

Assignment 3

In this exercise we were each individually given the task of observing five different pieces of human interaction, In this exercise my observations of how people interact, communicate, listen and respond should be noted and this may include people's body language. It is therefore simply as an exercise to assess the quality of the listening, communication and responding demonstrated by the chosen people witnessed below.

Observation 1

Dated: Sunday 14th September, 2003.

Place: The White House

People Observed: Husband and Wife

Role of the observer: Sitting in Pub Garden

Body Language of Observed people:

In my observations I noted that the couple seated next to us were having a domestic dispute. The husband appeared irritated and showed signs of annoyance. He was making gesturing movements with his hands and his eyes were dilated and fixed firmly on his partner's face, who was seated directly opposite him. He would occasionally "bang" his hands onto the table. Although his voice was not raised to the point where he would attract unwanted attention to the conversation, I noted that his voice was stern and aggressive. I would conclude though that only people sitting very close by would pick up aspects of his conversation when his voice raised.

His partner on the other hand had her head bowed and her shoulders slumped. Her eyes appeared tearful and her facial expression was sad. It appeared that whilst the husband spoke he controlled the conversation and the partner sat in silence and I would think that she was probably quiet due to the fear of possibly aggravating him further.

What do you think that their communication pattern conveyed?:

The emotions being expressed were clearly anger and frustration by the husband. He demonstrated these emotions by movement with his arms and the occasional "banging" on the table. His partner showed emotions such as sadness and fear. Sadness I presume from the fact that the couple were arguing and fear from the fact that her husband was angry.

With regards to understanding, as mentioned the husband controlled the conversation and very rarely would the female speak, occasionally a slight "nod of the head" or brief eye contact as she would look to the side to avoid his stare. I would deduce that she clearly understood what points he was making and she felt she had to listen rather than argue back.

To me it appeared that the scene was typical of a small domestic dispute in a public place between a couple. As an observer it was rewarding as it demonstrated several emotions, namely anger, sadness and fear and this was conveyed across by tone of voice and body language.

The wife left the table and walked away, clearly upset and trying to avoid a further confrontation. At this point the husband cursed and buried his head in his hands. After a few seconds the husband got up and pursued his wife from the garden into the pub car park.

The conversation observed was very deep and obviously an emotional upsetting one. As the husband was the one doing the majority of the talking, I would assume that he was the dominant one in the relationship. With regards to his wife, her input was minimal and quiet, and appeared to be her best policy of handling the potentially volatile situation.

What can you learn from that observation about your own communication patterns?:

I noted that this couple have demonstrated basic emotions that are generally shown in an argument. In order to assess this situation I required the ability to listen carefully and observe closely without giving the appearance I was intruding or listening in.

Observation 2

Date: Monday 15th September, 2003

Place: Willowbrook School.

People Observed: Two Females

Role of the observer: Waiting At School Gates

Body Language of observed people:

Two female friends appeared to be engaged in a happy conversation. Both were standing whilst their children played close by. They would occasionally glance to check that their children were being good. Both people appeared cheerful and their eyes were smiling.

What do you think that their communication pattern conveyed?:

Both people appeared to be good friends and relaxed in each other's company. Certain references were made to past events they had endured or shared together. Both appeared understanding of the other, with reference made to past events or circumstances they both shared. The outcome was where both people agreed on the subjects discussed, mainly about children and how difficult they can be. Yet this was stated in a funny way where both parents could relax and relate to each other's opinion on parenthood.

What can you learn from that observation about your own communication patterns?:

What would I be like in that situation? Would I comment in a similar context? I can derive from this that indeed I share similar relaxed traits when in the company of friends and possess a similar sense of humour when tackling a serious topic but in a light hearted approach. Their methods of communication were similar to my own in the sense that when feeling relaxed with a friend I joke and share ideas.

Observation 3:

Date: Monday 15th September, 2003.

Place: Partners Garden.

People Observed: My son, Kane and my partner's daughter, Chanelle.

Role of the observer: Gardening

Body Language of observed people:

As both children played eye contact was shifting between what each other was doing, with hand signals to point at toys in the garden. Gestures, such as waving to beckon the other child to join them was involved. At one point they argued over the swing and it was at this point where they changed from friendly to frustrated. This was when Chanelle decided to take the swing from Kane, who protested. Chanelle then "stuck her tongue out" and Kane ran away, upset and annoyed. This was resolved after both children went silent. Chanelle sat on the swing, head down whilst Kane buried his face in his hands. Finally Chanelle gestured to Kane to come over and in seconds, Kane almost "forgot" about the swing and they continued to play.

What do you think that their communication pattern conveyed?:

Emotions were predominantly playful ones. Both appeared cheerful apart from when they fell out. Both children were good at listening to one another's views and ideas on the games they were playing. This was shown by talking, sharing and copying each other. A strong friendship is evident Even when arguing, they understood each other. Chanelle understood that taking the swing was wrong and Kane realised that their friendship was stronger than the argument and quickly made up.

For myself it was rewarding in the fact that I observed how my son interacts with other children. Communication skills and body language observed, some of which I would usually never notice.

What can you learn from that observation about your own communication patterns?:

As the two subjects were children it would in my opinion be difficult to relate to the level of communication. It was clear to see that basic emotions are quickly incorporated into a child's learning and understanding. This was possible due to their own observations of adults interacting around them. This showed myself that I was perhaps similar to the two being watched when I was around their age.

Observation 4:

Date: Tuesday 17th September, 2003.

Place: Tesco's Superstore

People Observed: Male Customer and Female Cashier.

Role of the observer: Standing In Queue

Body language of observed people:

The Cashier made occasional eye contact with the man and she smiled as they chatted.

What do you think that their communication pattern conveyed?:

Mainly flirtatious emotions were expressed, The cashier showed embarrassment by blushing However she didn't appear uncomfortable as the man was chatting in a friendly, joking and relaxed manner.

The listening was strong on the cashier's part as apart from eye contact she would simply smile and answer the man clearly and in a friendly manner.

The conversation between both people appeared to be more rewarding for the man as he dominated the conversation and managed to extract certain and more personal references to the woman's appearance and marital status. In my opinion the female cashier appeared somewhat relaxed though towards the end slightly embarrassed by the man's flirtatious nature. To me it was interesting and rewarding to see how total strangers interacted, in a flirtatious manner.

The outcome was a friendly goodbye and an eye "wink" from the male as he finished packing his shopping and moved on. The conversation was never too deep, though in my opinion it could have quickly spiralled into a more in depth in a different setting. The female though engaged in the conversation equally as light heartedly and possibly has the experience several times a week from male customers.

What can you learn from that observation about your own communication patterns?:

To me I could clearly see that the male was confident and the female slightly shy. I can relate to her being embarrassed by the man's flirtatiousness However communication was clear and light hearted and given the situation by myself I could relate to how the woman would engage the conversation whilst working. setting.

Observation 5

Date: Wednesday 17th September, 2003.

Time: 9.50 am

Place: Newsagents.

People Observed: Newsagent and Delivery Driver.

Role of the observer: Standing In My Local Paper Shop.

Body language of observed people:

The newsagent stood with hands on hips. The Driver simply continued with his work.

What do you think that their communication pattern conveyed:

The newsagent was annoyed that the milk delivery was late. The driver didn't appear at all satisfied at the man's frustration and anger towards him and in the end just exited the shop.

What can you learn from that observation about your own communication patterns?:

In hindsight I would derive that people can quickly become agitated and frustrated, especially if their emotions and thoughts on a particular subject can be left to fester over a period of time. Indeed I can relate to both subjects as patience can wear thin and it is sometimes hard to take criticism.

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