Communication theories

Media Richness Theory
Media Synchronicity Theory
Communication Orientation Model
Media differ in their ability to transmit information.

More information (audio, visual, verbal) facilitates information sharing and building relationships.

- Face-to-face communication: Richest medium
- Online communication or Computer Mediated Communication (CMC): Lean medium, cold and impersonal

Daft & Lengel, 1984, 1986
MRT
Daft & Lengel, 1984, 1986

If cues are filtered out:

• Less social impact, more psychological distance
• Depersonalization, bad intentions
• Etiquettes are less prevalent: inappropriate reactions
  – Online disinhibition: to act out more frequently and intensely than one would do face-to-face (Kiesler et al., 2004)
  – Flaming: swearing, insulting others, hurtful comments
  – Closing
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synchronous</th>
<th>Asynchronous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Real time</td>
<td>Distributed over time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instant messaging, chat</td>
<td>Email, caucus, software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate FB</td>
<td>Time to reflect, review, revise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>What is said?</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>What do I think about this?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>What am I going to say?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>What is relevant to me?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less pressure, no interruptions</td>
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</tbody>
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MST
Dennis et al.
Types e-mediation

Chat
Synchronous communication

Email
Asynchronous communication
Intake versus full

Avatars:
Automatized Mediation

Answer frame

Mediator as facilitator

Mediator as dropbox and facilitator

1. Collecting information
2. Analysing
3. Diagnosing the problem
4. Suggestions for solutions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synchronous</th>
<th>Asynchronous</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People work together. They discuss and analyse previous actions together in order to reach <strong>common understanding</strong></td>
<td>Individuals work without being disturbed. They consult, analyse and integrate information in order <strong>to create meaning</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convergence</td>
<td>Conveyance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Effects of CMC < people’s attitude:
  – **Cooperative**:
    visual, vocal channels and synchronicity do not matter
  – **Neutral**:
    visual, vocal channels and synchronicity increase outcomes
  – **Competitive**
    visual, vocal channels and synchronicity decrease outcomes
    => all information is interpreted as efforts to dominate

• Need to develop cooperative attitude