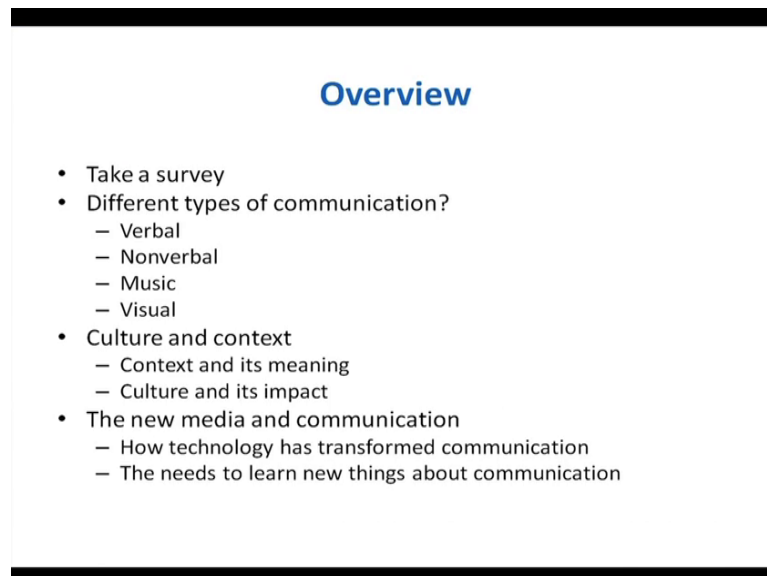


Soft Skills Development
Prof. P. Patnaik
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Lecture – 02
Understanding the Communicative Environment II

We now move on to the second part of our course. The second lecture which is about Understanding the Communicative Environment, again and this is the part two of that particular talk that I was giving little earlier.

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Overview

- Take a survey
- Different types of communication?
 - Verbal
 - Nonverbal
 - Music
 - Visual
- Culture and context
 - Context and its meaning
 - Culture and its impact
- The new media and communication
 - How technology has transformed communication
 - The needs to learn new things about communication

Now, before we proceed with that, this is an overview of what we are going to do together, but I would like to bring back to your memory the things that we did in the last session. We talked about the fundamental aspects of communication, like over implicit and explicit communication, we talked about how the communication process takes place the various bearers and filters the communication model and you must have wondered, as to why is it that these elements are relevant, if you are going to talk about soft skills.

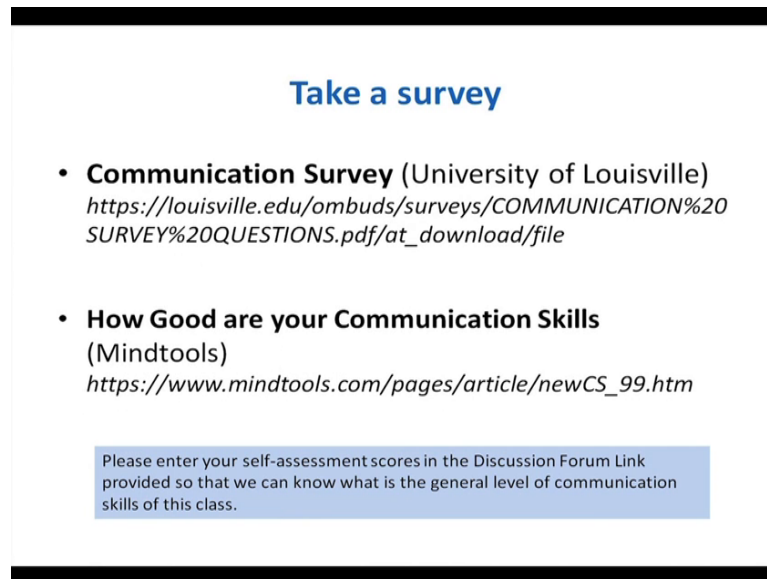
Now, it is with that, I would like to begin this and it is with within that that I would like

to focus on the elements of culture and context, as we proceed with this talk. And of course, we will talk about the ways that we generally communicate. If you look at this slide you will notice that right at the beginning we have talked about three of four different categories, like verbal, nonverbal music, visuals. And then towards the end we are talking about new technology.

It is very important to realize that with the advent of new technology, the way we communicate has changed. Because you see that a communication is a symbolic act, communication is a symbolic process, where something stands for something else. Why do you smile to begin with let us? Say you smile because you want to in some way communicate to the other person, that you are not unhappy with that person, or everything is fine with you or that you get along nicely. So, it is a kind of a symbolic act this smile in itself does not necessarily convey that you happy, you may or you may not be happy, but it is a social act a social symbolic act indicative of the fact that you want to convey certain things.

So, if you looking at each and every act, each and every sign. That performs a specific symbolic act and this act is very, very important. If we had to be social human beings meaningful it to contribute to the society, to meaningfully navigate within a society. So, when we keep these things in mind. We realize that communication in the context of soft skills is very, very important, but then would you ask me that why not go to the application of communication, you why not go directly listening and speaking skills. Because it is very important to self reflect, and before we self reflect about how we communicate. It is important to have certain concepts with which to communicate. And it is for this reason specifically that we are looking at the concepts. Secondly, these concepts will come up again and again as we proceed with the entire course, in other context as well in for instance, when we were are talking about stress, when we are talking about let us say attitude, when we were talking about persuasion, will suddenly realize that the concept that we have introduced here, some of them will become relevant there and it is for this reason again that we are looking at the concepts.

