UGC-NET Paper I Unit IV: Communication – Notes

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1. Meaning of Communication

The word comes from the Latin *communis* (common) and *communicare* (to share or make common). Communication is the process of sharing ideas, information, feelings and meanings between people through symbols.

Elements of the communication process: sender (source) → encoding → message → channel (medium) → decoding → receiver → feedback. **Noise** is any interference at any stage; **context** is the setting in which communication takes place.

2. Models of Communication

Model	Year	Key idea
Aristotle	Ancient	Speaker, speech, audience; persuasion through ethos, pathos and logos
Harold Lasswell	1948	'Who says what, in which channel, to whom, with what effect?'
Shannon and Weaver	1949	Mathematical (linear) model; introduced 'noise'
Osgood and Schramm	1954	Circular model; both parties encode and decode; field of experience
David Berlo (SMCR)	1960	Source, Message, Channel, Receiver
Westley and MacLean	1957	Mass communication model with gatekeepers
Frank Dance	1967	Helical model; communication evolves over time

Models can be **linear** (one-way: Lasswell, Shannon-Weaver, Berlo), **interactive** (with feedback: Schramm) or **transactional** (simultaneous sending and receiving).

3. Characteristics of Communication

- It is a **process**: continuous and dynamic.
- It is **two-way**; feedback completes it.
- It is **goal-oriented** and **contextual**.
- It is **irreversible**: a message once sent cannot be taken back.
- It involves both **verbal and non-verbal** elements.
- Meaning lies in people, not in words alone.

4. Types of Communication

Basis	Types
Number of people	Intrapersonal (with oneself), interpersonal (two persons), group, public, mass
Mode	Verbal (oral, written) and non-verbal
Formality	Formal (official channels) and informal (grapevine)
Direction	Downward (superior to subordinate), upward (subordinate to superior), horizontal/lateral (among peers), diagonal (across levels and departments)
Flow	One-way and two-way

Non-verbal communication

Term	Meaning
Kinesics	Body movements, gestures, facial expressions, posture
Proxemics	Use of space and distance (Edward T. Hall)
Paralanguage	Voice features: tone, pitch, volume, pace, pauses
Haptics	Touch
Oculesics	Eye contact
Chronemics	Use of time (punctuality, waiting)
Artifactics	Dress, ornaments, objects

Hall's zones of personal space: intimate (0–18 inches), personal (1.5–4 feet), social (4–12 feet), public (12 feet and beyond).

Albert Mehrabian's 7-38-55 rule: when communicating feelings and attitudes, about 7% of meaning comes from words, 38% from tone of voice and 55% from body language.

5. Effective Communication

The 7 Cs: Clear, Concise, Concrete, Correct, Coherent, Complete, Courteous (some lists include Consideration).

Inter-cultural communication is communication between people of different cultural backgrounds.

- **Edward T. Hall:** high-context cultures (meaning conveyed through context, relationships and non-verbal cues, e.g. India, Japan) vs low-context cultures (meaning stated explicitly in words, e.g. USA, Germany).
- **Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions:** power distance, individualism vs collectivism, masculinity vs femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation, indulgence vs restraint.
- **Ethnocentrism** (judging other cultures by one's own standards) and **stereotyping** hinder inter-cultural communication; empathy and cultural sensitivity help.

Group communication

- **Bruce Tuckman's stages of group development (1965):** forming, storming, norming, performing; adjourning was added in 1977.
- **Groupthink** (Irving Janis): a group's desire for harmony leads to poor decisions without critical evaluation.
- Small groups usually have 3–12 members; effective groups have clear goals, shared leadership and open communication.

Classroom communication

- Effective classroom communication is two-way and interactive, with questioning, discussion and feedback.
- **Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC)** by Ned Flanders has 10 categories: 1–7 teacher talk (1–4 indirect influence: accepting feelings, praise, accepting ideas, asking questions; 5–7 direct influence: lecturing, giving directions, criticising), 8–9 student talk (response and initiation), and 10 silence or confusion.
- A teacher's voice, eye contact, gestures, movement in the classroom, and use of examples and teaching aids all affect learning.

6. Barriers to Effective Communication

Barrier	Examples
Physical / environmental	Noise, distance, poor acoustics, faulty equipment, poor lighting
Semantic (language)	Jargon, ambiguous words, different meanings, poor translation
Psychological / emotional	Anger, fear, prejudice, stress, lack of attention, closed mind
Physiological	Hearing or speech impairment, fatigue, illness
Perceptual	Different interpretations, selective perception, stereotypes
Cultural	Different values, customs, gestures, norms
Organisational	Rigid hierarchy, too many levels, poor policies
Technological	Poor connectivity, information overload

Other barriers: **filtering** (manipulating information so it looks favourable to the receiver), **information overload** (more information than the receiver can process), **premature evaluation** and **poor listening**.

Overcoming barriers: use simple and clear language, listen actively, seek and give feedback, choose the right channel, be sensitive to culture, and align verbal with non-verbal messages.

7. Mass Media and Society

Mass communication reaches a large, heterogeneous and anonymous audience through technology. Feedback is delayed and limited, and gatekeepers control content.

Type	Examples
Print	Newspapers, magazines, books
Broadcast	Radio, television
Film	Cinema, documentaries
New / digital media	Internet, social media, podcasts, OTT platforms

Functions of mass media

- Harold Lasswell: surveillance of the environment, correlation of society's response, transmission of cultural heritage.
- Charles Wright added entertainment.
- Other roles: education, persuasion, mobilisation, and acting as a watchdog (the 'fourth estate').

Media effects theories

Theory	Proponents	Key idea
Hypodermic needle / magic bullet	Early 20th century	Media have direct, powerful and uniform effects
Two-step flow	Lazarsfeld and Katz	Media influence opinion leaders, who influence others
Agenda-setting	McCombs and Shaw (1972)	Media tell people what to think about
Uses and gratifications	Katz, Blumler, Gurevitch	People actively use media to satisfy needs
Cultivation	George Gerbner	Long exposure to TV shapes perceptions of reality
Spiral of silence	Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann	People stay silent if they feel their view is in the minority
Gatekeeping	Kurt Lewin; David Manning White	Editors decide which news reaches the public
Medium theory	Marshall McLuhan	'The medium is the message'; 'global village'

Positive effects of media on society: awareness, education, democratic participation, cultural exchange, entertainment.

Negative effects: misinformation and fake news, sensationalism, violence and stereotyping, consumerism, privacy concerns, the digital divide, and echo chambers on social media.

8. Indian Media Milestones

Event	Year
First newspaper: Hicky's Bengal Gazette (James Augustus Hicky)	1780
Indian Broadcasting Company; radio in Bombay	1927
Name 'All India Radio' adopted	1936
Doordarshan began (experimental, Delhi)	1959
Press Council of India first set up	1966 (current Act: 1978)
SITE (Satellite Instructional Television Experiment)	1975–76
Prasar Bharati (AIR and Doordarshan) established	1997
First community radio (Anna FM, Anna University)	2004

Regulators and bodies: Press Council of India (print), Press Registrar General of India (registration of periodicals; formerly the Registrar of Newspapers for India), TRAI (broadcasting carriage and telecom), CBFC (film certification), and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.