Communication Theories

According to Communication includes all aspects involved in the creation, export, import, and processing of artefacts used to link objects in the world. The study of communication encompasses all features of a communication system, Communication phenomena have been a central means of major transformations in the world. When it first appeared, the telegraph was described as an instrument of "the age of instant global communication." In the 20th century, Early Bird the world first's satellite, was the start of "a massive global revolution in the 1960s. Current digital transmission technologies have had a "significant impact on human interaction and hold promise to further increase humankind's ability to overcome constraints on communication imposed by time, location and distance.

Theories of Communication

- ✓ Linear Theory or Mathematical Theory
- ✓ Cybernetic theory
- ✓ Contagian Theory
- ✓ Theories of interpersonal communication
- Attribution theory
- Elaboration likelihood theory
- Social judgment theory
- Social penetration theory
- Uncertainty reduction theory
- Constructivism
  - ✓ Theory of Group communication
- Group think theory
  - ✓ Theory of Mass communication
- Cultivation theory
- Spiral of silence theory

Mathmatical Theory of Communication - Shannon and Weaver represents the communication process in their book entitled 'The Mathmatical Theory of Communication'.

Shannon-Weaver theory of communication was primarily designed to improve technical communication, but was later used to describe different fields of communication. Theory given by Shannon-Weaver includes the following concepts: sender, encoder, channel, decoder, receiver and feedback. Furthermore, there is also concept of noise included in the model, which goes through the channel and renders the message more difficult to understand by the receiver.

Noise –Noise is a 'black box' concept. It pervades like an umbrella over the entire communication system, reducing the accuracy of communication and is responsible for miscommunication.

Basic categories of Noise

(1) Internal Noise – refers to the uniqueness of human being that causes them to bring different perception to a message. These internal noises have become an entire field of study called, 'semantics'- the study of meaning, of language and its effect on human being. In addition internal noise is also caused by an abnormal psychological or physiological state.

(2) External Noise – refers to those environmental qualities that interfere with communication effectiveness, for ex. temperature, light, room size etc.

Varieties of Noise

(1) Non-mechanical Noise – This noise may eliminate completely if one is willing to make the required effort or pay the price for it.

(2) Mechanical Noise – There is no remedy for this kind of noise.

(3) Non-Verbal Noise – This can also occur because of contradictory mesvsages sent by the sender. For ex. if a politician while addressing an audience says he has plenty of time to speak, but very often sees his watch.

References

Al-Fedaghi,S.(2012) A Conceptual Foundation for the Shannon-Weaver Model of Communication. International Journal of Soft Computing. DOI: 10.3923/ijscomp.2012.12.19

Neeraj, Kumar (1997) Communication and Management. New Delhi, Gyan.

Cybernetic theory

The cybernetics model is developed by Norbert Wiener in electronics and Walter B.Cannon in biology. The term cybernetics is derived from the Greek 'Kybernetes' meaning of steersman, and   one of the reason for choosing the term was that the steering mechanism of a ship was a good example of feedback mechanism. Cybernetics is the study of how open system exchange information with their environment and deals with the comparison of control and communication in man and machines. It is virtually important for two reason-its shows us what men have in common with the machines they create and how man himself think, reacts, behaves and learns. Primitive element of cybernetics System is called the

Detector

Governor, and

Effector.

These elements process information, maintain equilibrium or homeostasis, feedback behaviour and acquire knowledge of results.

The pupil of the human eye is the readily example of a natural cybernetic system is the expands, or contracts inversely with the intensity of light. Retina detects the available light in surroundings and light stimulus is referred to the appropriate brain cells for interpretation and action. The brain cell or governor interprets the intensity of light, and the pupil as effector is made to contract or expand in order to maintain the desire homeostasis or range of light intensity necessary for sight.

Features

- Norbert Wiener work concentrates upon two central concepts: communication and control, emphasizing the implication for information. entropy.

- Information, entropy, redundancy and feedback are very important terms in communication theory and they are also essential in understanding the principle of cybernetics.

- The cybernetic system is adaptive to its environment. The adaptive control system not only responds but also adapts itself to environmental imperative in order to survive.

- Adaptive control is the basics dynamics of all cybernetic systems whether it is a person, a group, a community, or society.

Reference

McGarry, K.J. (1975) Communication, knowledge and the librarian. London, Clive Bingley.

Contagian Theory

The theory is first developed by Gustave Le Bon in his book called "the crowd: a study of popular mind in France" in 1885.His theories were improved by sociologist Robert Park and later by Herbert Blumer and explained how the crowd influenced the individuals dynamically within a group in a socio-psychological aspect. Contagion is a very old term which refers to anything that spreads from person to person like a disease such as chicken pox or flu. The theory adapted this idea in a sociological basis and stated as the transmission of ideas or even irrational behavior collectively displayed by an individual when engaged in a group. It is stated that large number of people are influenced by the contagious behavior of the group and avoids their individual responsibility.

