

Chapter 1: Introduction to Communication Theory

Test Bank

Multiple Choice

1. _____ theory has undergone systematic research and is the focus of this course.

- A. Applied
- B. Scholarly
- C. Strategic
- D. Working

Ans: B

Learning Objective: Differentiate a communication theory from a concept and a model.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Three Types of Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

2. The belief that “the more competent you are in your job, the more work they’re going to give you” is an example of _____.

- A. commonsense theory
- B. scholarly theory
- C. strategic theory
- D. working theory

Ans: A

Learning Objective: Differentiate a communication theory from a concept and a model.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Three Types of Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

3. _____ are more systematic than commonsense theories because they represent agreed-on ways of doing things for a particular profession.

- A. Scholarly theories
- B. Working theories
- C. Only provable theories
- D. Impractical theories

Ans: B

Learning Objective: Discriminate between commonsense, working, and scholarly theories.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Three Types of Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

4. One way of evaluating theory is to determine whether the theory makes a complex situation clearer.

- A. Accuracy
- B. Acuity
- C. Consistency
- D. Practicality

Ans: B

Learning Objective: Use criteria for evaluating theory to determine the relative usefulness of a communication theory.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Evaluating Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

5. When a theory has many real-world applications, we say it has _____.

- A. acuity
- B. external consistency
- C. practicality
- D. succinctness

Ans: B

Learning Objective: Recognize the various contexts in which communication takes place.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Evaluating Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

6. _____ refers to whether a theory is presented with simplicity--the fewest statements possible.

- A. Acuity
- B. Consistency
- C. Practicality
- D. Succinctness

Ans: D

Learning Objective: Use criteria for evaluating theory to determine the relative usefulness of a communication theory.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Evaluating Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

7. When a theory's concepts build logically upon each other, we say that the theory has internal _____.

- A. acuity
- B. consistency
- C. reliability
- D. validity

Ans: B

Learning Objective: Use criteria for evaluating theory to determine the relative usefulness of a communication theory.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Evaluating Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

8. A theory that seems to “skip” or miss steps is said to lack _____.

A. acuity

B. external reliability

C. internal consistency

D. validity

Ans: C

Learning Objective: Use criteria for evaluating theory to determine the relative usefulness of a communication theory.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Evaluating Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

9. Research indicates that communication competence is most often understood as achieving a successful balance between _____ and _____.

A. politeness; impersonal communication

B. effectiveness; appropriateness

C. using slang; “buzz” words

D. efficacy; understanding

Ans: B

Learning Objective: Analyze a definition of communication, articulating the definition’s level of observation, intentionality, and normative judgment.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication Competence

Difficulty Level: Easy

10. Although they often help guide our decision making, _____ can be problematic because they aren’t grounded in research.

A. commonsense theories

B. inductive theories

C. practical theories

D. scholarly theories

Ans: A

Learning Objective: Discriminate between commonsense, working, and scholarly theories.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Three Types of Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

11. Definitions of communication vary based upon an indication of success or accuracy. Which difference in definitions is the focus of this description?

- A. level of observation
- B. intentionality
- C. denotative
- D. normative judgment

Ans: D

Learning Objective: Analyze a definition of communication, articulating the definition's level of observation, intentionality, and normative judgment.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Dance's Definitions of Communication

Difficulty Level: Easy

12. A _____ refers to an agreed-upon aspect of reality.

- A. theory
- B. model
- C. concept
- D. axiom

Ans: C

Learning Objective: Differentiate a communication theory from a concept and a model.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Concepts, Models, and Theories

Difficulty Level: Medium

13. Ron and Harry have told Hermione that the theory she has told them about is not applicable to the practice of their profession of sorcery because it provides more thorough, accurate, and abstract explanations for communication than do some other types of theory. About which of the following would be the type of theory Hermione has told Ron and Harry?

- A. commonsense theory
- B. scholarly theory
- C. strategic theory
- D. working theory

Ans: B

Learning Objective: Differentiate a communication theory from a concept and a model.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Three Types of Theory

Difficulty Level: Medium

14. Harry has been asked to give a presentation at Hogwarts School. During the talk, he sees his friend Ron scratching his head, and Harry takes that to mean Ron is sending him a nonverbal message. Even though Ron meant nothing by the gesture, this scenario is an example of the notion that _____.

- A. you cannot communicate
- B. nonverbal communication complements verbal
- C. it's not what you say, it's how you say it

D. a message is a message is a message

Ans: A

Learning Objective: Analyze a definition of communication, articulating the definition's level of observation, intentionality, and normative judgment.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Dance's Definitions of Communication

Difficulty Level: Medium

15. The _____ context is the context in which our thoughts influence the way we communicate.

A. interpersonal

B. intercultural

C. cognitive

D. mediated

Ans: C

Learning Objective: Recognize the various contexts in which communication takes place.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Contexts of Communication

Difficulty Level: Easy

16. The _____ context focuses on interpersonal communication when two people are from different cultures.

A. interpersonal

B. organizational

C. cognitive

D. intercultural

Ans: D

Learning Objective: Recognize the various contexts in which communication takes place.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Contexts of Communication

Difficulty Level: Easy

17. A _____ is any systematic summary about the nature of the communication process.

A. model

B. context

C. concept

D. theory

Ans: D

Learning Objective: Differentiate a communication theory from a concept and a model.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Concepts, Models, and Theories

Difficulty Level: Medium

18. _____ theories are useful because they are often the basis for our decisions about how to communicate.