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Take a survey

- **Communication Survey (University of Louisville)**
https://louisville.edu/ombuds/surveys/COMMUNICATION%20SURVEY%20QUESTIONS.pdf/at_download/file
- **How Good are your Communication Skills (Mindtools)**
https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newCS_99.htm

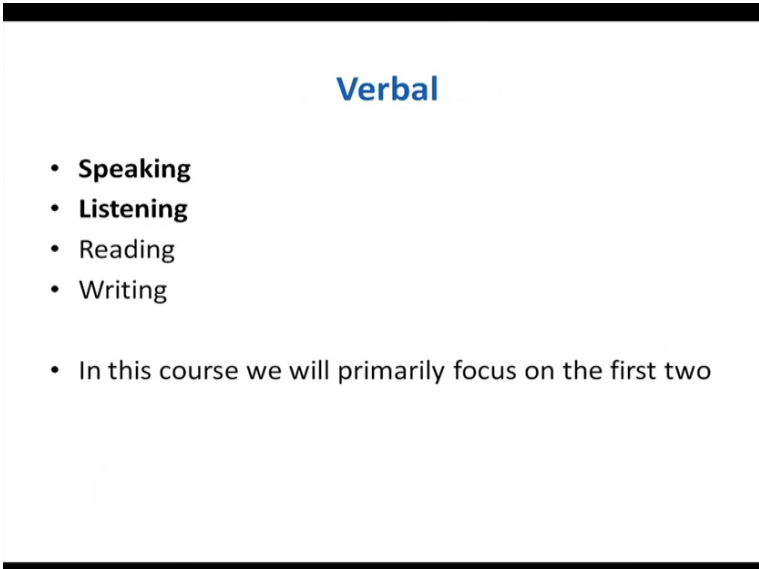
Please enter your self-assessment scores in the Discussion Forum Link provided so that we can know what is the general level of communication skills of this class.

So, having set this background, now let us look at what we are going to do today. I have already outlined what we are going to do today, but before even you begin this course. Here, at something at which you can start, how good a communicator are you. Now the point is that the links have been already provided if you go to the power points there you can cut past the link and you can use the links over there. The first survey can be downloaded it is a PDF document. And from the University of Louisville and you can do it on your own.

The second one is an automated tool located in mind tools and you can do it online and you will get a score on it. Now it is not very important to identify how rigorously these surveys have been created or how good how, but these surveys are. It is also not very, very relevant to find out. I mean how badly, you are perform there it is not that is the only survey which is available, and it is giving with the final judgment about you are being a very good performer or you are being a very bad performer, but the important thing here, is to be honest with yourself if you should do this survey you will be able to identify where you stand in terms of communication at a generic level, the reason for giving you two survey is. So, that you can compare this course and get to average idea of where you stand as a communicator.

Mind you, these surveys are not about how effectively you are communicating English. Which is important today in our context, but in general using the various channels that we talked about right at the beginning, how good a communicator you have been to be. So, having said that, and I hope that you will do that you will be completing the survey and we will have in the discussing forum link may be a Goggle document or a template, where you can either put in your name or as an anonymous entity you can put your scores . That will give some idea as to where this skill level of the class is right at the beginning of this session. It would be relevant, because at the end of the course probably we will take this survey again, and we will find in general how significantly the class has improved. So, I would like to you to take this survey seriously.

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Verbal

- **Speaking**
- **Listening**
- Reading
- Writing

- In this course we will primarily focus on the first two

Having said that let us move on to the points that we made in the outline in the overview. Which is about the different aspects that you will be taking up in this course? Now, you might find that speaking and listening are highlighted reading and writing are not, because in some sense our focus is on social transactions. It is true that you use texting you use writing or some kind of the other for quick transactions in the modern context.

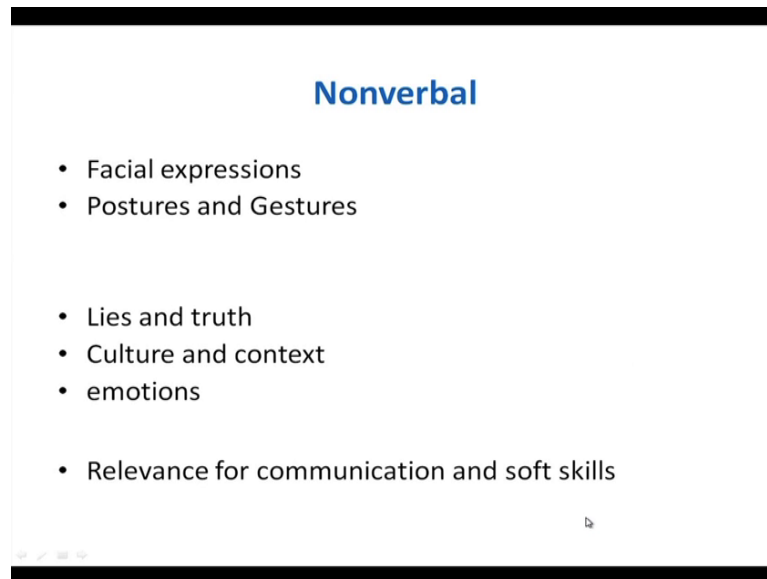
So, when we talk about new technologies, we will talk about them briefly and reading is something which we cannot highlight of here because that is not the main focus, but