Reference

Contagian Theory: https://www.communicationtheory.org/contagion-theory/

Theories of Interpersonal communication

Attribution Theory

We attach and assume meanings to others behavior in our day to day life, and the theory developed by Fritz Heider based on this attribution is called Attribution Theory. Attribution theory explains how and why ordinary people explain

the things as they do. Everybody tries to make sense in this social world. Fritz Heider classified the attribution theory into two types as:

Internal Attribution

When a person is motivating for a certain action and questioned about it, the person needs to explain the reason for the question or action. In Internal attribution, a person always wants to show him as much as positive.

Example

Jim scored the highest mark in class. He believes that he got marks because he worked hard and because he has the ability to score good marks. He attributes the causes in the factors which are internal. And thus his confidence level increases and he tends to score higher next time also.

External Attribution

A person wants to understand the world through events which happens around him and a person seeks reason for that particular event by using external events.

Example

Hendry Scored the lowest mark and he believes that it because the pen. He even believes that the person who checked his answer sheet was not in a good mood. He attributes the causes of this failure in external factors.

Reference

Attribution theory- https://www.communicationtheory.org/attribution-theory/

Constructivism theory

Constructivism makes three assumptions regarding communication:

1. All communication is intentional.
2. Communication is goal-driven.
3. Negotiation comes into play with shared interpretation (meaning)

Constructivism focuses on individuals rather than interactions. It tries to account for why people make the certain communicative choices. Constructs are the basis of constructivism. They are dimensions of judgment and can be thought of as filters, files, templates, or interpretive schemas. They are domain specific, almost exclusively focusing on interpersonal message variations.

Reference

Constructivism : http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/theory/rcq.html

Elaboration Likelihood Model

The Elaboration Likelihood Model is given by Petty and Cacioppo in 1986. claims that there are two paths to persuasion: the central path and the peripheral path. In central path receiver carefully process message arguments and in peripheral path receivers rely on mental shortcuts (heuristics) as a means of reaching conclusion. If the person cares about the issue and has access to the message with a minimum of distraction, then that person will elaborate on the message.If the receiver is motivated and able to elaborate on the message and if there are compelling arguments to use, then the central route to persuasion should be used. If the receiver is unlikely to elaborate the message, or if the available arguments are weak, then the peripheral route to persuasion should be used.

References

Danial,J.O'Keefe.   Theory   and   prospects   in   persuation   theory   and   research. http://www.uky.edu/~ngrant/CJT780/readings/Day%201/cjt780/OKeefe2004.pdf

Petty,R.E.&Cacioppo,J.T.(1986). Communication and persuasion.New York: Springer-verlag.

Social Judgment Theory

The key point of the Social Judgment Theory is that attitude change (persuasion) is mediated by judgmental processes and effects. Put differently, persuasion occurs at the end of the process where a person understands a message then compares the position it advocates to the person's position on that issue. A person's position on an issue is dependent on:

1. the person's most preferred position,

2. the person's judgment of the various alternatives and,

3. the person's level of ego-involvement with the issue.

Reference

Social Judgement Theory: https://oregonstate.edu/instruct/theory/sjt.html

Social Penetration Theory (SPT)

SPT proposes that as relationships develop, interpersonal relationship moves from relatively shallow, non-intimate level to deeper more personal ones. The theory was formulated by psychologists Irwin Altman and Dalmas Taylor to provide an understanding of the closeness between two individuals. Social penetration is defined as a process that moves a relationship from non-intimate to intimate. This process occurs primarily through self-disclosure. This theory is also guided by the assumptions that relationship development is systematic and predictable and also includes deterioration or growing apart.At times the relationships is very open and sharing. Other time, one or both parties to the relationship need their space, or have other concerns, and the relationship is less open. The theory posits that these cycles occur throughout the life of the relationship as the persons try to balance their needs for privacy and open relationship.

Persons allow other people to penetrate their public self when they disclose personal information. The decision to disclose is based on the preceived rewards the person will gain if he or she discloses information. If a person perceives that the cost of disclosing information is greater than the rewards for disclosing information then no infonrmation will be disclosed. The larger the reward - cost ratio the more disclosure takes place. People initially disclose superficial information that costs very little if another person finds it out.

