

Chapter 0

The Metachapter

“Meta-Dialogue”

Phaedrus and Timoth entered the grand hallway. Phaedrus gazed at Timoth with admiration. “Well, Timoth, you have graduated from our training and now through Zeno’s generosity you will enjoy quite a productive residency through the guidance of Rasmus.”

Timoth smiled as they approached the doorway, “I hope I live up to everyone’s expectations.”

Inside, Rasmus and Zeno were looking toward the doorway. Zeno smiled as Timoth and Phaedrus entered the room. “Good afternoon Phaedrus. Good afternoon Timoth. It’s good to see the two of you again.” Zeno gestured for Timoth and Rasmus to step toward each other, “Rasmus, this is your new Apprentice, Timoth. Timoth, your assigned Mentor, Rasmus.”

Timoth and Rasmus shook hands and exchanged greetings.

Rasmus placed a hand on Timoth’s shoulder, “You will do well. Just trust yourself and always seek to learn a new thing each day. You have already taught yourself well through Phaedrus’ training, now you will continue to teach yourself through your own experiences.”

Timoth’s eyebrows furrowed, “What do you mean that I taught myself well through Phaedrus’ training?”

Phaedrus stepped forward, “Rasmus refers to the eternal truth of education: No mind can force another to learn... true learning can only come from within the mind that learns. We present the information, the challenges, the guidance; but you, Timoth, you and your classmates are the ones who must choose to learn from these things.”

Zeno addressed Timoth directly, “And here we recognize that a transitional time is needed to bring the graduate into full capability as a Server. We look forward to your time with us, Timoth. When you have completed your time here as an Apprentice, we will review your progress and personal goals. Many of our Apprentices continue on with us as Independent Servers and some become Mentors themselves.”

Timoth glanced down, “Well, it’s going to be a long time before that ever happens to me.”

Rasmus laughed while reaching toward a nearby table and picked up the book lying there. “Timoth, here is your handbook. I think you will find it very helpful as you spend time with us here.”

Timoth glanced at the cover, “The Interpreting Handbook,” then opened it, flipped through several pages, returned to the table of contents and then flipped through more pages. “Hmm... I see the author uses dialogues at the beginning of each chapter. Why is that?”

Rasmus nodded, “It is based on the ancient principles of Socrates and Plato, which have been implemented by numerous authors since that time. The author uses dialogues to introduce concepts to the reader in a more casual way before exploring them in depth during the rest of each chapter.”

Timoth pointed a finger at a page in the book, “But this one character seems always to be asking questions. Doesn’t that character know anything?”

“Of course, but the inquisitive character needs some guidance to understand that the answers to the questions are already in the character’s mind.”

“Well, that makes sense. Of course! A person has to have some knowledge of the topic to ask the question in the first place. That sort of pins down which pieces are understood and which need more thought... hmm!”

Rasmus smiled. “And so I see we have already established a good beginning. I will see you tomorrow morning in my office.”

Timoth and Rasmus shook hands. Rasmus departed as Phaedrus and Timoth exited Zeno’s office. Timoth smiled while looking at Phaedrus “Thanks for getting me here. I’ll do my best.”

“Doing your best is what got you here in the first place.”

Chapter 0 - The Metachapter

“The Key to Education is to Trick People into Teaching Themselves.” - 1998 BC

0.0 The Overview

OK, so you’ve never heard of a “Chapter 0” before and you’ve never seen anything called a “metachapter” either. But if you know enough about language and how English words combine to create new meaning, you can predict that this chapter is a chapter about chapters. Indeed, it is exactly that. Most books call it a preface, but as linguists, we know about languages, and we can use pieces of words to make new words with the hope that they stimulate a little interest in the reader. If you are a working interpreter, or an advancing student of interpreting, then you *are* a linguist. You might not feel comfortable with that label yet, but I hope that once you have read through this book, completed the suggested activities at the end of each chapter, and used the ideas here to improve your own interpreting then you will feel perfectly comfortable calling yourself a *linguist*.

The key to self-improvement is having self-motivation. This means that you should have a sense of *what* you need to learn and some ideas about *how* you will learn it. *You* are always the one guiding your own education. Even if this book is required reading for a course you are taking, *you* still determine how much of it you are exposed to. If you aren’t interested in reading any more about how the book is organized, then you can go ahead and skip to Chapter One... it’s OK, you don’t even need my permission. You are the reader, therefore you can read the book any way you want to. Read the summaries first, or read the book randomly, just open to a page and start reading anywhere; you’re in charge! Of course, you might have a quiz or an exam on specific parts of the book, so following your teacher’s (or independent study coordinator’s) syllabus might be to your advantage, too.

So this metachapter is where I get to tell you what I was thinking when I wrote this book. Many times I have been reading a book or article and wondered to myself “What on Earth was this guy thinking?!!” ... so here is my explanation of my vision for this book. It begins with who I am and how I got here. Interpreting is that way too. Success as an interpreter very much depends on WHO you are and WHAT life experiences lead you to becoming an interpreter.

0.1 The Author

My name is Brian Cerney. I came to the profession of interpreting through the side door. What I mean is that I wasn’t exactly born into the Deaf community (my entire family is hearing). Most deaf people I know were not born into the Deaf community either. But I am not deaf... well, not completely. I sometimes refer to myself as Left Deaf. In audiological terms I am monaurally deaf, which (for me) means I am deaf in my left ear: 100%. No one could really measure it accurately because when the audiologists cranked up the volume (on the left side of the headset) toward 100 dB, my skull would transmit the sound vibrations to my right ear and I could “hear”.

In societal terms being left-deaf means people never even suspect this audiological fact about me unless they are within three feet of my left ear and attempt to converse with me through spoken language. If you have a sharp eye for details, you’ll notice that the right side of my mouth (the side closest to my “good” ear) is a little more flexible than the left side of my mouth. Growing up left-deaf gave me a permanent curiosity about the

Deaf community. I had deaf classmates in high school and in college, but I never learned sign language (my high school classmate was “oral”) until my sophomore year at the University of Rochester. Of course, Rochester, NY has a very active Deaf community, and I happened to be in a pretty good place to begin exploring my “left” side.

I understood before I began learning ASL that I was not culturally Deaf. I had seen the stage play “Children of a Lesser God” twice before I began my excursion into ASL and the Deaf community. At each performance I was in the balcony and below me was a sea of moving hands. I knew I would some day get involved with this community, but I also knew that I needed to be invited in, I didn’t have a full birthright to it.

I have met many other monaurally deaf people, some left-deaf, some right-deaf. Most of them don’t care to talk about their “condition.” Perhaps they see themselves as impaired in some way. I always drew strength from the fact that I was different from nearly everyone else. Before my family knew that my deafness was centered in the cochlea of my left inner ear, they expected that I would have middle-ear surgery to correct my condition. At the Center of Science and Industry (COSI) in Columbus, Ohio, there was a permanent exhibit on the ear. Part of this exhibit showed a videotape of middle-ear bone-replacement surgery. Many times we would get to that floor of the museum and see that exhibit and my mother would remind me that I would be having that surgery when I got older. I am sure many other kids might have been thrilled at the prospect of fixing a problem... but I just saw the surgery as a way to change who I was... I did not look forward to having it.

Finally the time came to see if I was a candidate for the surgery. My examination results indicated that surgery would not correct my condition – I was relieved and pleased with these results. I didn’t feel any need for correction, and finally I knew I would be allowed to stay the same person I had always known myself to be. When I later learned that most members of the Deaf community don’t want to have surgery to change themselves, I understood completely. The change isn’t really for your benefit; it’s for the benefit of other people who get frustrated with your “differentness.”

After graduating high school I left Ohio and its two-dozen colleges and headed out of state to Rochester, New York to study chemical engineering. My dad was a physician and my sister and two brothers had all gone to college with the intention of entering the field of professional medicine. My sister is the one who got closest to it: she’s a mental health therapist. My oldest brother pursued chemistry as his pre-med focus. He’s now an investment analyst. My other brother pursued biology. He’s now a songwriter in Nashville. So I pursued chemical engineering because I figured I could always focus on engineering, chemistry, or go on to med school. The one big problem with that grand scheme was that I really didn’t like chemistry and beyond that, I really had no particular interest in any kind of engineering.