when it comes to speaking and listening these will be very, very significant as we proceed in next few lectures, as well as when we talk about persuasion, when we talk about transaction, we talk about conflicts. Because it is basically through inter personal communication that these things occur mostly, not that it cannot happens through writing, but generally they do happen through speaking and listening primarily through body language through your voices and tone and. So, we are going to in the context of soft skills primarily focus on these areas.

As I said with you when we talk about new technologies, we will move on to certain aspects of text, text etiquettes and what is text do manage to communicate or not manage to communicate and. In fact, it would be fun if and I has have said with you in the introductory talk. If we can actually conduct certain experiments with your help to find out how we text, how we communicate and identify the results. That will be very exciting and we will be doing it later in the later weeks as we proceed with a course; however, when we talk about the first two we will be talking about we will be talking about verbal, which is speaking and listening let me clearly clarify what exactly are the points that we are going to touch upon. Now all those speaking as been highlighted right at the beginning it is probably more important to listen to things before we speak. Listening has a number of dimensions and will start up with listening in the next talk that we have, and very often effective listening will give raise to effective speaking on which we shall be devoting at least two lectures, which will deal with speaking and then later on with conversation.

Now, there when we talk about speaking voice will be play significant role. And when we talk about voice, voice manages to carry emotions, and those have very interesting implications for how we assess people, and how we assess whether they are been honest, dishonest, sincere or in sincere. So, those are things those are issues we will discuss as we proceed with them, reading and writing as I told you writing we will take a briefly not reading.

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When it comes to nonverbal, here are few things that I would like to highlight. We would be focusing on facial expressions, now facial expressions play very, very significant role in our social life's, you might when you are discussing things realize that some people have faces which look in general happy, some people have faces which in general look unhappy. We have certain masks now it is possible that the people who look unhappy may actually be unhappy. It is also possible that that is the way that faces convey in general, when they are neutral to the world outside. So, but the very fact that faces play such a very important role, the moment somebody walks into a lecture, the moment somebody walks into house, the moment is stranger appears in front of you, you are looking at the face, the face looks imposing, the face looks weak, the face looks sincere, the face looks encouraging, friendly all kinds of information come from the face.

A lot of research as had gone into the various aspects of the face the different mussel that plays significant roles in the face. And this is one area which we are going to focus on later in a very, very detailed way, because for social transactions this is a very, very important aspects of things, and whether its conflicts, whether its negotiations, whether its persuasion and leadership. Now the facial expressions will be of paramount importance and hence there will constitute an important part of what we focus on as we proceeds postures and gestures again relate to nonverbal communication.

If you remember in the earlier talk we talked about covert communication or unintentional communications. Even, if you do not intend to you manage to communicate a lot of things through your face, and through your body, now the body has two dimensions the body happens to communicate actively when you are using gestures. So, you are talking to somebody your hands are moving, these are known as illustrators. You are making specific gesture like, if I take my hand up and put it on my lips indicative of silence, this is known as an emblem. Now, these are gestures which are very often intentional the first one is non-intentional gesture and the second one is an intentional gesture. Some of the gestures we have control over we do it intentionally we do them intentionally some of the other gestures we are not have been aware off.

Very often you find that people who are not use to public speaking suddenly brought in front of an audience would put their hands behind their backs or put them insides the pockets, because they are nor comfortable and they do not know what do we their body their consensus of the body. And because their consensus of the body the illustrative gestures that the body makes a no longer been made. On the other hand, you want to makes specific gestures you have full control over the gestures that you are about to make, whether intentional or unintentional these gestures again play significant role in making you interpreted in specific ways.

They play significant role in the way somebody interprets you as a person and assess your behaviour. So, gestures will again with postures the way you hold your body, the way you slouch, and the way you lean forward these things play very significant role. In fact, you might be aware of the fact that even if you are walking away from somebody just by looking at the way you walks somebody would be able to your close friend would be able to identify you, it is on the basis not only of your body mass, the way your body looks, but also on the basis of the way you get your postures as well as the way you walk the moments you makes that you are able to identify them.

Gestures and postures play again a significant role in the context of transactions, because in social transitions space how far you are how you point to somebody, how you make a gesture towards somebody, these plays significant role. These are intertwined with culture and context to make, or to mean different things, in different culture the same

sign can mean different things for instance. If I make a sign like this in certain cultures it can mean 0. In certain other cultures it can mean a gesture of appreciation. So, this is again a very, very important aspect of things. And you see that as we proceed with this series of talks, we will be talking about some very exciting things lies as such as lies and truth.

