another and the communication.

Answer: False

25. Humans are able to communicate without the use of symbols.

Answer: False

26. The meanings of symbols are arbitrary and are negotiated between people.

Answer: True

27. Codes lose their value once they are known broadly by a large number of people.

Answer: False

28. Individuals are only able to identify with one co-culture at a time, making this aspect of their cultural identity less meaningful than others.

Answer: False

29. The discipline of communication is only concerned with communication that is intentional.

Answer: False

30. Transactional communication involves a sender and a receiver sending independent messages to one another.

Answer: False

31. Competent communicators are more concerned with the outcome of their communication than they are with the process of their communication.

Answer: False

32. An individual's ethics are influenced by his or her personal morals and values as well as by broader cultural notions of what is right or wrong morally.

Answer: True

33. Communication behavior can be effective without being appropriate.

Answer: True

- 34.** The appropriateness of a communication act is largely determined by cultural norms and rules about what is acceptable or unacceptable.

Answer: True

- 35.** While appropriateness is subjective, and may change from one situation to another, competent communication focuses on using the skills that are effective in all situations.

Answer: False

- 36.** Having strong communication skills is a requirement to develop mutually satisfying relationships.

Answer: False

- 37.** The linear model of communication could be used to describe the way an artist uses her recorded music to communicate with her fans.

Answer: True

- 38.** The interaction model of communication is the most complex and accurate model of communication put forth because it is the only model to acknowledge that communicators simultaneously send and receive messages.

Answer: False

- 39.** A communicator's perception of himself or herself can have a profound impact on the way he or she communicates.

Answer: True

- 40.** Most people perceive their cognitions, thoughts, and feelings to be innate, but they are actually shaped by the culture in which they live.

Answer: True

- 41.** Define the term *communication*.

Answer: Communication is the process by which individuals use symbols and behaviors to exchange information.

- 42.** What are the three primary reasons why human beings communicate?

Answer: To express affiliation, to accomplish goals, and to influence others

43. What is the difference between encoding and decoding of a message?

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Answer: Whereas encoding refers to the process of mentally constructing a message, decoding refers to the process of receiving a message by interpreting and assigning meaning to it.

44. Provide an example of a co-culture to which you belong.

Answer: Examples will vary.

45. Briefly describe a time in which your unintentional behavior contradicted your intentional message.

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Answer: Examples will vary, but should accurately reflect unintentional communication, a contradiction between the intentional and the unintentional messages—the unintentional one should be the more honest/believable message in the example.

46. Define what is meant by *communication channel*, and provide an example of a channel you have used to communicate today.

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Answer: A channel is a method through which communication occurs—examples will vary.

47. Contrast the difference between appropriate and effective communication.

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Answer: Appropriate communication behaviors are ones that match other people's expectations and meet the demands of a given situation, whereas effective communication simply helps a person meet his or her goals.

- 48.** What term do we use to refer to a person's ability to have a number of communication behaviors at his or her disposal, and the willingness to use different communication behaviors in different situations?

Answer: Behavioral flexibility

- 49.** What term is used to refer to anything that interferes with the transmission of a message, changing it in some way from what was originally encoded?

Answer: Noise

- 50.** In your own words, what do the authors of your textbook mean when they say that communication is transactional?

Answer: Individuals simultaneously send and receive interdependent messages.

- 51.** What is the difference between cognition and behavior?

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Answer: Cognitions are the thoughts communicators have about themselves, and behaviors are observable verbal and nonverbal communication—our cognitions inform our behaviors.

- 52.** Identify one element of the situational context of the classroom in which you are taking this course that can create a challenge to the communication between you and your instructor or among the students in the class.

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Answer: Examples will vary, but might include something related to the physical set-up of the room, arrangements of desks, the décor, the time of day, etc.

53. Define *cultural identity*.

Answer: How individuals view themselves as a member of a specific culture.

54. Explain what the functional perspective on communication means. What does this perspective say about the reasons why we communicate?

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Answer: Ideal answers will acknowledge that the desire and the need to communicate are innate, and that we begin communicating the moment we are born. Communication is essential to beginning, maintaining, and ending our relationships. It is through these interdependent communication relationships that we get the things we need. We communicate to express affiliation, accomplish goals, and influence others.

55. List and describe the six characteristics of communication.

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Answer: Ideal answers will describe the following characteristics:

- Communication is symbolic: The verbal and nonverbal symbols we use are arbitrarily constructed.
- Communication requires a shared code: Communicators both encode and decode symbolic messages.
- Communication is linked to culture: The shared values, beliefs, and norms of a group of people influence the way they interact and their expectations of others. Our communication is also influenced by our membership in co-cultural groups, and we use communication to identify ourselves as members of these co-cultural groups, as well as to delineate who is not a member of the group.

- Communication need not be intentional: Some of our communication is planned and intentional and some of it is spontaneous and unintentional. Our unintentional messages are often more believable to others.
- Communication occurs through various channels: We have a variety of channels available to us, but competent communication requires us to consider what channel or channels will work best for us to communicate our messages.
- Communication is transactional: We are simultaneously sending and receiving messages, our messages influence the messages of others and vice versa, and our messages cannot be reversed.

56. What are the essential features of competent communication? In what ways are process and outcome related, and in what ways are they distinctly different from one another? How about appropriateness and effectiveness?