What I actually did enjoy was taking English courses: Shakespeare, Chaucer, and a few other authors. I also enjoyed psychology, computer science, education, and related explorations into the human experience (or simulations of the human experience through artificial intelligence: computers). I was all set to pursue a degree in cognitive science when I discovered American Sign Language. At first I had merely learned some vocabulary in a YMCA non-credit course taught by some NTID interpreters: no course syllabus, just a group of students who asked the interpreters how to sign English words.

When we were done, we all thought we knew how to sign; but I hadn't even talked with a Deaf person yet!

One of my fraternity brothers, majoring in Electrical Engineering, was taking "Sign Communication I" as an elective which was "totally unrelated to Electrical Engineering," and asked if I wanted to come along. He was one of a handful of people who was aware that I was left-deaf (not a fact that I advertised very much at the time) and for over a decade he was the only person I knew on this planet who would move to position himself so as to be on my right side before I could begin to make those maneuvers myself. I went to his "Sign Communication" class with him, found that a Deaf person was teaching the class, and that auditing the class would not be permitted. I was interested in learning more and so I dropped a film class in order to make room for "Sign Communication I."

Dorothy Wilkins ended up teaching all three of my sign courses at the University of Rochester. They were offered through the Medical Center and had originally been intended for hospital staff to improve their communication skills. When I took the courses, they had been "discovered" by the River Campus students and I never had a hospital employee as a classmate after "Sign Communication I" was finished. It was during "Sign Communication II" that I began to learn about ASL structure. Finally in "American Sign Language I" we explored grammatical structures in ASL, having already achieved pretty good fluency in making sign vocabulary.

Somewhere during these courses I learned about Gallaudet College¹ and decided that I wanted to attend the linguistics program there after I graduated from the University of Rochester. I also applied for the Basic Interpreter Training Program (BITP) at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf and was admitted into one of the last classes of that intensive summer training program. By today's standards it seems bizarre (and perhaps in reality it truly was bizarre) but thirty people came into that program in June of 1985 and only eight weeks later, thirty people had graduated with certificates in Interpreting. By September of 1985, I had moved my worldly possessions to Washington, DC, and was beginning my graduate studies in Linguistics, living with Deaf people as roommates and throughout the dorm, learning to live without a phone, and learning more about the Deaf community than any course or library of videos and books can ever reveal.

While I was at Gallaudet I attempted to find work as an interpreter. After all, I had just graduated from the BITP and even though my instructors had told me (as they had told all of my classmates) that we needed to gradually improve our skills, I believed that I knew better. I marched right over to Gallaudet Interpreting Services (GIS) and requested an interview for employment. William Isham was kind enough to allow the interview to take place. It began with a demonstration of my skills: interpret two out of the three deaf people on the videotape from ASL to English. I looked at the first segment for a few moments and then, without having even attempted to interpret any of it, I asked to see the next segment. After a few moments I realized I would not be working for GIS any time soon, but I asked if I could see the third segment, just out of curiosity. Like the previous two segments, I had not the slightest idea what the Deaf people were saying; therefore I couldn't even begin the process of interpreting. Bill gave me a copy of one of his articles and some encouraging words on how to develop my skills and I left the GIS offices determined to keep working so that some day I could come back, try again, and succeed.

¹ Now known as Gallaudet University.

I find it interesting in retrospect that while I kept telling myself over and over that I did not intend to become a professional interpreter, things kept happening which pushed me in that direction. I had applied to the BITP only because I had completed all of the University of Rochester's available credited courses in sign language and knew that I needed to get better before I went to Gallaudet. I applied to GIS because I needed money while I was at school. I applied to the Dorm Communication Center (DCC) for the same reasons. At the DCC we took messages for students (phone service was very restricted in those days, only a few ground-floor students had their own phones), lent TTYs to students who didn't have their own, and interpreted phone calls (local or long distance) because the concept of telephone relay services was not yet widespread or well funded. At the DCC I was finally earning money, at least in part, as an interpreter.

In many ways, telephone interpreting is an ideal way for a developing interpreter to enter the profession. Consecutive by nature, telephone interpreting allows clarification of each source text before presenting the target text. It allows for significant pre-conferencing prior to placing the call (an essential element for successful pizza orders) and it reveals the different levels of patience and cooperation between people who know the deaf person (such as friends and family members) and people who don't (such as taxi dispatchers and auto mechanics). It was through a coworker, after we had both graduated, that I actually entered the world of simultaneous interpreting in 1987. Rhonda Jacobs asked me to help interpret a rather fast-paced graduate-level course and I agreed to help out as best as I could.

In those days, team interpreting meant "you read your book while I interpret, then I'll read mine while you interpret." I got a surprising amount of reading done while being paid to interpret. As I worked with many different interpreters at the University of Maryland I saw that we all understood the same principles: work in half hour shifts, don't pay too much attention to the working interpreter during your "break" and don't talk about the work too much when you're done.

A few years later, Richelle Hammett, the new coordinator of interpreting at the University of Maryland, was scheduled as my interpreting team member. I expected that she would probably start with a review and assessment of my skills. On the first night of our work together I volunteered to interpret the first "shift" and she had her notepad out and wrote throughout that first half hour. Each time she put the pen to paper I wondered what I had just done wrong. I really tried to do my best, my most complete and accurate, interpreting. She just kept writing. Then after the first thirty minutes were done we switched, but she had left her notepad sitting on the desk. I tried not to look at it and then I noticed that at the top it said "Hi Brian!" I kept reading and the first page or so was just a nice note to me about how she was glad to be working with me and "isn't this an interesting class?" and so on. The rest of her notes were more of a loose outline of the topics discussed, occasionally with questions about the meaning of a technical term, but with very little feedback about how to improve my interpreting and no indication that I had done anything wrong. When I was done reading, I realized that I needed to keep up the same kind of notetaking; I wasn't going to be reading the book that I had brought with me!

Soon after this introduction to true team interpreting I had a different assignment with another "enlightened" interpreter. Eric Deemer helped me understand some of the finer points of team interpreting. I came to understand that perhaps instead of working for

strict time periods, we should instead work until we *needed* to switch. This meant that we had to pay attention to each other's work: we had to monitor whether the interpretation was accurate and whether the message was still being produced with clarity. We might go forty minutes each, at the beginning of a three-hour class, and be switching at fifteen minute increments near the end. When the class session was over, we would sit and discuss the work we had just completed – sometimes for forty-five minutes or more. These were revolutionary ideas to me at the time; and they also represented my first steps into true professionalism.

Around this time I took and passed the RID certification exams for interpreting (CI) and “transliteration” (CT). I continued to work as I had for several years at Gallaudet: teaching English to undergraduates and working as a Research Associate with the Gallaudet Research Institute. I eventually stopped the teaching part during the last year of the GRI research project. Then the research project ended and I was among eight research associates looking for new research projects. I didn't find one; and so in October of 1990, after all of those years of trying not to be a professional interpreter, I had actually come to the point in my life that that's exactly what I had become because all my other labels of professional status (teacher, researcher) had disappeared.

From 1990 until 1994 my primary profession was interpreting. During those years my wife, who had graduated from Gallaudet with a masters in Deaf Education, and I adopted three deaf children. I continued my studies and completed a variety of coursework at the University of Maryland, Georgetown University, and more courses at Gallaudet. I taught remedial English to international students at the Northern Virginia Community College. In 1993 I completed my second masters degree (in Education and Human Development from the University of Maryland) and started looking for other opportunities to serve the interpreting profession. By August of 1994 I had moved my family to Pittsburgh, PA to begin coordinating and teaching at the Interpreter Training Program at the Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC).

0.2 The Book

Shortly after I began teaching interpreting at CCAC, I found that I needed to develop a significant amount of my own material for my students; there were no existing books that accurately described linguistic principles in an appropriate way for undergraduate students studying the interpreting process. After many years of working on committees with RID, I had come to understand many of the principles of RID's national certification exams and worked toward clear descriptions of the process. The definitions of interpreting versus “transliteration” in particular required intensive comparisons of the expectations for each exam.