How do we guess when people are telling lies how do we guess when people are telling the truth we will be able to identify these things using a number of tools and I am pretty excited about how you response to that and these relate to facial expression as well as to postures and gestures, because you see that the ability to tell lies depends on your ability to control your senses. So, when you are telling a lie you are manipulating your speech when you are telling a lie you are manipulating your voice, your facial expressions, your postures, and gestures and for most of us it is very difficult to control all of them together.

So, there is always a possibility of something leaking out these are known as leakages. A body language, through body language may be through speech a slip a slip of a particular word not maintaining or maintaining eye contact you can have a number of ways that is happen, but even if we do not take the extreme examples you would say that why are we interested in extreme examples say telling lies. I would like to point out that in most social situations we are force to tell lies these are known as white lies. We will elaborate them and we will take it up take them up in a detailed way it a late of point of time, but to make a point clear.

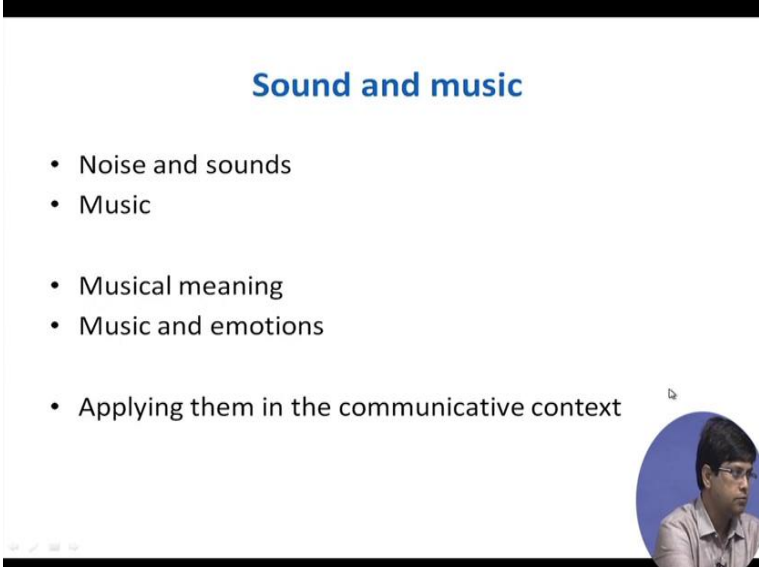
White lies are an innocent lies. Let us say that you have a situation where a you are not felling good you have visited a friend and you having a food and you do not feel like eating, but you would be hurting that person if you do not eat properly and every time he asks how is the food you have to say that its nice now this is a white lie. So, throughout our social transactions we keep on telling lies small lies big lies and its very, very important to assess if not lies degrees of discomfort, degrees of comfort, degrees of openness, degrees of reticence and reluctance.

In order to be a good at soft skills, in order to understand others emotions and hence, as I

told you a little earlier it is very relevant to focus on the nonverbal aspects of communication. That we just now focused on one of the areas that I have not mentioned on the slide which in some sense belongs to the area of its speech is a paralinguistic dimension because speech constitutes texts. So, when we are verbalizing we are saying something which can be written down as words. So, that is the text, but we are also saying it in a particular way if we are in toning our voice is being modulated in specific ways; which is the paralinguistic component which is where very often the emotion most dominantly gets expressed. So, when we talk about conversation we are also going to talk about that and when we talk about facial expression postures and gestures to a certain extent we will also touch upon some of these areas.

Now, when we talk about the next thing that is relevant in these areas culture and context, whether I just, few minutes back, I talk to you about a gesture like this which has different meanings in different contexts. So, culture and context will play very significant role as we proceed, and I hope that by this point of time I have been able to share with you the relevance of soft skill communication in the contexts of soft skills.

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Sound and music

- Noise and sounds
- Music

- Musical meaning
- Music and emotions

- Applying them in the communicative context

A small circular inset photo in the bottom right corner of the slide shows a man with glasses and a light-colored shirt, looking towards the left.

Now, we come to another aspect of things, which will again be taking up and hopefully it will be exciting and interesting. Because these are areas of very, very topical research

currently and we will probably be able to do a little bit of research together as we proceed with this course. There is sound and music which is the auditory dimension of our senses again a channel through which communication takes place.

When we are talking about speech we have already discussed that earlier. So, what we are going to do is we are going to look at noise and sounds in the context of our communication, these also play significant role. However probably they play significant role, in the context of let us say making a movie or defecting a audio let us say play or whatever than in the context of actual communication. Because sounds might contextualize things, but we generally do not use sounds on the other hand music plays a very, very significant role in our life. And this is one area we going to touch upon music as a very, very significant aspects of communication and social communication.