References

Social Penetration Theory: https://psychology. wikia.org /wiki/ Social_penetration_theory

Social Penetration Theory https://oregonstate.edu/instruct/theory/spt.html

Uncertainty Reduction Theory

Uncertainty reduction theory (URT) was originally created to explain the communication process that occurs when two strangers interact. Charles Berger and Richard Calabrese (1975) observed that when we interact with strangers, we experience uncertainty because we don't really know what to expect. Berger and Calabrese claim that as the interaction proceeds we gain information that quickly reduces our uncertainties. However, there have probably been times where you didn't really worry about finding out anything about the stranger because you never expected to see the person again or it wasn't someone with whom you wanted to pursue a relationship. URT provides explanations for these and other behaviors when people interact with someone new. However, the general principles underlying URT apply to most, if not all, human communication. There are three basic ways people seek information about another person and can reduce uncertainty:

1. Passive strategies -- observe the person.
2. Active strategies -- we ask others about the person we're interested in or try to set up a situation where we can observe that.
3. Interactive strategies -we communicate directly with the person.

Reference

Redmond,M.V.(2015) Uncertainty Reduction Theory. https://lib.dr.iastate. edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1005&context=engl_reports

Theory of Group Communication:

Groupthink

The term "groupthink," defined by psychologist Irving Janis in 1972, refers to how cohesive groups of people make and justify faulty decisions. People affected by groupthink usually feel pressured to conform to the views expressed by an influential group leader. Janis's research uncovered eight symptoms that indicate group thinking:

1. **Illusion of Invulnerability** – The group believes failure is impossible.
2. **Collective Rationalization** – Group members invent reasons to ignore warnings and refuse to objectively evaluate their stance on an issue.
3. **Inherent Morality** – The group assumes all its actions are ethical and beneficial.
4. **Stereotyping** – The group creates negative views of opposing groups to avoid rationally addressing objections to its activities.
5. **Direct Pressure to Conform** – Members are discouraged from dissenting.
6. **Self-Censorship** – Members willingly refrain from expressing doubts or objections.
7. **Illusion of Unanimity** – Because dissent is never voiced, members assume everyone in the group agrees with the decisions made.
8. **Mind Guards** – Some members voluntarily act to shield the group from dissent or criticism.

When groupthink occurs, creativity, mental efficiency and moral judgment become impaired. Objectivity suffers. Group members refuse to fully assess risks and reject expert advice. Once alternatives are discarded, they are not reevaluated. Only information that supports the group's viewpoint is discussed and accepted. Since the group believes it is immune to failure, it refrains from making contingency plans.

Group leaders can prevent groupthink by:

1. Encouraging members to raise objections and concerns;

2. Refraining from stating their preferences at the onset of the group's activities;

3. Allowing the group to be independently evaluated by a separate group with a different leader;

4. Splitting the group into sub-groups, each with different chairpersons, to separately generate alternatives, then bringing the sub-groups together to hammer out differences;

5. Allowing group members to get feedback on the group's decisions from their own constitutents;

6. Seeking input from experts outside the group;

7. Requiring the group to develop multiple scenarios of events upon which they are acting, and contingencies for each scenario; and

8. Calling a meeting after a decision consensus is reached in which all group members are expected to critically review the decision before final approval is given.

References

Groupthink: http://www.communicationstudies.com/communication-theories/ groupthink

Golkar,H.(2013) Groupthink principles and fundamentals in organizations. Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research Business.5 (8).PP.225-240.

Theory of Mass Communication:

Cultivation Theory

The cultivation theory was proposed by George Gerbner. It is one of the core theories of media effects. According to the theory, people who watch television frequently are more likely to be influenced by the messages from the world of television. The influence goes to such an extent that their world views and perceptions start reflecting what they repeatedly see and hear on television. Television is, therefore, considered to contribute independently to the way people perceive social reality. Various studies have supported the claim that those who watch television more frequently, often display higher tendencies of being depressed and lonely, sense of alienation, have feelings of mistrust and think that the world is a malicious place.

Reference

Cultivation theory:https://www.communicationtheory.org/cultivation-theory/

The Spiral of Silence

The theory of the spiral of silence arose from a surprising discovery in connection with election research conducted during the 1965 German federal election campaign. Theory is the study of human communication and public opinion. According to this people's willingness to express their opinions on controversial public issues is affected by their largely unconscious perception of those opinions as being either popular or unpopular. Specifically, the perception that one's opinion is unpopular tends to inhibit or discourage one's expression of it, while the perception that it is popular tends to have the opposite effect. In the context of the theory, the term *public opinion* refers to opinions or behaviour that can be displayed or expressed in public without running the risk of social isolation or, in some cases,that even must be displayed to avoid the danger of isolation.

Reference

Spiral of silence: https://www.britannica.com/topic/spiral-of-silence