Prior to 1995, RID certification candidates for the CT exam were told to refer to Frishberg's *Interpreting: An Introduction* for a definition of the process of “transliteration.” Frishberg's definitions included the use of Manual English Codes, signed English, and English-like signing:

“Sign language interpreters have used the term ‘transliteration’ to refer to the process of changing an English text into Manually Coded English (or vice versa). An interpreter who transliterates, also called a ‘transliterator,’ gives the viewer English in a visually accessible form.” (Frishberg, 1990:19).

“Certificate of Transliteration (CT): ability to transliterate between signed English and spoken English in both sign-to-voice and voice-to-sign.” (Frishberg, 1990:96).

“Transliteration Certificate (TC): ability to transliterate between English and an English-like signing.” (Frishberg, 1990:97).

In 1995 a pool of RID performance examination raters were asked to generate a definition of interpreting and “transliteration” based on the performances of passing and failing candidates for both performance exams. The results of their work was finalized in December of 1995 and published in the February, 1996 RID Views:

What is “Transliteration”?

Many candidates for the RID Certificate of Transliteration (CT) examination have requested guidance in an effort to understand the goal of the English-to-sign portion of the exam. Raters have reviewed the minimum standard in addition to various performances of passing and failing candidates, and have agreed upon the following description of rating criteria for the current performance evaluation for the Certificate of Transliteration.

The three broad categories of variables that Raters evaluate for the English-to-sign portion have been described: Grammar and Vocabulary, Processing, and Mouth Movement Patterns.

Grammar and Vocabulary

- Use of space for role taking (characterization)
- Use of space for subject-object agreement and verb inflections
- Conceptually correct sign choices (based on meaning rather than form)
- Some amount of “initialization” but only to the extent that initialization is used by deaf adults (not to the extent of Manual English Codes).

Processing

- Lexical to Phrasal level[s] of processing, e.g. ranges from “word meaning for word meaning” to “more than words, less than sentences”
- Some restructuring or paraphrasing for clearer conveyance of meaning
- Some additions of ASL signs which enhance the clarity of the visual message (modals, [such as CAN, WILL, and MUST placed at the end of sentences], classifier constructions, indexing, and listing structures)
- Detailed English morphology (e.g. manual English coding of “ing,” “ed,” and the copula) which is conveyed on the mouth but not with manual signs.

Mouth Movement Patterns

- Cohesive English sentences are visibly presented on the lips, either as exact words from the original text or as English paraphrasing of the original text.

Finally, overriding all of these details is the requirement that the target message resulting from the transliteration process remains true and accurate with regard to the source text. There should be no substitutions (missing a concept from the original and replacing it with a different concept) and no significant omissions (all of the main points and nearly all of the supporting details of the source text should be reflected in the target text).

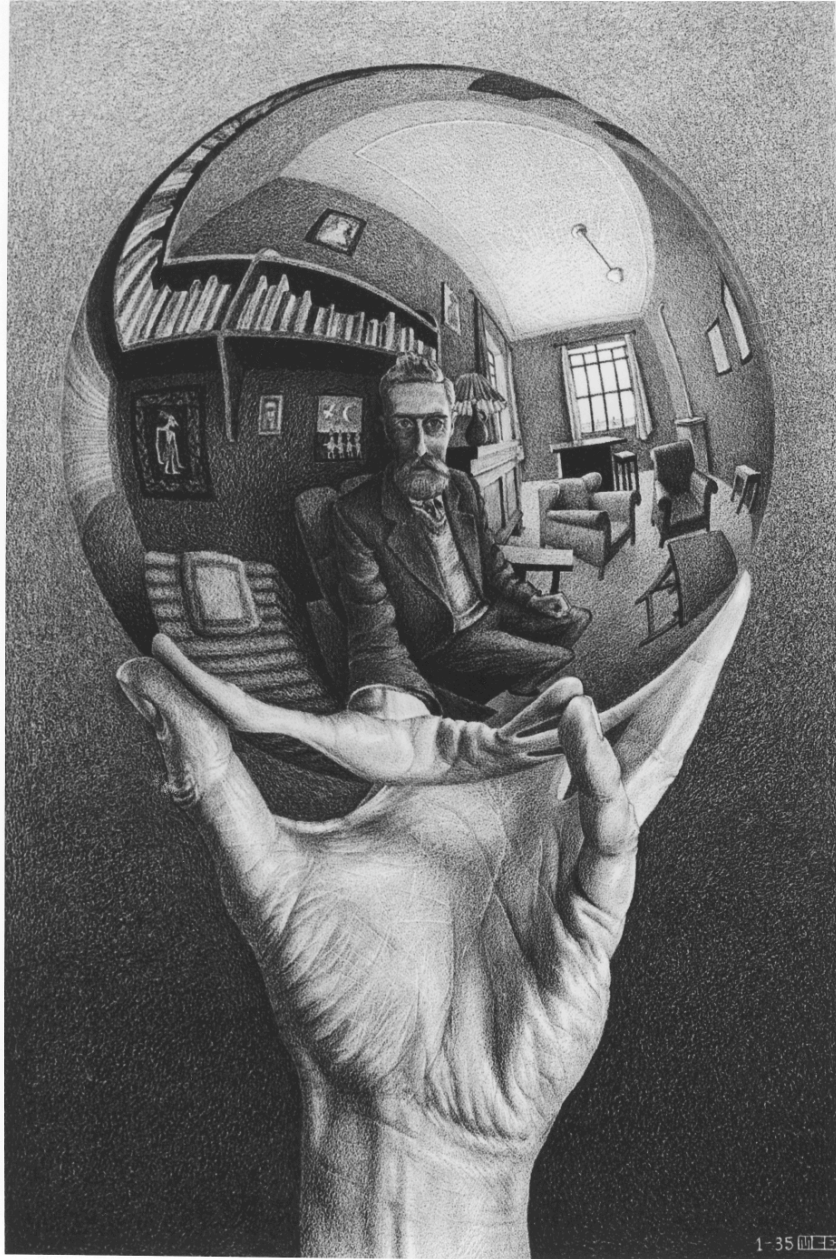
In order to gain further guidance, the RID Raters recommend that candidates for testing read Elizabeth Winston's article, "Transliteration: What's the Message?" [Winston, E. 1989. In *The Sociolinguistics of the Deaf Community*, Ceil Lucas, Ed. San Diego, CA: Academic Press] The description of transliteration in this article is determined to be an accurate description of the performance of a successful candidate for the Certificate of Transliteration performance examination. (RID Views, February, 1996:24)

It takes a long time to write a book. I've revisited every chapter many times. Every Unit in the book has expanded and shrunk multiple times as I juggled ideas within and between chapters, sometimes pulling information out into two chapters, then reconsidering and putting the two pieces back into one. In the end I decided that four units, each with six chapters would provide some sort of balance which would allow a fairly comprehensive overview of the profession of interpreting while allowing teachers the flexibility to figure out which parts of the book would usefully apply to their courses.

Units three and four are published as a separate text and they cover self-improvement techniques and working in specialized settings. The first twelve chapters are presented in this text. The first unit, containing six chapters, provides the essential elements of linguistics for successful interpreting. The second unit (chapters seven through twelve) reviews the essentials for interpreting and related work. I hope these first twelve chapters present an organized and uncomplicated explanation of linguistic principles and interpreting. If you don't think it does, please let me know... I consider this work as perpetually "in progress."

0.3 The Summary

This text was made possible by encouragement from the RID home office, particularly Clay Nettles, Deb Stebbins, and Stuart S. Nealy. Thanks go also to my parents, Charles and Phyllis Cerney, for their support in so many ways; and to my wife, Janet Cerney, and our children, Tasha, Anna, and Alosha, who allowed me the time to do revisions at home and at work. I also appreciate the comments of my students, the first guinea pigs of this effort, who helped me to clarify and improve the text as I handed out chapters to them one by one and then handed out quizzes which tested them on each chapter as part of their course grade (please accept my apologies). To you, the reader: no book can ever completely encompass any topic... please take advantage of the suggested activities at the end of each chapter and check out the readings in the bibliography to more fully explore the topics raised within these pages.



