

# Arizona State University (ASU) COM100 Introduction to Human Communication Test 1 Practice (Sample)

Study Guide



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## Questions

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1. What does "context" refer to in communication?
  - A. The physical distance between communicators
  - B. The background information of the communicators
  - C. The situation, environment, and circumstances of communication
  - D. The history of the relationship between communicators
2. What is the goal of an interpretive approach in communication studies?
  - A. To measure communication's effectiveness
  - B. To develop new communication theories
  - C. To gain a deeper understanding of communication phenomena
  - D. To create public speaking guidelines
3. How do quantitative methods typically present their findings?
  - A. Through narrative descriptions
  - B. As numerical data analyzed using statistics
  - C. By fictional scenarios
  - D. Through philosophical discussions
4. How many sexual identity categories are officially recognized?
  - A. A fixed number based on international standards.
  - B. Two, based on traditional views.
  - C. No set number of sexual identity categories exist.
  - D. Only those defined by government regulations.
5. What type of methodology is typically used in the Interpretivist Approach?
  - A. Quantitative experiments
  - B. Qualitative studies in natural habitats
  - C. Surveys with large sample sizes
  - D. Statistical analyses of communication patterns

6. How does self-esteem impact communication?
- A. Higher self-esteem can lead to more confident communication
  - B. Individuals with low self-esteem often dominate conversations
  - C. Self-esteem has no impact on how one communicates
  - D. Higher self-esteem can lead to aggressive communication styles
7. Which term describes the understanding of one's distinct characteristics and how they compare to others?
- A. Self-respect
  - B. Self-concept
  - C. Mutable
  - D. Enacting identities
8. What is defined as any stimulus that can interfere with the quality of a message?
- A. Feedback
  - B. Noise
  - C. Symbols
  - D. Messages
9. What do paradigms in communication carry with them?
- A. A set of assumptions about knowledge
  - B. A definitive way to communicate
  - C. Rigorous rules for behavior
  - D. A focus on emotional expression
10. What is the main difference between etic and emic epistemologies?
- A. One focuses on social interactions while the other focuses on measurement
  - B. One involves objective analysis and the other focuses on subjective understanding
  - C. One looks at group behavior while the other looks at individual behavior
  - D. One is based on empirical research while the other is theoretical

## Answers

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1. C
2. C
3. B
4. C
5. B
6. A
7. B
8. B
9. A
10. B

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## Explanations

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### 1. What does "context" refer to in communication?

- A. The physical distance between communicators
- B. The background information of the communicators
- C. The situation, environment, and circumstances of communication
- D. The history of the relationship between communicators

"Context" in communication encompasses the situation, environment, and circumstances surrounding the interaction between communicators. It plays a crucial role in interpreting messages and can significantly affect how communication is received and understood. For instance, the context includes the physical setting where the conversation takes place, the social norms of the participants, and the specific situation that prompted the communication. These elements influence the meaning conveyed, the appropriateness of certain behaviors, and the overall tone of the interaction. Understanding the context allows communicators to navigate and interpret messages more effectively, taking into account factors like cultural background, audience expectations, and the specifics of the communicative situation itself.

### 2. What is the goal of an interpretive approach in communication studies?

- A. To measure communication's effectiveness
- B. To develop new communication theories
- C. To gain a deeper understanding of communication phenomena
- D. To create public speaking guidelines

The goal of an interpretive approach in communication studies is centered on gaining a deeper understanding of communication phenomena. This approach emphasizes the subjective and contextual aspects of communication, focusing on how individuals construct meaning through their interactions. Interpretive researchers aim to uncover the nuances of human experience and the complexities of meaning-making processes, often through qualitative methods such as interviews, focus groups, and ethnography. Unlike approaches that seek to measure effectiveness or develop theories in a more empirical sense, the interpretive framework prioritizes context, culture, and individual perspectives. This depth of understanding is crucial for exploring how communication shapes and is shaped by social realities, thereby offering insights into the lived experiences of communicators.

### 3. How do quantitative methods typically present their findings?

- A. Through narrative descriptions
- B. As numerical data analyzed using statistics
- C. By fictional scenarios
- D. Through philosophical discussions

Quantitative methods focus on collecting and analyzing numerical data to uncover patterns, relationships, and trends within the information gathered. This approach relies heavily on statistics to interpret the data and presents results in an objective, measurable way. By using charts, graphs, and tables, quantitative findings offer clear and precise evidence that can be generalized to larger populations. This method contrasts with narrative descriptions, fictional scenarios, or philosophical discussions, which do not emphasize numerical analysis or statistical rigor. Therefore, presenting findings as numerical data analyzed using statistics is the hallmark of quantitative research, making it the most accurate representation of how these methods convey their results.

4. How many sexual identity categories are officially recognized?

- A. A fixed number based on international standards.
- B. Two, based on traditional views.
- C. No set number of sexual identity categories exist.
- D. Only those defined by government regulations.

The notion that no set number of sexual identity categories exist reflects the understanding that sexual identity is a complex, fluid, and evolving concept. In contemporary discussions around sexuality, identities can vary widely based on cultural, social, and individual factors. This recognition allows for a diverse range of identities beyond binary classifications, such as heterosexual and homosexual, including terms like bisexual, pansexual, asexual, queer, and many others. The fluidity in these categories arises because people's understanding and expression of their sexual orientation can change over time, and some individuals may identify in ways that do not fit neatly into established categories. This evolving nature underscores the importance of recognizing a spectrum of sexual identities rather than trying to confine them to a specific or fixed number. In contrast, the other options imply a rigidity to sexual identity classifications, which does not accurately reflect the current social and academic understanding surrounding this topic.

