

Advance Course in Social Psychology

Lecture 30: Communication - Part III

Hello friends, welcome back. Let us continue with the discussion about communication. Since we were talking about a non-verbal communication, in this discussion I will talk about chronemics. Chronemics is the role of time in communication. We understand the environment, we relate ourselves to the environment. But if a timely response to the stimulus in the environment is given, then the message has some weight or value.

But untimely response to that situation, to a particular situation will not create that impression for the message we want to convey to the other person. So chronemics is the role of time in communication and person's perception and values placed on time plays a considerable role in communication process. As I said just now, that if timely response to any situation will create the effectiveness of the message and if the response is untimely, then definitely the message will not have that impact on the receiver or on the situation. So when we are talking about chronemics, it is all about role of time and valuing the time and response in a way that the message transmission is effective.

Therefore the use of time can affect lifestyles, personal relationships and work life. So, if any individual who do not value time in response to an individual's behavior, that what correct response has to be disposed or exhibited in particular situation, that will define an individual's personality, certain traits, lifestyles, relationships, even at work and personal life. So time perceptions include punctuality, interactions and willingness to wait. There is also a very important role of time when two people are interacting, maybe one person do not allow the other person to speak openly or there is some kind of interruptions when the other person is speaking. Giving some space and time to the other person to speak, that also indicates the role of chronemics in non-verbal communication.

Thomas Bruno was the first person who has talked about chronemics in social psychology and has defined the function of time in human interaction. As I mentioned just now, that two people are engaged in some interaction and one person do not allow the other person to talk to. Then this also creates a sense of conflict or discomfort between two people and the communication breaks down. So, time can be used as an indicator of status as well. If it is about lifestyle, it is about personal relationship, then it is also about indicator of status.

For example, in any board room meeting, the boss can interrupt the employee during the process of presentation and he can call of the meeting and call another important meeting to be convened in another 10 minutes. Now this kind of interruption is no doubt a time consideration or role of chronemics in interaction, but at the same time, the authority or the boss has the potential to reflect his competency or status to interrupt in the meeting and call for another meeting. At the same time, may be the employer or the manager do not have that status that even in the presentation, he or she can interrupt and call for another meeting. This

is about time can be used as an indicator of status. As it is mentioned on the slide, the example that the boss can interrupt progress to hold an impromptu meeting in the middle of the work.

Yet the average worker would not make an appointment to see the boss. This is the difference of status that how much time the other person is giving to you will also define not only the relationship, but also the status. The way in which different cultures perceive time can influence communication as well. Now the same kind of example or pattern of usage of time is acceptable in some work cultures and it is not acceptable in certain cultures. So the right drive at the right time may bring laurels, whereas an untimely initiative may evoke harsh criticism.

So the right response at the right time will have the impact of message on the other person and if the response is not at the right time or it is not timely, then the person can receive some harsh criticism. So time plays a very important role when we are interacting or responding to the situation. Now time when we are talking about chronemics, then social psychologists have also talked about two types of time zones that is monochronic and polychronic. Now these are the categories of chronemics in a way which has cultural influences. There are certain cultural patterns in different countries that how they value time.

There are countries where the culture is to value time as asset which is tangible that we cannot lose it. That time is either used or it is wasted and in some cultures time there is no value for time and they are on their own and they have complete freedom to use their time or use other person's or waste the other person's time. So when we are talking about monochronic time, this time system means that things are done one at a time and time is segmented into small pieces units. They divide the time, they schedule time in a very punctual manner and things are being scheduled or process is in every work process is scheduled in a way that things to be done in a very timely fashion. So this is a monochronic time zone where people respect time in a way that they divide time or dedicate time to every task in a very rational and calculative manner.

This is a feature of monochronic time zones. Under this kind of time zone, time is scheduled, arranged and managed. It is not haphazard, it is very much scheduled and disciplined. Monochronic cultures place a paramount value on schedules, tasks and getting the job done. Once they are dedicating some portion of time to a particular task, they have the tendency to get the job done because time is very important.

At the same time in monochronic cultures, time is tangible and it is viewed as a commodity not to be wasted and it is money. Events are scheduled at one at a time following another and in monochronic culture this type of schedule may take precedence over interpersonal relationship. Now this has very important aspect to be discussed in monochronic time zone that when members are not coming on time for any particular event then it has a very negative

impact on the interpersonal relationship of the other person. That means time is respected, time is valued and is considered as a tangible commodity and if it is not respected by the other person then it has a negative impact on interpersonal relationship. Therefore, monochronic time orientation is very important in countries like USA, European cultures, in England and Scandinavian countries.

So this is the cultural pattern of time zones that people maintain and in a non-verbal fashion they tend to use time in a way that they not only get the things done or the task done but it also has negative or positive impact on interpersonal relationship. The other time zone is polychronic time zone. It is a system where several things can be done at once and wider view of the time is exhibited and time is perceived in large fluid sections. Fluid sections means that time is considered as instrumental and flexible and can be used for any purpose at any time. There is no schedule, there is no management and there is only flexibility to an extent that it can hamper the work process as well.