M.C. Escher's "*Hand with Reflecting Sphere*" (1935)
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Chapter 1

Communication

“Communication”

Rasmus took a step back from the artwork hanging on the wall. “What does this say to you?”

Timoth glanced up from the theory book. “What does what say to me?”

“This print by M.C. Escher. I just bought it at the store. I love the way Escher draws us into his world. See how the globe reflects the hand that is holding it? But we also see the image of the person attached to the hand as he looks at the globe and we also see the room he’s in: the object, the person, and the physical surroundings. And here we are observing all of it, understanding it on our own terms, within our own physical surroundings. In fact, the print itself is part of our physical surroundings now.”

“What are you talking about? It’s just a piece of artwork. Sure, it’s interesting, but it doesn’t ‘say’ anything to me.”

“Ah, Timoth. You see the world but you do not understand it. Here is an opportunity to reflect on your chosen field of work as an interpreter; but you refuse to learn from it. You see the object and yet you ignore it. How will you make your own progress if you do not incorporate the progress made by others before you?”

Timoth placed a marker in the book and closed it. “Now wait a minute. I thought we were talking about your new piece of artwork. How does a piece of art help me to become a better interpreter? Are you trying to tell me that Escher was an interpreter?”

“In a sense, yes. He understood the world around him and documented his perspectives in his art with the understanding that others would then interact with his work.”

“Interact? It’s just a print: it’s ink and paper. How can I interact with a document?”

“What’s that thing in your hands right there?”

"This? This is my book, 'The Interpreting Handbook'. What does this have to do with art?"

"Does the book speak to you in any way? Does it communicate anything to you?"

"Well, it's not exactly an audio book, if that's what you mean. But it's giving me information about the profession of interpreting... so, yes, I guess it communicates useful information."

"So a book can communicate to you. But who is doing the communication?"

"Who is doing the communication? Um.... well, I'm the one reading it."

"Yes, and I hope you keep on reading; but still, communication requires two. Who is communicating with you?"

"You mean the author?"

"Sure... the author. But the author is not in this room, is he?"

"Well, no, of course not. But his work - this book - is in the room."

"And that work 'speaks' to you in some way?"

"Sometimes it does... sometimes I'm not quite sure what he's getting at. What are *you* getting at?"

"My point is that we communicate in different ways. What we do, how we do it, how we arrange our physical settings, the books we read, the art we look at, the things we create. Everything about us communicates something to everyone we encounter. Even if they encounter the things we have created years later, we continue to communicate even to people we will never meet."

"So, in other words, everything communicates something to us, even if we don't know the creator?"

"Well put. Now, keep on reading."

Chapter 1 - Communication

“Make Sure You Know The Rules Before You Play Someone’s Game.” - 1997 BC

1.0 Overview

This section provides basic definitions for *communication* and *language*. The value of defining these terms is to understand the essential components of the work of interpreters, translators and transliterators. Many people who perform interpreting work have never actually studied communication and language, and may even feel overwhelmed by the idea of having to learn about linguistics. These first several chapters are designed to be a friendly tour of how communication and languages work. Once interpreters understand the main ideas, they can further explore those elements that interest them the most on their own. We will begin by defining the difference between communication and language. We will then identify several significant factors that contribute to successful communication. In *Chapter Two* we will explore seven interactive levels of language. Subsequent chapters will explore language variation, various ways to encode languages, and how languages mix, merge, and emerge.

1.1 Communication and Language

Before we can begin talking about working between two languages we must investigate the definition of *communication*, the definition of *language*, and the difference between communication and language. Most animals (if not all) have the ability to communicate – and some forms of communication are more complex than others. *Communication Systems* are the use of symbols to convey information between members of a community. The symbols may be sounds, grunts, spoken words, or bird songs; the symbols may be posturing, such as placing hands on hips, signed words, or the dance of honeybees.

What does it mean to communicate? ***Communication is one mind’s perception of a message that another mind has expressed.*** (STOP. Read that again, slowly this time). Communication can be *immediate* such as seeing someone smile or saying hello. It can be *delayed* such as seeing an arrow painted on a tree or an old sign that describes an historical landmark. Communication takes place between living things, but it is not limited to humans. Animals can indicate (communicate) that they are angry or injured. They can stake out territory, seek and find mates, issue warnings, and indicate submission. Some forms of communication are more complex than others: Many mammals are able to growl and bare their teeth to communicate a threat or warning to a potential foe. Bees can indicate sources of pollen through complex dances. Whales are said to produce every year a new complex song, which is shared throughout their species. Humans from different countries, who share no common language, can still bargain and negotiate trades with each other. *Communication simply requires at least two minds and the means of expressing and perceiving information.*

Communication is a broad category that includes all possibilities of language; but communication includes much, much more than only language. Animals have the ability to communicate at least within their species and generally between species. Humans, being a specific kind of animal, share some of these communication abilities; but humans are able to move beyond mere communication when they use language. Figure 1.1 shows the relationships between animal communication, human communication, and language.

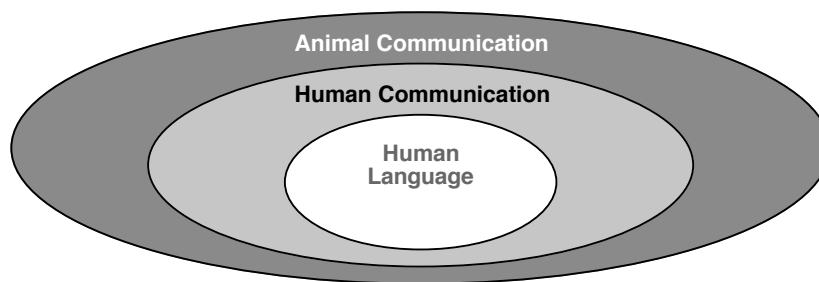


Figure 1.1 – Animal & Human Communication and Language

We will further explore the differences between communication and language in Chapter Two. For now, however, we will continue to explore the more general category of communication: *one mind's perception of a message that another mind has expressed*.

Communication begins with the *intention* to communicate. This requires intelligence and therefore a brain, or mind, capable of thought and knowledge. The mind's intention, or meaning, may be either *Conscious* or *Unconscious*. Conscious intentions, where the mind is aware of its own intentions to communicate, are the most easily recognized. Requesting assistance, issuing a warning, or expressing affection are all possible conscious intentions for communication, especially when words are used such as "give me a hand, please", "back off!", or "you're so sweet!"

Unconscious intentions, where the mind is not directly aware of its own intentions to communicate, are less obvious. A request for assistance may be expressed as simply as a glance toward a nearby person. A warning can consist of a fierce stare. An expression of affection may be communicated by the dilation of the eyes' pupils when a certain person comes into view. Unconscious intentions may also be expressed in the vocal inflections or facial expressions that accompany a message composed of words. People who are lying often find it difficult to make direct eye contact with the people they are lying to. A liar is usually not aware of the fact that his body is warning us not to believe what he is saying. In many cultures a nodding head is an indicator of truthfulness. Shaking one's head side to side while strongly affirming a statement (such as we commonly see in advertising, e.g. "I use it every day!") may be a result of the person's subconscious directing part of the expression of communication. Their words say "I use this product every day" but their body subconsciously says, "I am not telling you the truth." A child may state that she is "not scared" but her vocal inflection and facial expression may reveal that she is actually quite frightened. Our unconscious mind is almost always expressing our *emotional* state. Our conscious mind provides the ability to communicate things *beyond* emotion.

Four components are always present in any act of communication: 1) Background Knowledge of Participants, 2) Expressive Modalities of Communication, 3) Perceptive Modalities of Communication, and 4) Physical Context. An understanding of each of these components will make us more aware of the additional communication that can simultaneously co-occur with language and help us understand the truthfulness or emotion surrounding a message.

