



1. Communication Process: Definition, elements, and models of communication

BVPT-104: English & Communication

Unit 1: Understanding the Communication Process

Chapter 1: Communication Process - Definition, Elements, and Models

1. What is Communication?

Communication is the process of **exchanging information, ideas, feelings, or messages** between two or more people to create understanding.

In simple words: **Communication is the bridge between people**—we speak, listen, write, gesture, or respond to share and receive meaning.

2. Definition of Communication

- “Communication is the process by which individuals share meaning through the transmission of messages.” - *Michael Gamble*
- “Communication is the transfer of information and understanding from one person to another.” - *Keith Davis*

3. Importance of Communication in Physiotherapy

In healthcare—especially in physiotherapy—**clear communication** is vital:

- To explain exercises or treatment plans to patients
- To coordinate with doctors, nurses, or caregivers
- To gain the trust and cooperation of patients
- To record accurate progress and feedback

4. Elements of the Communication Process

Every communication has **7 key elements**. Together, they form the communication cycle:

Element	Explanation
Sender	The person who initiates the message (e.g., physiotherapist)
Message	The information, thought, or idea being sent
Encoding	Converting the idea into symbols (spoken words, gestures, writing)
Medium/Channel	The method of communication (e.g., speech, email, WhatsApp, body language)
Receiver	The person who receives the message (e.g., patient)
Decoding	The process of interpreting or understanding the message
Feedback	The receiver’s response (e.g., questions, facial expressions, actions)



□ **Noise:** Any barrier that distorts the message, like background noise, language gap, or emotional stress.

5. Simple Example in Physiotherapy

- **Sender:** You (physiotherapist)
- **Message:** "Do 10 leg raises twice daily."
- **Encoding:** Speaking in simple English, showing the exercise
- **Channel:** Face-to-face + visual demonstration
- **Receiver:** Elderly patient
- **Decoding:** Patient tries to understand and perform
- **Feedback:** Patient nods, asks "Like this?" and repeats

If the patient didn't understand or couldn't hear—**communication failed** due to noise.

6. Models of Communication

A. Linear Model (One-way)

→ Simple flow: Sender → Message → Receiver

Example: Giving a speech or announcement

□ Limitation: No feedback, so you can't tell if message was understood.

B. Interactive Model (Two-way with feedback)

→ Sender → Message → Receiver → Feedback

← Context and noise are considered.

Example: Asking a patient if they understood an exercise, and modifying your explanation based on their response.

C. Transactional Model (Simultaneous)

→ Both people are **sender and receiver at the same time**

Example: Live conversation, where both respond to each other's words, tone, and body language in real time.

7. Barriers to Effective Communication

Barrier Type	Example
Physical	Noise, distance, poor lighting
Language	Use of medical jargon the patient doesn't understand
Psychological	Anxiety, anger, lack of interest
Cultural/Social	Gender roles, traditions, accent differences
Physiological	Hearing loss, speech difficulties



8. Self-Check Questions

1. What is the role of the “receiver” in communication?
2. Give two examples of “channels” in physiotherapy communication.
3. What is the difference between linear and interactive models?
4. Name two common communication barriers.
5. Why is feedback important in clinical communication?

ANSWERS:

1. The receiver interprets and responds to the message
2. Spoken instructions, visual demonstration
3. Linear has no feedback; interactive includes feedback loop
4. Noise, use of complex language
5. Feedback ensures the message is understood and improves clarity

□ Key Take-Home Points

- Communication is more than just talking—it’s **understanding and being understood**.
- It involves **clear messages, proper delivery, active listening**, and **adaptation** based on feedback.
- Good communication improves **patient safety, cooperation, and outcomes**.
- Always consider possible **barriers** and choose your words and tone carefully.