

# 3.1 Human Person as a Communicator

## Aim

- To understand communication as an essential and existential dimension of the human person.
- To help the student understand the nature of culture and his inter-relation with communication.

## Materials Required

- Pen and Paper

## Procedure

- Ask each participant to imagine he/she was marooned on an island. All he/she had was a comb, a photograph of a loved one, a handkerchief and a few coins. How would he/she spend the week? Ask them to share their fantasies and pick out the communication elements. Then emphasize the intrinsic nature of the human being to communicate with the help of the input given below.

or

- Ask the participants to pick up a pen/pencil, place them on a blank sheet of paper, close their eyes and then doodle away for a period of 30 seconds. On opening their eyes they must look closely at their doodles to discover at least three recognisable shapes and figures. After this exercise they may share their findings. (Later you will have to draw their attention to the eagerness they displayed while discovering various shapes and while sharing them.)

## Input

1. Much like life itself, communication is a process. That means it is dynamic, ever-changing, and unending.
2. Men and women are different from the rest of other living things in that they possess self-consciousness or 'presence-to-self'.
  - Two fundamental operations constitute self-consciousness – knowing (cognition) and willing (volition) originating from the faculties of intellect and will.
3. Human consciousness is dynamic and not static. Knowing and willing are drives that impel a person forward to know and will more and more.
  - This irresistible dynamism pushes us out of ourselves to the world around us. We thus yearn for the joy of knowledge, free choice, discovery and exploration.
4. Culture is also dynamic. It changes and is not static.
5. No group or society has a completely static culture. Everything is subject to, and is in the process of change. Life never remains the same for successive generations.
6. 'Making Sense of Reality' occurs in every human person through a cyclic process of experience-understanding-judging-acting. This process is not only cyclic, it also moves forward: every judging/doing gives rise to a newer experience and every experience proceeds from a previous judgement/act.
7. But this drive to know and will which is in reality a cycle of experience-understanding-judging is not merely an introverted process (self-possession). It is a dynamic drive for self-expression. This is the urge to communicate, to share meaning with our fellow-beings. It is also usually quite slow and subtle. Otherwise you might be in a constant state of confusion and frustration about many things. The human being- a presence-to-self – is by nature a presence –to-another. By virtue of the dynamism within the person, personhood implies self-possession as well as self-expression. Thus every person is a knowing/willing subject and a communicating subject as well.
  - To be human is to be communicative.

## Communication and Culture: The Link

- Without communication, there can be no culture, for there would be no predictable behaviour among members of a society and, therefore, no human relations. Groups, principles of descent, social and political organisation, authority, religion etc. would be non-existent, because for them to exist there is need for meanings to be agreed upon by the group sharing all these elements of culture.

## Review

1. Communication is a process. It is dynamic, ever-changing, and unending.

2. Human beings are different from the other living things in that they possess self consciousness/ presence to self.
3. Human consciousness is dynamic.
4. Culture is dynamic and no group or society has a completely static culture. Everything is subject to, and is in the process of change.

## Reflection

1. How much do you know about yourself? Resolve to engage in an exercise that will engage your faculty and will with an aim to discover yourself more.
2. What are some of the things that younger people resent deeply about their culture?

## Relevant Skills

For the first half hour of the lesson, the instructor asks the class to remain quiet and to refrain from communicating with each other and with the instructor either verbally or non-verbally as he/she lectures. It may not be possible to avoid communicating completely but the students are to try their best not to communicate. The students will then comment on the effect of learning without communication. Were they able to understand the session? What effect did it have on them as individuals? After this exercise, the instructor is to ask the participants to comment on the human person and communication.

## Resources

BOSCOM-INDIA. 'SHEPHERDS' FOR AN INFORMATION AGE. Matunga: Tej Prasarini, 2000.

## References

Barker L. Larry 1978. Communication. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Social Communication Departments AMECEA and IMBISA. Communication, Culture and Community. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1999.