Background Knowledge can help us to understand the topic of discussion, to make predictions about how it might be organized, and to know which kinds of communication may be inappropriate for the situation at hand. A deeper understanding of *Expressive Modalities of Communication* may help us determine the goals of the communication. A person may gesture to indicate that an unseen person is able to overhear the communication in a room (such as one's boss) while the conversation is conducted with the intention that the unseen person will "overhear" it. A person's facial expression and body posture may indicate extreme anger while their words are produced with amazing calm. Knowing about *Perceptive Modalities* helps us to analyze physical settings and eliminate potential sources of noise or disruption to the communication. It also helps us to understand potential misperceptions of information. *Physical Contexts* shape all of our communication not only because of potential *noise* in our environment, but because certain settings are restricted to certain kinds of communication such as sermons in a church or cheers at a basketball court. The next segments of this chapter further explore these four primary components of communication.

1.2 Background Knowledge

Success in communicating the mind's intention will depend on the person's *Background Knowledge*, which includes the following four kinds of knowledge:

- 1) Knowledge of *how* to communicate,
- 2) Knowledge of *what* can be communicated,
- 3) Knowledge of *others* who are able to understand the communication, and
- 4) Knowledge of how the *physical environment* will impact the communication.

Figure 1.2 below provides our initial graphic representation of the mind and lists the variables influencing communication, which are all contained within the mind: its two levels of self-awareness (conscious and unconscious), and the four kinds of knowledge which influence communication. An interpreter keenly aware of these factors will be equipped to perform the best possible interpretation for the topic, setting, and participants.

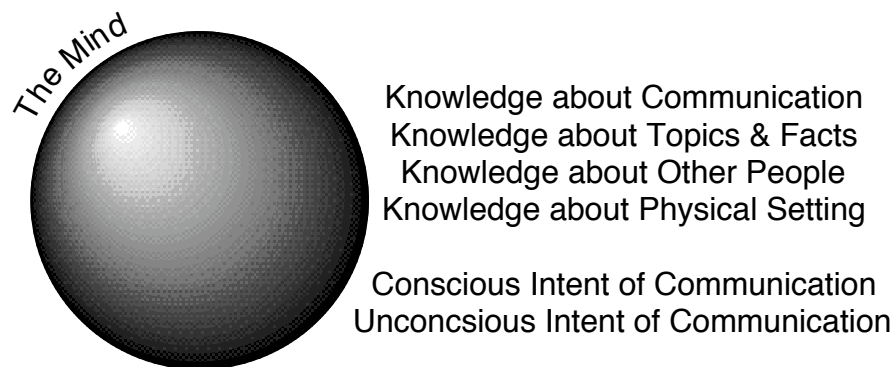


Figure 1.2 – The Mind and Communication

A mind that does not yet know these things can still communicate; but communication is more successful if that mind is aware of all four kinds of knowledge. A newborn child instinctively cries when hungry or uncomfortable. The child has no significant knowledge in any of these four areas and yet succeeds in communicating general distress. It is important to note, however, that the caretaker must be able to perceive the newborn's cries and also must have enough background knowledge about communication to recognize the child's cries as meaningful: it is still up to the caretaker to understand the communication correctly. Within a month a newborn infant will have much more knowledge about communication and can express much more specific requests (still without words) which a caretaker can more efficiently understand. Every communication experience in life builds on our knowledge of *how* we can communicate.

Background knowledge may also be shared. If two participants in communication share significant background knowledge, then they will require less new information in order to effectively communicate. This is best exemplified by "in-jokes" and situations where one "just had to be there to understand." If I mention that an actor's words told me one thing in a commercial but her body movement told me another, then I expect that you will understand what I mean if you already read section 1.1; and if you didn't read that section, you might be very confused.

Background Knowledge and *Culture* overlap significantly. The culturally appropriate behaviors known to a community of people are a part of their *Background Knowledge*; but *Background Knowledge* extends beyond *Culture*. *Culture* is the set of shared knowledge and values within a community, but *Background Knowledge* is the set of knowledge and experience that any *individual* has. *Background Knowledge* includes all the knowledge of one's culture; but it also includes information known about other cultures, and indeed every piece of information, both substantial and trivial, known to each communication participant. Not all of that information is equally active all of the time. We make assumptions about what a message likely means based on recent topics of communication, past experiences with the person generating the message, our estimate of the other person's background knowledge, and, of course, the physical context.

Without the common background knowledge of what a phone flasher is, we might not even see any relationship between a flashing light and the actions of a deaf person who suddenly stops all other activity and begins typing on a TTY. Likewise, the use of the word TTY in the previous sentence also assumes a shared background knowledge between the reader and the author. People of distant cultures may have little overlap in their background knowledge. Some people living in equatorial climates may have no understanding of the concept of snow. Many people living in particularly oppressive non-democratic countries may have no understanding of the concept of "rights".

1.3 Semiotics - The Nuts and Bolts of Communication

Before we can begin to communicate we must have a means of doing it. *Semiotics* is the study of all possible signaling systems. For the purposes of this book we will generalize this to mean the study of all possible forms of communication. Semiotics includes the study of language, but also includes so much more. Gesture, body posture, proximity, odor, taste, and sound may all communicate things not only among humans but animals as well. Any possible means of communication – a raised eyebrow, a handshake, the clearing of one's throat – can be analyzed and understood; but each may

take on distinct appropriate uses. One culture may use an upward palm gesture to call another person closer, while other cultures may do nearly the same gesture for the same reason, except that they produce the gesture with the palm facing down. Producing the same gesture but with only the index finger moving may be appropriate to call children closer, but an adult in some cultures may understand the same gesture as an insult.

1.3.1 Expressive Modalities of Communication

We use the term “modality” to refer to any medium of communication. There are five basic expressive modalities of communication: *image*, *odor*, *sound*, *taste*, and *texture*. All avenues of expressing communication require muscle movement and typically include things such as lungs, vocal chords, facial muscles, and limbs. The cries of newborns are expressed through movement of the diaphragm, which moves air out of the lungs, through vibrating vocal chords and through an open mouth. In addition, crying newborns are likely to have contorted facial expressions and may also wildly flail their arms and legs. In this way crying newborns are multimedia presentations, simultaneously expressing communication in numerous ways including sound and image (and sometimes odor).

Muscle movement requires nerve connections to the brain. Various diseases and medical conditions can disrupt the nerve connections (such as Cerebral Palsy or Parkinson’s Disease) or deteriorate the muscle’s ability to move effectively (such as Muscular Dystrophy). Such conditions, therefore, can disrupt not only people’s ability to move comfortably but also their ability to express communication. These kinds of medical conditions, which impede communication ability, are often misperceived as a mental deficiency. This perception means that many people will not have enough patience to allow the time for effective communication. If you find yourself interpreting in a situation where a consumer has physical difficulties expressing communication it may serve you well to ask the participants to have patience because it may require additional time for you to do your work effectively and accurately.

1.3.2 Perceptive Modalities of Communication

As you might suspect, there is a one-to-one correspondence of *expressive* modalities to *perceptive* modalities. All are related to the five senses: *hearing*, *sight*, *smell*, *taste*, and *touch*. All senses require nerve connections to the brain. Sight also requires muscular control (not only to direct the eyes to the source of communication, but also to bring it into focus). The multimedia presentation of the crying newborn will likely be perceived first by hearing, then by sight (and perhaps smell!), and finally by touch. The newborn may perceive that you are providing food by using all five senses: seeing a bottle, smelling and tasting the formula, feeling the texture of the nipple, and hearing the sounds made as liquid is drawn into the mouth.

Various diseases and medical conditions (such as rubella or a sustained high fever) can disrupt the nerve connections of sensation or deteriorate the organ’s ability to activate the nerves effectively: Retinitis Pigmentosa, Macular Degeneration and cataracts are conditions which damage the eye; ossified bones in the middle ear, a damaged cochlea or the absence of fluid within the inner ear will disrupt hearing. Such conditions, therefore, can disrupt a person’s ability to perceive communication. A blind person would perceive the newborn’s cry through the sense of hearing, a deaf person would perceive it through sight, and a DeafBlind person would perceive it through touch if they were in contact

with any object vibrating as a result of the child's cry or movement. As long as just *one* of the newborn's senses remained functional it would likely still understand when it was being fed.

Disruptions to a person's perceptive abilities, like disruptions to expressive abilities, are often misperceived as a mental deficiency. Many people will try to help a person who is disabled, but the person should always be consulted as to whether they wish to have any help at all. No matter how many perceptive modalities are disrupted, the mind perceiving the communication must still be respected.