Now, the point is that you might be surprised you might say that well where does music figure, I will say that it figures in let us say multimedia communication sound and music in certain sense is would figure significantly in multimedia communication. And again that would play a very, very important role, in whatever we are covering because in the act of socialization, when we use new technology we have access to multimedia. We have the ability of creating animations we have the ability of linking sounds music and other things to these animation and thus we have a very, very powerful tool though which we can not only communicate to somebody cognitively that is communicating information. We would also be an able to communicate emotions and mind you emotions very often regulate and modify or even manipulate our cognitive decision making. So, in the context of soft skills this would when you link it with modern technology if when you link it up with social media will play very significant role for instance, if you are looking at Facebook very often we find that people give their favorite songs on a Facebook.

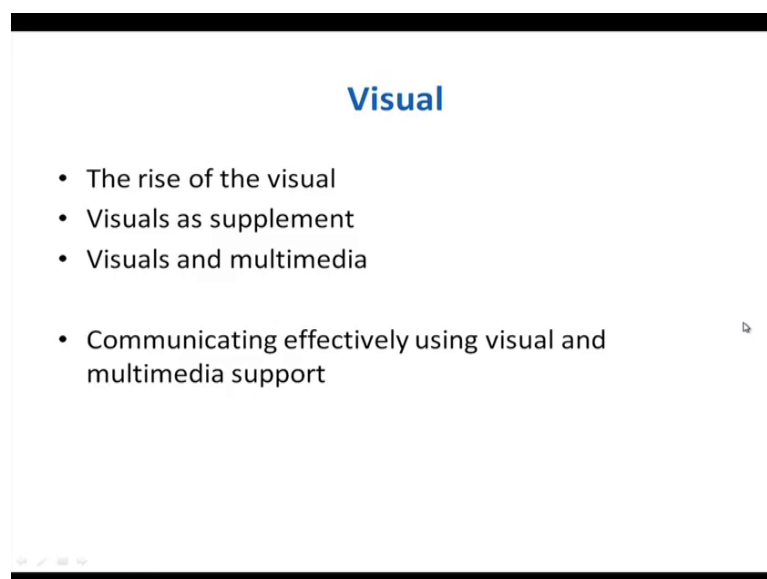
Now, the presentation of your depiction of your favorite song on a Facebook in certain ways, get link to your cultural identity the kind of person you are is very often link to the kind of music that you that you listen to whether, it is done consciously or unconsciously whether it is biased, or whether it actually manages to access somebody's real persona. These are debatable things the bottom line is that the kind of music that you present on

Facebook would in certain ways determine the way people perceive. So, when I talk about music and the way it communicates. It is not really far away from soft skills as far away as it would have seem ten years back because today you find that it plays a very significant role in our life's in the context to multimedia.

So, when we are talking about music we will be looking at how music communicates, the different let us say the different components, the different features of music that play significant role. And the way that they communicate about us about a personality about a attitudes and the way that music can be use to evoke emotions, convey emotions to manipulate emotions and others, these are some of the things which we will be very relevant in the context of soft skills we will have a detailed discussion about that as we proceed. We will also have certain fun games and interactions and even let us say quizzes or surveys takes floor music together and come out with the findings that we are able to identify the collaboratively.

So, when we are looking at music we can look at musical meaning, and music and emotions. And then I will try to link it to specific activities that you can do specific group activities that we can do together and then as I (Refer Time: 23:05) limited clear apply it to a communicative context. So, this is one of the other things we will be doing together.

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Visual

- The rise of the visual
- Visuals as supplement
- Visuals and multimedia
- Communicating effectively using visual and multimedia support

4

Now, let us come to a very, very important component of contemporary communicative environment which is visuals. Now visual became dominant in the later part of the 20th Century. And the 21st Century visuals pervade us and the surround us and we spent a huge amount of time with visuals. Now what exactly do I mean by visuals. Visuals cannot be really separated from multimedia, but initially will talk about visuals in isolation. Anything that we see around us is visual now that was true, in ancient times that is true today also, but what is true today is that we have the ability to manipulate visuals, because our communicative environment has the ability to create and communicate visuals.

So, when I am sitting in this let us say theater the various things that are around with surround me are things, which I may not have controlled over, but this screen behind me the power points that I am showing the very fact that we are switching between the power point. And me and if I scribble something, I you can look at the paper on which I am scribbling or I can show you movie, I can play music and show you the factors been generated by some software all this is visual. And this suggests played such a powerful role that today we are more and more leaning in the direction of visuals and multimedia. The best illustration is this movement from telephones to mobiles from mobiles to smart mobiles, and we have mobiles where primarily the interface is a visual interface the interaction primarily is visual.

Even, when we have texts we use smiles we use emoticons and this tell us that we are not satisfied with texts anymore at every point of time we want to inserts visuals into our life to mediate using visuals. There is possibly a reason for that because visuals are very, very persuasive they have they make a very strong emotional impact. And hence, in the communicative environment probably, now this is highly debatable issue visuals have become very, very important. And hence, when we talk about visuals we will talk about visuals in two different contexts.

We will talk about visuals when we are making power point presentation or presentations of any kind multimedia presentations we will in fact do presentations together some of you might even upload presentation might even comment on them, that is how we are going to do that, but we will also look at the new visual environment which is generated

by the digital edge. The way that it manipulates us the way that we manipulate it and the way that it influences communication, especially persuasive communication which is the forty today communication means today in various context, even in the context of soft skills making a good impression and managing to convince others and all that and visuals play a very, very powerful role in that.