5. What type of methodology is typically used in the Interpretivist Approach?

- A. Quantitative experiments
- B. Qualitative studies in natural habitats
- C. Surveys with large sample sizes
- D. Statistical analyses of communication patterns

The Interpretivist Approach in communication studies emphasizes understanding human behavior and social phenomena from the perspective of those being studied. This methodology is characterized by a focus on qualitative studies, which allow researchers to gain deep insights into individuals' experiences, feelings, and interpretations of their social world. By conducting research in natural habitats, interpretivists aim to observe and understand communication in context, thus capturing the complexity and richness of human interaction. This approach is well-suited for exploring nuances in communication that numbers alone cannot convey, making qualitative studies essential for this methodology.

## 6. How does self-esteem impact communication?

- A. Higher self-esteem can lead to more confident communication
- B. Individuals with low self-esteem often dominate conversations
- C. Self-esteem has no impact on how one communicates
- D. Higher self-esteem can lead to aggressive communication styles

Higher self-esteem plays a significant role in enhancing one's ability to communicate effectively. When individuals possess higher self-esteem, they tend to engage in conversations with greater confidence, which enables them to express their thoughts and feelings more clearly. This confidence often makes them more open to sharing ideas, participating in discussions, and asserting themselves in social situations. As a result, they are more likely to initiate conversations, maintain eye contact, and exhibit positive body language, all of which contribute to more effective and meaningful interactions. This connection between self-esteem and communication highlights how internal perceptions of self-worth influence external expressions in social contexts. Higher self-esteem can also lead to a willingness to take risks in communication, such as speaking up in group settings or addressing conflict directly, further facilitating richer dialogues and connections.

## 7. Which term describes the understanding of one's distinct characteristics and how they compare to others?

- A. Self-respect
- B. Self-concept
- C. Mutable
- D. Enacting identities

The term that best describes the understanding of one's distinct characteristics and how they compare to others is self-concept. Self-concept refers to the overall perception and evaluation that individuals have of themselves, which includes their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about their own identity and personal attributes. It encompasses how one sees themselves in relation to others, integrating aspects such as physical appearance, personality traits, abilities, and social roles. Having a well-developed self-concept is crucial for effective communication, as it influences how individuals present themselves and interact with others. By understanding their distinct characteristics, individuals can navigate social situations with greater confidence, clarity, and authenticity. This understanding also aids in recognizing the differences and similarities with others, which can enhance interpersonal relations and communication effectiveness. The other terms do not encapsulate this understanding in the same way, as self-respect relates to one's regard for oneself, mutable refers to the ability to change or be changed, and enacting identities involves performing roles or personas in specific contexts rather than a reflective understanding of oneself.

8. What is defined as any stimulus that can interfere with the quality of a message?

A. Feedback

B. Noise

C. Symbols

D. Messages

The term that refers to any stimulus that can interfere with the quality of a message is noise. In communication theory, noise encompasses anything that disrupts or distorts the message being sent, received, or understood. This can include physical noise, such as sounds in the environment that hinder auditory reception, as well as psychological noise, such as preconceived notions or emotional states that affect how the message is interpreted. Understanding noise is essential in the study of communication because it highlights the potential barriers that individuals may face when trying to convey or receive messages. This helps to underline the importance of clarity and attentiveness in communication practices, as well as the need for effective feedback mechanisms to ensure that the intended message is accurately perceived. The other terms listed have distinct definitions that do not encompass the concept of interference in the same way. Feedback refers to the responses or reactions of the receiver, symbols represent the elements used in communication (like words or gestures), and messages are the actual content being communicated. These terms are critical to understanding communication dynamics, but they do not directly address the disruptive influences that impede communication effectiveness as noise does.

9. What do paradigms in communication carry with them?

A. A set of assumptions about knowledge

B. A definitive way to communicate

C. Rigorous rules for behavior

D. A focus on emotional expression

Paradigms in communication are foundational models or frameworks that shape our understanding of communication processes. They carry a set of assumptions about knowledge, which includes beliefs about how communication works, how meaning is created, and how individuals relate to one another through communicative acts. This understanding is deeply embedded in our interactions and helps guide our interpretation of messages and the roles individuals play in communication. The other options do not encapsulate the concept of paradigms as effectively. While they may touch on certain aspects of communication, they do not fundamentally represent the conceptual framework that paradigms provide. For example, suggesting that paradigms offer a definitive way to communicate simplifies the complexity of communication processes, which can vary greatly across contexts and cultures. Similarly, implying that there are rigorous rules for behavior overlooks the flexibility and adaptability inherent in human communication. Lastly, focusing solely on emotional expression limits the scope of what paradigms encompass, as they are concerned with broader theories and assumptions rather than just emotional aspects.

10. What is the main difference between etic and emic epistemologies?

- A. One focuses on social interactions while the other focuses on measurement
- B. One involves objective analysis and the other focuses on subjective understanding
- C. One looks at group behavior while the other looks at individual behavior
- D. One is based on empirical research while the other is theoretical

The distinction between etic and emic epistemologies is rooted in the perspective from which cultural understanding is approached. Emic epistemology refers to an insider's perspective, where understanding arises from the subjective experiences and interpretations of individuals within a culture. This approach seeks to comprehend how people within that culture view their world, often relying on personal narratives and qualitative data that reflect their unique interpretations and meanings. On the other hand, etic epistemology is about an outsider's perspective, where understanding is achieved through objective analysis and often involves the application of universal categories or language to interpret cultural phenomena. The approach typically relies on quantitative methods, aiming for a more detached, systematic, and comparative evaluation of cultural practices. The importance of this distinction lies in how it informs researchers' methodologies and approaches. While emic focuses on insiders' views and subjective realities, etic emphasizes a more objective perspective that seeks broader patterns and generalizations. This fundamental difference is why the chosen answer accurately represents the key contrast between the two epistemologies.