There are additional challenges for interpreters working with consumers who cannot perceive all of the modalities in which communication is expressed. Not only does the interpreter have to work on communicating the linguistic information, but also the non-linguistic, semiotic elements of the physical setting. Deaf consumers need to be informed of auditory environmental stimulus. Blind consumers need to be informed of visual environmental stimulus. DeafBlind consumers need to be informed of both kinds of information.

1.3.3 Production and Perception of Non-linguistic Communication

Images and sight allow for visual communication. Non-linguistic visual communication includes eye contact, facial expressions, body postures, gestures, pictures or drawings, and written or printed symbols. The physical environment is largely perceived through sight as well. Communication about the physical environment to another person can be accomplished as simply as making eye contact with a person and then looking at an immediate danger to that person (such as an oncoming car).

Visual information should be conveyed to blind people as part of interpretations. The body posture and facial expression of people can provide significant input to understanding a message. When English words such as "this" and "that" are used, they are often accompanied by gestures that identify the referent of each word. These referents will need to be fully identified for the blind consumer to understand the message correctly. Knowing that a person has just raised her hand will help explain why a lecture comes to a sudden halt and the teacher says, "Do you have a question?"

Odors and Smell allow for olfactory communication. Olfactory communication is generally non-linguistic² and includes perfumes and colognes, body odors, and aromas from cooking or offering food. All physical environments will have some odor (or perhaps a lack of odor) associated with them. Our attention to the odor may be minimal. Odor is more likely to play a role in communication through perfumes and food aromas. The smell of a fresh apple pie, for example, may be perceived as an invitation to enter the kitchen.

Sound and hearing allow for auditory communication. Non-linguistic auditory communication includes grunts, squeals, sighs, hiccups, humming, music, footsteps, rustling paper, banging doors, and kicking furniture. Sounds permeate almost every physical environment. Even very quiet rooms often have some hum or hiss such as from electrical lights, furnaces, or just the wind against the windowpane. A sigh may be an indication of frustration. Footsteps may indicate that someone is about to knock at the

² There actually have been attempts to manipulate odors for linguistic communication, but these experiments have not yielded success for effective communication.

door. Rustling papers may indicate nervousness. Banging doors and kicking furniture may indicate frustration or anger. If an interpreter is working with a deaf consumer and does not provide access to these sounds, then the consumer is not receiving the same communication as hearing people who are in the room. These auditory environmental stimuli may seem trivial, but there have been many instances where a door being slammed shut was the impetus for an angry lecture about a person's attitude.

Think about the auditory information that is taken for granted. If someone knocks at a door, it is perfectly logical for someone inside the room to approach the door, ask who is there, and perhaps open the door. If you didn't hear the knock, it would seem bizarre that someone in the room arbitrarily decided to walk to the door, talk to it, and suddenly cause a person to appear at the moment that the door was opened. Knowing that there is a knock at the door clearly helps explain why a person is standing there when another person decides to open it.

Similarly, a person who is continuously coughing in the back of the room communicates several things with every cough: 1) the person is not completely healthy, 2) the person may be contagious to others in the room, 3) the person is still in the room and has not yet left. If the person decides to leave, you would understand that they might wish to get a drink of water and that they are not being deliberately rude. If at some point you are expected to meet and shake hands with each person in the room you may understand why the person does not offer to shake hands with you (or you may understand that you might wish to wash your hands if the person does shake hands with you). If at some point another person asks the cougher to leave the room and get a drink of water, you would understand such a request to be fairly normal.

Taste allows for gustatory communication. Gustatory communication is limited to tasting or consuming foods, beverages, and non-food items. Tasting spoiled food may communicate that one's host has either been careless or perhaps even rude.

Touch and *Texture* allow for tactile communication. Non-linguistic tactile communication includes such things as holding hands, giving a hug, pats on the back, tickling, massaging, punching, and scratching. Certain aspects of physical environments are perceived tactually including the temperature of the room. A warm room in the winter may indicate that one's host is concerned for her guests and wishes to ensure they are comfortable. A warm room in the summer may indicate opposite information, or perhaps indicate that the host is unable to afford air conditioning.

Image, *Sound*, and *Texture* are the three most easily manipulated modalities for expressing communication. Figure 1.3 overlays the abilities to *express* and *perceive* communication with our previous representation of the mind.

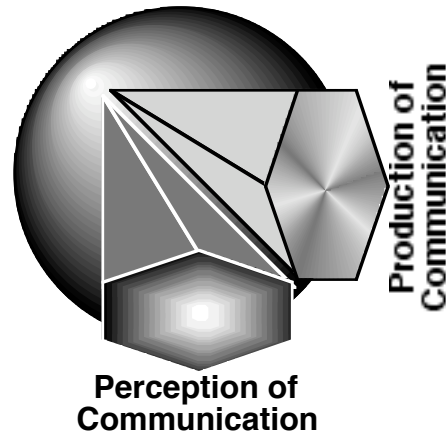


Figure 1.3 – The Communicating Mind

1.4 Physical Context

The *Physical Context* is the setting for the communication and surrounds the expression and perception of communication. *Physical Contexts* will always affect the clarity of the communication and also influence how each mind within a physical context will understand the communication. The *Physical Context* absorbs and reflects the communication. Sound waves will echo in large empty spaces or be obscured by the whirring of a film projector or an electric fan. Light waves remain bright in empty lightly colored rooms. Low light makes visual perception of an image difficult but bright, glaring light can be equally disruptive. Backlighting provides such a strong contrast of high and low light that can cause headaches from straining the eye muscles.

All communication expressed by a person becomes part of the *Physical Context*. Each communicator must be able to perceive some form of the *Physical Context* along with the communication expressed by another person. In addition to perceiving the physical context and the communication expressed by another person, both communicators are generally able to perceive (monitor) their own expression of communication. In other words, hearing people using speech to communicate, will perceive their own speech at the same time that they produce it. It is actually through this self-monitoring that infants modify their own speech production when babbling. It is in part due to *an inability* to self-monitor that deaf children generally have difficulty matching their speech patterns to the hearing people around them.

The perception of communication may use different senses, especially between deaf and hearing people: Deaf people communicating through speech sounds may perceive their own expression of communication primarily through the sense of touch (feeling the vibrations of their own throat and head as they make spoken sounds) while the hearing people will not likely *feel* the deaf person's sounds so much as *hear* it. Hearing people will most readily monitor their own communication as they speak (they might also notice the vibrations in their own bodies but are likely to ignore this information) while the deaf people will mostly depend on vision to understand the physical movements of the hearing

person's face, rather than depending upon the sounds themselves. This mismatch of expression and perception of communication leads to significant difficulties and frustration. Communication will be most natural and successful if both the sender and receiver perceive all of their communication through the same senses. Figure 1.4 below shows the communication links between two minds within a *Physical Context*.

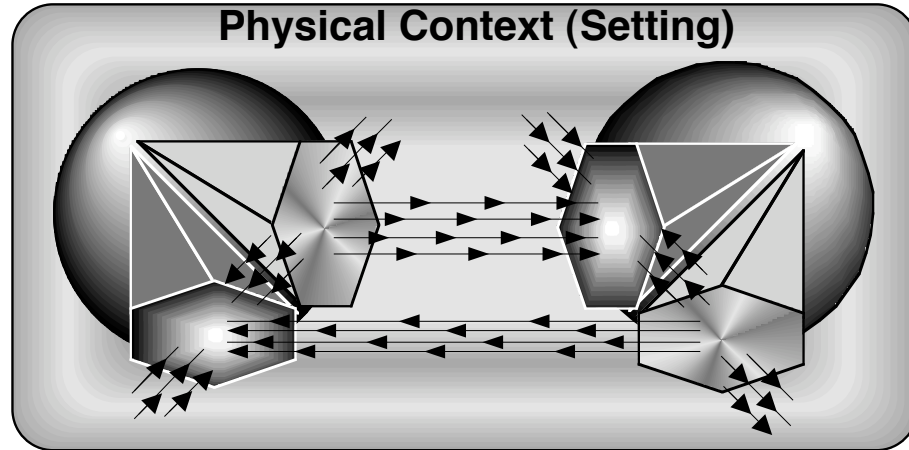


Figure 1.4 –Communicating Minds Within a Shared Physical Setting

Physical Context, or the setting for the communication, is the most important variable to understand for any issue of communication. Every act of communication occurs within a physical setting. Generally, both participants of the communication will share the same setting, but through such modern advances as satellite communications, computers, telephones, and books it is now possible for two participants to communicate without sharing the same physical setting. Communication through recorded media (such as writing, and more recently through audio, video, and data recordings) allows each perceiver of the communication to be in a distinct setting; and also allows the communication to reach across great expanses of distance and time. Even so, each participant will be at least aware of her own physical environment and *may* also be aware of each other participant's environment as well.