- A. Commonsense
- B. Scholarly
- C. Strategic
- D. Working

Ans: A

Learning Objective: Discriminate between commonsense, working, and scholarly theories.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Three Types of Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

19. A model is defined as _____.

- A. a precursor to a theory
- B. a physical representation of a theory
- C. a specific application of a prediction
- D. all of these

Ans: D

Learning Objective: Differentiate a communication theory from a concept and a model.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Concepts, Models, and Theories

Difficulty Level: Easy

20. The notion of _____, whether internal or external, is concerned with the logic of the theory.

- A. acuity
- B. consistency
- C. reliability
- D. validity

Ans: B

Learning Objective: Use criteria for evaluating theory to determine the relative usefulness of a communication theory.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Evaluating Theory

Difficulty Level: Medium

21. Adler and Proctor suggest that which one of the following might be considered a “wow” factor in the evaluation of theory?

- A. acuity
- B. consistency
- C. reliability
- D. validity

Ans: A

Learning Objective: Use criteria for evaluating theory to determine the relative usefulness of a communication theory.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Evaluating Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

22. When Adler and Proctor suggest that the most useful theories are those that have a strong logical structure, they are referring to which of the following?

A. external consistency

B. internal consistency

C. succinctness

D. accuracy

Ans: A

Learning Objective: Use criteria for evaluating theory to determine the relative usefulness of a communication theory.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Evaluating Theory

Difficulty Level: Medium

True/False

1. Scholarly theory is only useful for academics and researchers.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: Discriminate between commonsense, working, and scholarly theories.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Three Types of Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

2. Commonsense theory is also sometimes called theory-in-use.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: Discriminate between commonsense, working, and scholarly theories.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Three Types of Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

3. A working theory is comprised of generalizations made in particular professions about the best techniques for doing something.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: Discriminate between commonsense, working, and scholarly theories.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Three Types of Theory

Difficulty Level: Medium

4. Communication theories provide abstract understanding of the communication process.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: Analyze a definition of communication, articulating the definition's level of observation, intentionality, and normative judgment.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Concepts, Models, and Theories

Difficulty Level: Medium

5. Appropriateness is more important than effectiveness when communicating.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: Use criteria for evaluating theory to determine the relative usefulness of a communication theory.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Competence

Difficulty Level: Medium

6. A theory must have all five criteria for evaluating theory in order to be labeled "good."

Ans: F

Learning Objective: Use criteria for evaluating theory to determine the relative usefulness of a communication theory.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Evaluating Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

7. Some definitions of communication suggest that only messages sent consciously and purposely count as communication.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: Analyze a definition of communication, articulating the definition's level of observation, intentionality, and normative judgment.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Dance's Definitions of Communication

Difficulty Level: Easy

8. Appropriateness *and* effectiveness are both necessary to be a competent communicator.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: Analyze a definition of communication, articulating the definition's level of observation, intentionality, and normative judgment.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication Competence

Difficulty Level: Easy

9. Accuracy suggests that the best theories correctly summarize the way communication actually works.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: Use criteria for evaluating theory to determine the relative usefulness of a communication theory.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Evaluating Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

10. *Acuity* refers to the ability of a theory to be easily understood.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: Use criteria for evaluating theory to determine the relative usefulness of a communication theory.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Evaluating Theory

Difficulty Level: Easy

Essay

1. Explain the difference(s) between internal and external consistency.

Ans: Internal consistency means the ideas of the theory are logically built on one another. External consistency refers to the theory's coherence with other widely held theories.

Learning Objective: Analyze a definition of communication, articulating the definition's level of observation, intentionality, and normative judgment.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Evaluating Theory

Difficulty Level: Medium

2. Define "source orientation."

Ans: Source orientation refers to communication as "those situations in which a source transmits a message to a receiver with conscious intent to affect the latter's behaviors."

Learning Objective: Analyze a definition of communication, articulating the definition's level of observation, intentionality, and normative judgment.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Dance's Definitions of Communication

Difficulty Level: Easy

3. Provide two examples to explain why there must be a balance between effectiveness and appropriateness in order to be a competent communicator.

Ans: To be a competent communicator, a person must have both appropriateness and effectiveness, not either/or. This is because many messages sent only appropriately, but not effectively, can be misinterpreted. For instance, if I am mad that my roommate has numerous visitors in the room and it is very late at night, I may be appropriate and not confront the roommate at that

time, however the communication is not effective in making the room quiet. In the reverse, people can send an effective message but be highly inappropriate, which is not a competent way of communicating. For instance, while in an argument, if one romantic partner makes the other cry during an argument, the conflict may have ended (effective), but it does not mean that the couple handled the conflict in an appropriate manner.

Learning Objective: Analyze a definition of communication, articulating the definition's level of observation, intentionality, and normative judgment.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communication Competence

Difficulty Level: Hard

4. Provide an example of non-evaluative communication and explain.

Ans: Students may describe a communication interaction in which a speaker sends a message, but the receiver does not comprehend that message.

Learning Objective: Analyze a definition of communication, articulating the definition's level of observation, intentionality, and normative judgment.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Dance's Definitions of Communication

Difficulty Level: Hard

5. Explain what Lewin (1951) meant when stating that, "There is nothing so practical as a good theory."

Ans: Answers should suggest that theories may have practicality and that the best theories can be used to address real-world communication problems.

Learning Objective: Use criteria for evaluating theory to determine the relative usefulness of a communication theory.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Evaluating Theory

Difficulty Level: Medium