Even if you are looking at scientific literature, one hundred years back and if you are looking at the graphics if you looking at the graphs, if you looking at the visual display of statistics you find that today it is much superior, much more powerful, much more innovatively and creatively designed even animated. Why is it so, because it is not just the facts and figures that matter the way that you present these facts and figures also matter to a significant extent, and this is where the visual dimension of displaying statistics and things like that play very significant role.

Now visuals, if you looking at visuals. We find that the first point I made was about the raise of the visuals in the 20 Century and its pervasiveness today because even the odings today are animated, if you looking at the cricket stadium, if you are looking at the boundaries you have visuals there which are animated. If you are walking a survey, if you are walking up some place if you are looking at odings big hug odings now they are become dynamic they were visuals earlier, but they are ever changing dynamic visuals if you working in to a shopping mall these things are become pretty common.

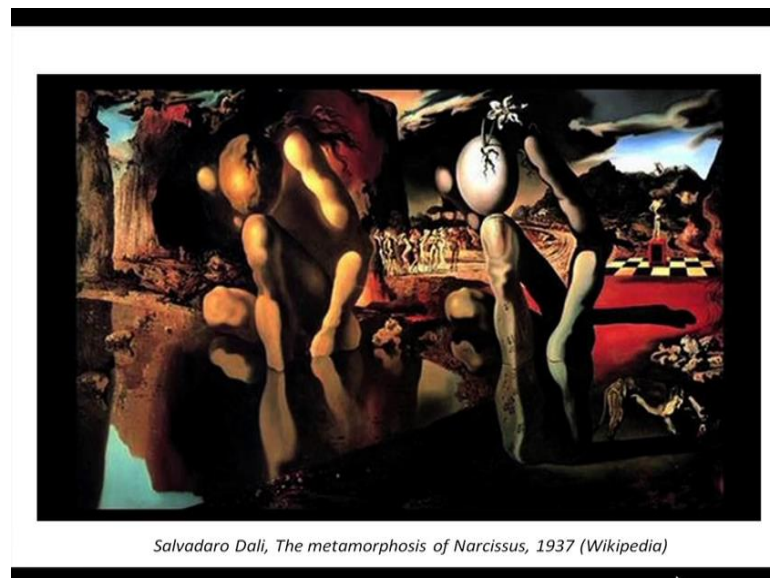
The second point I want to make was about visual are supplements. When we were talking about communication, when we were talking about speech body language nonverbal communication, if you are talking about a context like a presentation context, the visual acts as a supplement it is something which is added which enhances the communication process. If you are talking about scientific literature if you showing graphs the visual again is a supplement. So, today the visual as a supplement is another important aspect that needs to be explored and we will be doing in a detailed way as we proceed. And again as I said with you little earlier it is relevant in the context of soft skills.

Now, the final one is visuals and multimedia. Because visual happens to be integrated

with other aspects visuals can be static, visual can be dynamic, that is they can be animation or they can be very much like what you are seeing right now we speaking and along with that visuals also include voices. So, when you are listening to me you have multimedia, because you are able to listen to me and you are able to see me together. Multimedia also means the ability to interact interactivity, this is the more recent kind of multimedia that we are looking at and it will again plays a very significant role and as I told you a little earlier we have the ability to create multimedia even using a small smart phone.

Hence, that is one aspect and we use that for communicating things we send of presentations, we make presentations using Skype and I making a presentation to you using power point slides. So, visuals and multimedia in the contexts of various kinds of communicative contexts, and how to make an impression using them will become significant and hence will take it up.

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So, talking has been talked about visuals. Now I would like to share with you an example of how visual can be a very, very exciting. Now if you are looking at this image this is an image which was generated by the French painter Salvador Dalí known as the metamorphosis of narcissus in 1937. Now this story of narcissus in the Greek mythology

is of a person, who is in love with himself. And of whatever, reason he makes one of the goddesses, the Greek goddesses angry and the angry goddess curses that he would so much fall in loves with himself that he would not be able to tear himself away from himself. And hence, you find that on one occasion he looks down at the still water see his own reflection and he so fascinated by it that is does not manage to look up ever (Refer Time: 31:04)

Now, it so, happens that along to a according to that myth. What happens is that, because of this curse he looks down at the still water and over a period of time he is metamorphosed or transformed and becomes, if a tiny and beautiful flower known as the narcissus flower. So, if you are looking at these particular very, very powerful visual you find that this story as been depicted, all those statically in a way that he is that takes us our vision in specific ways. Now let me help you with understanding the figure if you look closely you find this is the head and this is the knee, so this is the torso, this is thigh, so this is the person, this is the chest, and this is the shoulder.