For the remaining, more mundane situations of normal, everyday communication the physical context may carry great significance as part of the overall communication. The fact that humans put a great amount of effort into creating distinct physical environments certainly contributes to the impact these environments have upon communication. We build offices, homes, cars, public buses, religious centers, hospitals, funeral homes, warehouses, retail centers, bedrooms, and bathrooms. We generally acknowledge that certain kinds of communication are more or less appropriate for each of these settings.

Beyond just the structure of the physical surroundings is the activity that is taking place within the setting. Religious centers are generally associated with ceremonies but

may also house social gatherings and bingo games. Lecture halls may host prestigious international guests, weekly chemistry lessons, or weekend film screenings.

Within the *Physical Context* of a lecture being presented in a lecture hall, or of a ceremony being performed within a chapel, we would generally expect that side conversations should be whispered. We would also expect that there might be questions from the audience at the end of the lecture but that there usually are no questions from the audience during, or after, a religious ceremony. These expected behaviors overlap with the first primary factor of communication: *Background Knowledge*.

So each of the primary factors (*Background Knowledge*, *Expressive Modalities*, *Perceptive Modalities*, and *Physical Context*) combines and overlaps with the others to make up communication. But what of the *intentions* behind the expression of communication and the *meanings* derived upon perceiving communication? These elements fall in the realm of *Pragmatics*.

1.5 Pragmatics - Doing Things Through Communication

Not all communication seems to serve a purpose, but in general terms, *communication accomplishes goals*. The goal may be as simple as having another mind pay attention to your own (such as a cat repeatedly brushing up against your leg and purring until you pick up the cat). The goal of the cat is to be picked up. The semiotics of the cat's communication include brushing up against your leg and purring. One possible result of this communication is that you pick up the cat.

The goal may be as significant as a declaration of war. The goal of the members of a governing body might be to initiate a process to approve the funding and implementation of war. The semiotics would include the writing of a document directly declaring war upon another government or group. The result would be that a state of war would have been initiated. While *Semiotics* is the study of all possible communication systems, *Pragmatics* is the study of the *goals* and *results* of communication. The *goals* are basically the action desired by the mind expressing communication. The *results* are the action of the mind(s) perceiving the communication. The *desired action* can also be understood as *meaning*.

1.5.1 Meaning Versus Communication

Meaning is independent of communication. This may seem an odd statement, but it is not necessarily obvious. A gust of cold wind may mean that a cold front is on its way; but the gust of wind could only be considered communication if your religion or philosophy provides for the mind of a Higher Power to have been the one using the wind to communicate to you. The mind may find many meaningful aspects of the physical context, but only those manipulated by another mind can be considered as *communication*. Likewise, many efforts at communication may exist within a physical context (such as a signpost obscured by overgrown weeds) that will still fail to communicate if another mind fails to perceive it. Even when perceived, an attempt at communication may not be understood fully if the perceiver does not know who the expresser is (such as carved initials on a tree trunk) or if the perceiver does not know the intention of the communication (such as a child's picture on a refrigerator). The perceiver's mind may use the physical context and background knowledge to try to determine the meaning of the attempt at communication.

Communication is the understanding (by one mind) of a message, which another mind has expressed; but *what one mind intends need not coincide with the other mind's understanding*. (STOP. Read that last sentence again, slowly). A gesture pointing toward a hornet nest may be intended as a warning. One perceiver may understand it as a warning, while another perceiver may understand it as a request to move toward the nest. Each perceiver has perceived the message; but each has determined its meaning differently. In other words, the two perceivers' minds have engaged in communication with the initiator's mind, but each perceiver's mind has understood a different meaning.

Communication merely describes a kind of link between minds; meanings exist separately within each mind. The meaning of the initiator's mind might have no similarities at all to the meaning understood by the perceiver's mind; and therefore, *meaning is independent of communication*. This suggests that interpreters are responsible only for their own understanding of the message. It is impossible to fully know what another person understands through communication. If you are asked whether a consumer understands another consumer's meaning, the only honest response is to verify your own understanding of the meaning and describe your attempt to express that meaning to the other consumer.

1.5.2 Expression and Perception Versus Meaning

Expression and perception of communication are likewise distinct from meaning. One person may say "It's hot in here" and wish the other to do something about it (such as turn on a fan or open a window or turn off the heat, etc.) Another person in the room may perceive the communication and yet not understand the first person's intention. This other person may merely agree with the first person but take no action. Communication has taken place, clearly influenced by a shared physical context; but not everyone understood the same intention (or meaning) of the communication. This demonstrates that the words that are used in communication don't actually contain any meaning at all: *it is the perceiver's mind that determines a meaning*. Meaning is in the mind and communication reaches between minds; but each mind is always free to determine its own meaning or even *if* there is any meaning at all. Two people can look at the same line of clouds in the sky and one may understand that it means a cold front is coming while the other merely sees clouds. Both minds have perceived the clouds, but only one has attached any meaning to their perception.

1.6 Variation in Communication

We have already identified communication as one mind's perception of a message, which another mind has expressed; but there are many ways that such communication can take place. Most often we intend to communicate with a specific person or a specific group of people; but it is often the case that other people are also able to perceive our expression of communication. In restaurants it is common to overhear the conversation at the next table. Professional spies (and amateurs too) *intentionally* eavesdrop or spy upon the communication of others. The communication that occurs between any two minds may be *intentional* or *unintentional*.

Both the means of expressing and the means of perceiving communication can function simultaneously in face-to-face communication; but other forms of communication (exchanged letters or E-Mail, telephone calls via TTY or relay operators) may limit the ability to simultaneously express and perceive communication. These

forms of communication become consecutive: one party must complete a portion of communication before the other party can reciprocate. The timing of communication may be *immediate* or *delayed*.

Some forms of communication are only one-way, such as most television broadcasts, street signs, billboards, and the writings from deceased authors. One-way communication, like consecutive communication, also prohibits the simultaneous expression and perception of communication between two minds. In fact, it restricts one mind to only perceiving the communication of another mind. In this way, it is possible for communication to be *interactive* or *only one-way*.

We will now further investigate these three variables: *Intention*, *Immediacy*, and *Interactivity*. Each of these three variables has three general levels that we can categorize as being positive [+], negative [-], or mixed [+/-].

1.6.1 Intention Versus Incidence

Intention is the expression of communication toward specific perceivers. Was the communication intended to be sent to all the people who received it? A private conversation would be intentional [+ Intention] between two people engaged in it, but might be incidentally overheard [- Intention] by a third party. This happens often in restaurants where people sitting back to back in a series of booths may be able to overhear the conversation going on just behind them. The people expressing their communication intend it for the other people sitting in the same booth, but not for the person in the next booth. Some communication fits somewhere between being intentional and incidental: A public performance of a play or lecture may not be intended for any one specific audience member, yet it is intended to communicate with the entire audience [+/- Intention].

Interpreters face this variable every time they interpret. On one hand, they are incidental over-hearers of the message because the communication is intended for the interpreter's consumers, but not necessarily for the interpreter. But of course, the interpreter is physically present, cannot be ignored, and plays a very active role in the room. When the communication shifts to be intentional to the interpreter and only incidental to the consumers, this creates a serious disruption. Interpreters are often asked personal questions or for advice by either consumer, often in the midst of interpreting. Ignoring intentional communication creates the impression of rudeness and may foment an uncooperative attitude among the consumers. Participating in a lengthy exchange with a single consumer will alienate the other consumer and provide an adversarial atmosphere. The interpreter's challenge is to acknowledge the intentional communication and return the communication to an exchange between the consumers as soon as possible.