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Answer: Ideal answers to this question will reflect an understanding that competent communicators are able to adapt their communication to particular situations so that they behave both appropriately as well as effectively. Competent communicators are aware of ethics, and the way their messages affect others. Competent communication is process-oriented, rather than outcome-oriented. Competent communicators continually evaluate and assess their own communication processes to ensure they are appropriate as well as effective, and that they are ethical. Strong answers will identify that the process leads to the outcome, but that a focus on outcome rather than process may lead to unethical behavior. Similarly, appropriate behavior is determined by the situation, and behaving appropriately increases the chance of communication effectiveness. While a person may be effective at getting what he or she wants in the short term (outcome), if the means used (process) is not appropriate, he or she may ultimately undermine relationships and long-term competence and satisfaction.

57. Describe how a person's cultural identity influences his or her communication behavior.



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Answer: Culture provides the backdrop to the situational context in which we communicate. Culture provides us with values, norms, and rules to guide both our cognitions as well as our behavior. Culture helps provide us with expectations about how others will behave, as well as guidelines for what others expect of us. Culture, co-culture, and our cultural identity shape the choices we make, as well as how we interpret the choices of others. Ultimately, we cannot separate ourselves from our culture, but an awareness of the way culture influences us can help us adapt and communicate more competently.

58. Consider a time when you and a communication partner failed to communicate competently. Describe what happened in the situation and what went wrong in both your and your partner's communication. Based on what you have learned so far about competent communication, what

could you and the other person do to communicate more competently if you could go back in time and do the interaction over?



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Answer: Answers to this question will vary, as the student is required to reflect on his or her personal experiences and personal knowledge and theories about communication. Ideal answers will demonstrate self-reflexive ability and critical thinking abilities. At this point, most students will not have an especially strong sense of how to improve their communication competence, but they should demonstrate an awareness of concepts such as appropriateness, effectiveness, the difference between process and outcome, and ethics. They may be able to demonstrate how lack of agreement about the meaning of symbols contributed to miscommunication, and how the ability to adapt one's communication to the expectations and needs of the other would improve their competence. This question can be used early on in the term and again later on in the term to assess students' progress as their understanding of communication in general, as well as of specialized areas (interpersonal, group, organizational) in communication research, deepens.

59. Using classroom interaction as the source for your examples, illustrate the characteristics of communication as being symbolic, requiring a shared code, being linked to culture, being both intentional and unintentional, occurring through various channels, and being transactional. Explain how understanding these characteristics can help a teacher communicate more competently with his or her students.



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Answer: Ideal answers will provide clear examples of communication within the classroom context (situational context) that reflect the characteristics of communication. For example, students may identify:

- The use of symbols: The instructor's use of lecture and assignment of reading material to convey information, as well as the use of demonstrations, graphic models, and diagrams to represent ideas.
- The need for a shared code: New terms introduced in the course of study must be defined so that all communicators are able to encode and decode accurately.
- The link to culture: Culture has shaped our expectations regarding the roles of the teacher and the student and what is appropriate for each in this situation.
- Communication is both intentional and unintentional: An instructor may need to be adept at reading a student's unintentional communication to know whether new concepts are understood before moving ahead.
- Communication occurs through multiple contexts: A diverse classroom means that most instructors use a variety of means to convey information (reading, oral discourse, use of graphic depictions, interactive activities, and use of both face-to-face, as well as electronic modes of communication).

- Communication is transactional: A student's behavior in class will impact the behavior of the instructor as well as other students in the class, and vice versa. A "boring" instructor may come to life if students express interest, and even the most dispassionate student may perk up if an instructor conveys information in a manner that resonates with him or her.

60. Compare and contrast the essential features of the three models of communication discussed in your textbook: the linear model, the interaction model, and the competent communication model.

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Answer: Ideal answers will recognize an understanding of the following ideas/concepts:

- Linear Model: The most basic model depicts communication as being linear and unidirectional. A sender encodes a message and sends it to a receiver through a channel, and the receiver decodes it. Along the way, noise may change the message leading to misunderstanding. While the model is limited, it does portray certain forms of communication, and provides the basic elements for more complex models of communication.
- Interaction Model: Building on the linear model, the interaction model acknowledges that the receiver also responds to messages with feedback. While more complex, this model portrays the sender and receiver as being locked into their roles, and the communication process as being disjointed with the receiver having to wait until the sender finishes encoding to begin decoding and the sender having to wait until the receiver has finished decoding the message to respond with any feedback.
- Competent Communication Model: This model is the most complex of the three, portraying communication as being transactional, with all communicators simultaneously sending and receiving messages within a relational context, a situational context, and a cultural context. This model allows for flexibility in roles, and for the focus to shift to the transaction rather than just isolated messages that are being sent back and forth.

61. Describe a recent conflict you had with your roommate, a close friend, or your significant other. Apply the model of competent communication to this interaction to illustrate the elements of the model. How does considering the interaction through the lens this model provides help you understand the interaction differently than you might have before engaging in this analysis?

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Answer: Answers to this question will vary, as the student is required to identify a personal example. Ideal answers will demonstrate a clear understanding of the transactional nature of communication, and the impact the relational context, situational context, and cultural context had on their

expectations of the other, the choices they made, and the way they interpreted the other's behavior. Strong answers will also demonstrate an ability to question one's initial assumptions about what was expected of themselves and others, and an ability to reinterpret the other's behaviors based on this awareness. At this point, students should not be expected to have mastery of these abilities, but should be able to demonstrate some self-reflexive questioning of their assumptions as well as a basic awareness of the process. This question can be repeated toward the end of the course to assess whether or not students can synthesize what they have learned in subsequent chapters into the model, and can provide a sense of cohesion and continuity between the various topic areas covered throughout the text.