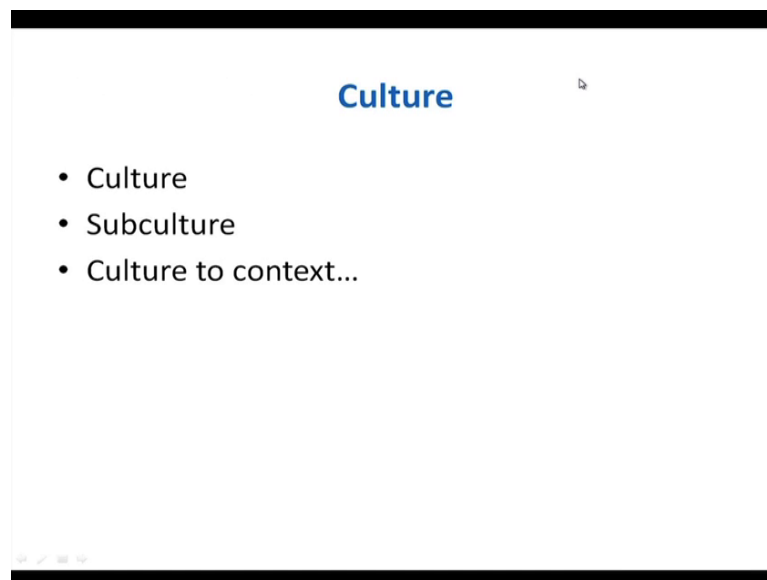
So, you find that one harm is going down into the water and here is the reflection. The other leg this is the back connecting the leg and it is going up to the thighs, the knee and it is this part of the knee is going down again into the water you can see the ankle and the reflection of the ankle. The other leg is folded you can see the knee over here it is folded inside. And here is the other shoulder humpt back. So, you find person who has put his head on his knee and he is looking down into the water. On the other hand if you looking at this image which looks very similar, the position the shapes are very similar, but if you are to make sense of it you have to understand it in different senses.

Imagine that hand is a emerging out of the water the hand is a emerging here, and this is the reflection of the hand. What you can see over here is the first figures, this is the second, the third and fourth fingers folded over here, and this is the thumb jetting out of the water. So, the thumb and the finger within them they are holding an egg, and out of the egg a beautiful narcissus flower is emerging. So, you find that what we have over here, is an illustration of visuals and the way that visuals manages to communicate very powerfully in various interesting ways. But it also manages to tell us a lot more about visual that visuals can be misleading visuals can create illusions visuals can lead us and

depending on the kind of orientation that you have visuals can tell us different stories, you change the orientation the meaning of the visual changes you changes the color, the meaning of the visual changes the context, and various or symbolic components which surround it and the meaning of the entire thing changes.

This painting that I said with you right now is an illustration of many of these components, which also very powerfully located in visuals. And this is one of the areas there we are going to look at as be proceed with this sessions.

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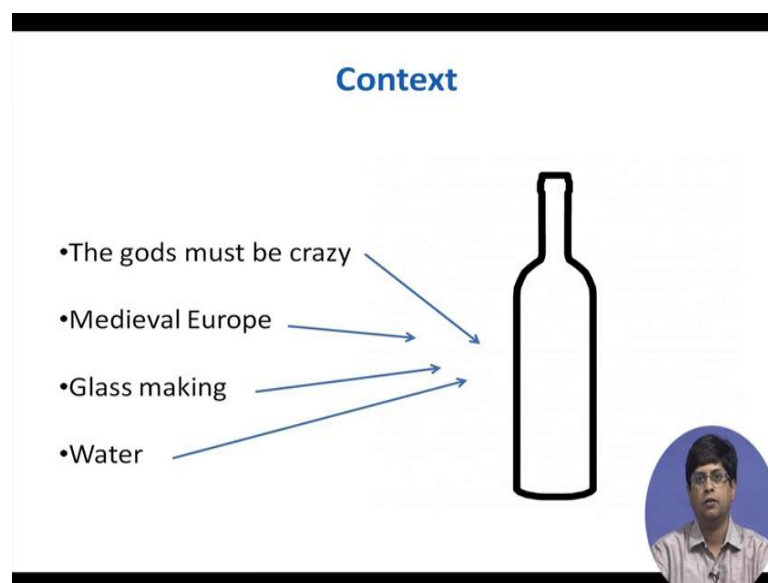


So, the next few things that you are going to look at will be culture and context. Any culture has a very wide definition we might talk about a national culture; we can talk about a local culture, a state culture. Where we are talking about our beliefs, our attitudes, our specific behavior patterns, the way we speak even in the same language being spoken in different ways, but when we are talking about a sub culture we are talking about even a smaller area than that let say the culture of IIT, Kharagpur can be considered as a sub culture. You find that within this particular place people behave in specific ways, people transact in particular ways, people use specific languages, and have specific rituals which are not there in other places. If you Goggle for something known as rangoli or illumination at IIT Kharagpur you will find that these are too, distinctively

different festivals highly publicized which are unique to this particular place. Now this is part of our subculture that students do these things in a distinctive or a specific way.