So, polychronic cultures are much less focused on the preciseness of accounting for time. Like in monochronic cultures, time is perceived as tangible or commodity which is money and not to be wasted. But in polychronic cultures there is no preciseness, there is no accounting of time. In monochronic cultures, time is dedicated to every work process. But in polychronic there is no accounting of time.

Polychronic cultures are more focused on tradition and relationships rather than on task. They are more focusing on relationships that no matter what how much time is wasted or not used. But they will focus on relationship while in monochronic cultures if time is wasted it has negative impact on interpersonal relationship. So examples of polychronic cultures are Latin American, African, South Asian countries and Native American cultures where people follow polychronic time zones. Polychronic societies have no problem being late for an appointment and they deeply focus on some work or in a meeting then pass schedule.

So the concept of time is fluid and can easily expand or contract. So in polychronic cultures people use time as a flexible element. They have no schedule and they are just focusing on one task that how much time it can take and that is not calculated there is no accounting for that time. It is only that they are using the time to complete a task and there is no accounting. As a result, polychronic cultures have much less formal perception of time and they are not ruled by precise calendars and schedules.

That means there is no management, there is no timely scheduling of any task as it is a fluid section of interpersonal relationships. So these are the two time zones when we talk about chronemics that is polychronic and monochronic time zones. Now this table provides some predictable patterns between cultures with different time systems. That means that how people tend to perceive time and has a impact on human behavior based on monochronic people and

polychronic people. In monochronic people, people do one thing at a time because time is dedicated to every task and they are more concentrated on the set of the task based on the time.

They consider time sometimes as commitments because there is deadline, there is schedule. They are committed to the job and the end results because when they are dedicating a time to the task then they make it a point to complete the task and come to the end result. They dedicate themselves to plans. They are more concerned with privacy and individual ownership because it is my time or I am using someone else's time for a particular task. Then I am using the other person's time then it is the ownership of the time.

They emphasize more on time recognition regardless of relationship or circumstances and have strong tendency to build temporary practical relationships. Whereas in polychronic people, they do many things at once because there is no scheduling of time for every task. It is fluid for them, it is flexible for them, it is instrumental for them. They concentrate on event happening around them and they consider objectives, goals, results seriously. In monochronic, time is very important for the task.

Whereas in polychronic, they are more focusing on the task rather than scheduling that how much time should be invested in the task. They are committed to people and relationship. They change plans often and easily. When there is no scheduling of the time then definitely people tend to shift from one schedule to another in a very simple or flexible manner. They are more concerned with community and shared connections.

They emphasize response based on nature of relationship and circumstances and have strong tendency to build lifetime familial relationship. The idea is that in polychronic cultures or polychronic people, they are using time to establish familial relationship rather than focusing on finishing the task. So there are strong differences between polychronic and monochronic people but the significance of the discussion is that when we are talking about non-verbal communication based on chronemics then how time plays a very special role in maintaining human relationships based on monochronic and polychronic time zone. Apart from this, since monochronic time zone we are talking about then there is another aspect of non-verbal communication in terms of chronemics that is the MUP effect. The literal meaning we understand to keep silent but what is the psychological significance or real message behind this MUP effect that is more important to understand.

The meaning of the MUP effect is the reluctance or failure to deliver negative information is called the MUP effect. In our day to day conversations we say I do not know how I will convey this message to him. I do not know how the other person will react to that news which I will convey to him. I think I should not call him today, I will call him tomorrow. Now this delay in conveying the message is actually the MUP effect.

It is reluctance to or hesitation to convey the message to the other person and most of the time negative information. The MUM effect refers to keep silent or MUM about undesirable messages that has to be transmitted to the other person. This involves it is not only to keep silence but it involves different kind of behavioral dispositions without uttering a word. It involves avoiding invalidating language for not arousing negative feelings using validating language so that whenever the message is conveyed to the other person the message should be conveyed in a very timely manner and with the language that the person can easily adapt or accept that message the negative message. Conjective statements that is to make the conversation going for instance even we are in a hurry but yes giving some time in a very silent manner to the other person will not only add to the MUM effect but also the use of time that we are giving some space to the other person while not reacting or saying anything to the other person.

For instance I heard you correctly tell me more about it. So here we are using time in terms of giving more time to the other person to speak up. Person sharing is also there and at the same time the person is silent and giving more space to the other person and the other is disjunctive statements that is to break the conversation while not keeping silent and interrupting that I have to leave and I have some other task to perform. Now in all these aspects that is avoiding invalidating language, using validating language, conjunctive statements or disjunctive statements. In all the four process time and when to keep silent is playing a very important role for either encouraging the other person to speak up their own opinion or voice or not to arouse any negative feeling in the other person.

So this is the significance of MUM effect where the person is reluctant to deliver any message that arouses any negative feeling or to deliver any negative information. So this is the role of Chronemics when we are talking about normal communication where polychronic, monochronic cultures play a important role based on task and maintaining interpersonal relationships and the MUM effect the reluctance to convey a negative information to the other person and how MUM effect along with time zone can be maintained to maintain cordial relationships with the other person. So we are done with this discussion. Thank you so much. Thank you.