1.6.2 Immediate Versus Delayed Access

Immediacy is the perception of communication at the time it is expressed. Is the communication received at the same time it is created, or is there a delay? Face-to-face interaction is the most immediate form of communication [+ Immediacy]. Written communication can be significantly delayed, especially if you are reading a book written hundreds of years ago [- Immediacy]. Likewise, audio and video recordings provide a delay between the creation of the communication and its comprehension. Attending an

interpreted lecture may be both immediate and delayed: the events of the lecture (presenter's body posture, use of visual aids, etc.) can be seen immediately while the linguistic information may be delayed by several seconds for simultaneous interpreting and even longer for consecutive interpreting [+/- Immediacy].

Interpreters who have immediate access to both sets of consumers may have the option to ask for clarification, but immediate communication also creates an expectation among the consumers that the interpreter will not further delay the communication process. Interpreted communication will *always* be delayed, at least in comparison to non-interpreted communication. A short delay in access may be relatively unimportant for lectures but can become extremely detrimental for a brainstorming session or for counting votes in a business meeting. The level of need for immediacy may influence the approaches taken in providing the interpretation: either to attempt to shorten the processing time of the interpreting or sometimes to deliberately lengthen the time to process the consumers' communication. Processing time of the interpretation may be shortened so that the resulting interpretation is less grammatical, yet understandable. Processing time of the consumers' communication may be lengthened by requesting participants take turns (eg. raising hands to be recognized before speaking) or requesting that a consecutive interpreting process be used rather than attempting simultaneous interpreting.

1.6.3 Amount of Interactivity

Interactivity is the ability of the perceiver to reply to the initiator. Is the communication one-way (monologic), mostly one-way, or two-way (dialogic)? Most conversations will be two-way, especially if people are asking and answering questions [+ Interactivity]. Watching information on television is generally a one-way (to the viewer) communication event [- Interactivity]. A lecture may be mostly one-way, but how the audience reacts to a joke (or fails to react to it) can make a significant impact on how the presenter proceeds [+/- Interactivity]. Other terminology that has been used to describe this difference in communication is *Monologue* (monologic discourse) versus *Dialogue* (dialogic discourse).

The concept of dialogue [+ Interactivity] can include more than two people; but the amount of interactivity may be different for multiple receivers of the same communication. A restaurant conversation will be interactive [+ Interactivity] for the people at one booth, but be mostly non-interactive [+/- Interactivity] for the person seated at the next booth (who *could* turn around and say something). The same conversation would be non-interactive [- Interactivity] to anyone listening to a recording of it.

The level of interactivity of the communication clearly has an impact upon the work of interpreting. Interpreters working in highly interactive settings (such as group discussions) may find it hard to provide access to overlapping communication. Non-interactive communication (such as interpreting a videotaped message) prevents the possibility of interrupting the communication for clarification.

1.6.4 Simultaneous Occurrence of Variables in Communication

Each of the three communication variables (*Intention*, *Immediacy*, and *Interactivity*) plays a role in every communication situation. Interactive communication tends to co-occur with immediate communication, (such as in a face-to-face conversation); but it is still possible to have interactive communication which is not immediate (such as the exchange of letters between two friends). It is also possible to have immediate communication that is not interactive (such as watching a live satellite broadcast on television). Figure 1.5 below provides some examples of the application of these variables.

Intentional	Immediate	Interactive	Examples
+	+	+	Talking with someone, face-to-face or by phone
+	+	+ / -	Attending a lecture; Watching a play or other performance
+	+	-	Hearing your name over an airport's Public Address system; Seeing / hearing someone say hello to you on a live broadcast
+	-	+	Exchanging E-Mail with a friend; writing letters back and forth
+	-	-	Seeing / hearing someone say hello to you on a recorded broadcast; Reading of a Last Will and Testament
+ / -	+	-	Watching a live satellite-broadcast lecture or television show (along with a thousand other people)
+ / -	-	-	Hearing / watching a recorded lecture or performance; Reading a book; Watching a recorded television broadcast
-	+	+ / -	Hearing / watching other people converse face-to-face or by phone
-	+	-	Hearing another person's name over an airport's P.A. system; Seeing someone say hello to someone else on a live broadcast
-	-	-	Reading two other people's E-mail or letters to each other

KEY: "+" means the condition is present, "-" means the condition is absent, "+/-" means the condition may or may not be present.

Figure 1.5 - Intentional, Immediate, & Interactive Aspects of Communication

An understanding of these three communication variables will help to identify different applications of *Transcommunication* in Unit Two. The next chapter will further define language. The rest of this chapter reviews what we have learned so far.

1.7 Summary

This chapter has defined *Communication* as one mind's perception of a message, which another mind has expressed. We identified language as a subset of *human communication*, which itself is a subset of *animal communication*. All communication requires at least two minds, each of which will have certain *Background Knowledge*. *Background Knowledge* consists of four things: 1) knowledge of *how* to communicate, 2) knowledge of *what* can be communicated, 3) knowledge of *others* who might be able to understand the communication, and 4) knowledge of how the *physical environment* will permit the communication to take place. *Culture* (the set of shared knowledge and values within a community) is part of *Background Knowledge*. The intent of communication additionally may be either *conscious* or *unconscious*.

All communication takes place within *Physical Contexts*, which can directly influence both the *Expression* and *Perception* of communication. Communication is expressed and perceived through matched sets of *expressive modalities* (which require muscle movement, controlled by nerves) and *sensory perception* (which generally require only nerve connections). The five sets are *Image-Vision*, *Sound-Hearing*, *Texture-Touch*, *Odor-Smell*, and *Taste-Taste*³. These matched sets of expression and perception are a significant part of *Semiotics*, which is the study of all possible communication systems.

While semiotics provides the means of communication, *Pragmatics* is the study of the *goals* and *results* of communication. Each mind is free to determine its own meaning. Therefore, meaning is *independent* of the expression and perception of communication.

Three additional variables significantly influence how communication takes place: 1) *Intention* – the expression of communication toward specific perceivers, 2) *Immediacy* – the perception of communication at the same time that it is expressed, and 3) *Interactivity* – the ability of the perceiver to reply to the initiator.

³ If you have a better label for the “taste-taste” pair, please share it with me. Remember that taste is not limited to food items.

1.7.1 Review Questions

1. What is the definition of communication?
2. What is the definition of Semiotics?
3. What is the definition of Pragmatics?
4. What is the difference between *conscious* and *unconscious* intention?
5. List several examples of unconscious intention in communication.
6. What are the four components present in any form of communication?
7. What four factors combine as *Background Knowledge*?
8. How are *Culture* and *Background Knowledge* related?
9. What five variables constitute *Expressive Modalities of Communication*?
10. What five variables constitute *Perceptive Modalities of Communication*?
11. Which three matched sets of *Expressive* and *Perceptive Modalities* are the most easily manipulated for communication?
12. In what ways can the *Physical Context* impact upon communication?
13. What is meant by the following phrase: “Meaning is independent of communication”?
14. Which three factors (beginning with the letter “I”) have additional impact upon communication.
15. Identify the +, -, or +/- features for the following scenario: Reading questions written in a textbook.

1.7.2 Suggested Activities

1. Describe five different facial expressions that can be meaningful in your native culture and identify the possible meanings for each. Are there any circumstances where the same facial expression may have a different meaning?
2. List ten different gestures or body postures that can be meaningful in your native culture and identify the possible meanings for each. Are there any situations where these gestures or postures may have a different meaning?
3. List ten different meaningful sounds in your native culture that are not actually words and identify the correct use of each (ex. “Shhh” is a common sound made to indicate that people should be quiet).
4. Observe the natural body postures of people talking to each other. What different kinds of postures can you find? What might these postures indicate about the communication that is taking place?
5. Identify twenty different things that are in your current physical context. Out of the things you have identified, how many are the result of another mind’s expression? How many of the twenty items do you perceive as *meaningful*?