Now, culture plays a very significant role in the context of soft skills and communication and the reason we are talking about that is because when we are talking about culture of a particular place we realize that it is something which determines, how we understand what are being said in one place namaskar is a namaskaram is the thing which is used, in another you find that greeting is hi, hello. So, these changes these small things make a significant difference, and one needs to be very perceptive about the culture within which one is communicating. So, that is why it is relevant we will take it up a different points of time although generically.

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Context is something which is illustrated very briefly by showing these 4 lines the gods must be crazy, medieval Europe, glass making, water, when you look at these 4 lines they do not make any sense until you just convert or converge on this bottle.

The gods must be crazy is a movie which is begins with the story of a Coca Cola bottle or a cold drink bottle. Medieval Europe, Glass making and bottle making was very, very significant, water is contained inside the bottle. You find that to begin with this four

sentences are given meaning within the are the gift within the context of the bottle when bottle is brought into creates a context, and they interact in various ways with that independently also they manage to interact and give different dimensions to the same bottle as a concept.

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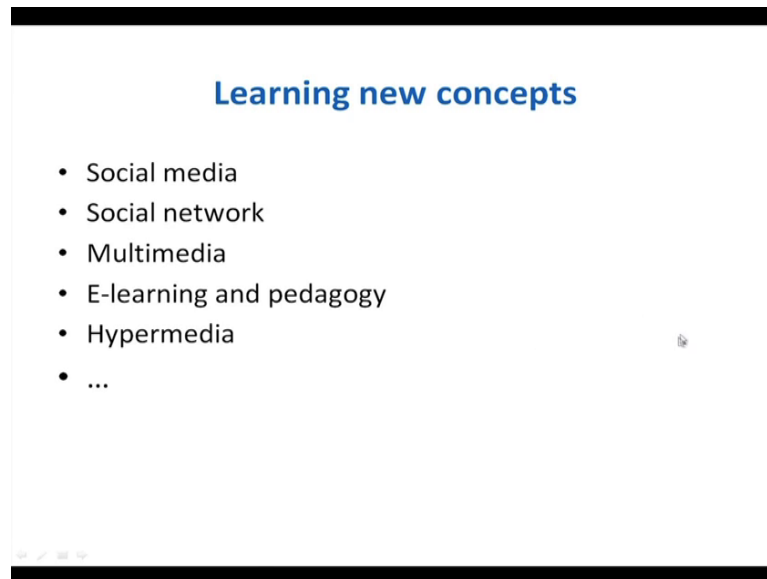
New media and communication

- What is new media?
 - online newspapers
 - blogs
 - Wikis
 - video games
 - social media
- The key characteristic – dialogue, interaction
- Features that recur:
 - being manipulated
 - networkable
 - dense
 - compressible
 - interactive

Context is again something which is relevant. Now the thing which I have already shared with you, but which I would quickly take up here is the new media which is very relevant for soft skills and communication. The new media is the digital media we will not go into the details of it right. Now online news paper, blogs, wikis, video games, social media and the fundamental feature of these happen to be dialogues interactions. So, there is a perpetual scope for quickly interacting even texts not like letters which were written and which took months, to be delivered or weeks, to be delivered and their key features are there they can be manipulated, they can be network, the dense they can be compressed and they are very, very interactive.

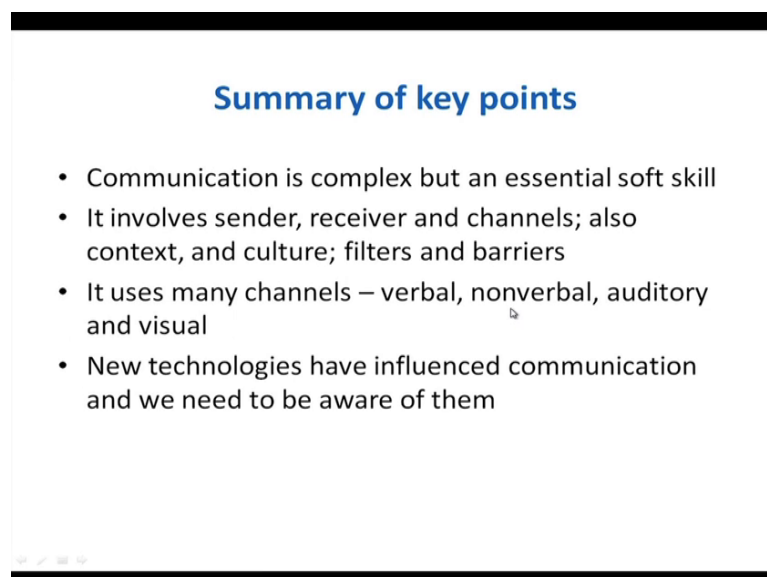
Now, these are key features which we will be exploring experimenting with your help as we focus on those aspects and we proceed with the next few classes.

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So, learning new concepts social media, social network multimedia, E-learning and pedagogy hypermedia, we will be dealing with some of these concepts because now they have become relevant in the context of communication and soft skills. Today we are not going to focus on these, but we will definitely take them up as we explored new media.

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These are the summary of key points that we have made so far. And as I shared with you please take the survey which we had started with. In the next session we will focus on listening, because it is the key to one of the most fundamental things to communication.

Thank you.