

Chapter 2: Connecting Perception, Self, and Communication

Multiple Choice

1. In his assertion that “Nothing is clear in and of itself but in some context for some person,” communication scholar Robert L. Scott meant that _____.
 - a. when we talk with others, we say things in certain ways that undermine the creation of meaning
 - b. one person’s perceptions are not more accurate than another's
 - c. words are static and unchanging
 - d. communication occurs in a linear, step-by-step fashion

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.1 Explain the connection between perception and your communication competence.

Topic: Perception and Communication

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

2. Our perceptions are based on _____.
 - a. universal meaning
 - b. the experiences of our peer group
 - c. our personal experiences
 - d. the meaning assigned by our culture

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.1 Explain the connection between perception and your communication competence.

Topic: Perception and Communication

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

3. What statement is correct about the process of perception?
 - a. Perception is a simple process.
 - b. Perception is universal.
 - c. Perception involves selecting, organizing, and interpreting information.
 - d. Perception of a single communication event provides a complete picture.

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.1 Explain the connection between perception and your communication competence.

Topic: Perception and Communication

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

4. When we make deliberate choices to experience or to avoid experiencing particular stimuli, we engage in _____.
 - a. selective set
 - b. selective exposure
 - c. perceptual set
 - d. selective attention

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.2 Understand the effect of the three stages of perception on your communication.

Topic: The Perception Process

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

5. What are the three primary elements of the perception process?
- selecting, organizing, and interpreting information
 - creating, understanding, and selecting information
 - creating, interpreting, and organizing information
 - selecting, deconstructing, and remembering information

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.2 Understand the effect of the three stages of perception on your communication.

Topic: The Perception Process

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

6. Kate is putting together a puzzle. She places silver puzzle pieces in one pile, purple puzzle pieces in another pile, and pink puzzle pieces in a third pile. What organizational strategy helps Kate to understand this information?
- closure
 - proximity
 - similarity
 - complexity

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.2 Understand the effect of the three stages of perception on your communication.

Topic: The Perception Process

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

7. The tendency to fill in missing pieces and to extend lines in order to finish or complete figures illustrates what organizational process?
- closure
 - proximity
 - similarity
 - complexity

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.2 Understand the effect of the three stages of perception on your communication.

Topic: The Perception Process

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

8. You arrive at a mall you have never visited before, and you are not sure where your favorite store is located. You approach an information kiosk to ask for directions, because you have received directions at other information kiosks before. This illustrates what strategy used for interpretation?
- interpretation based on new situations
 - interpretations based on others' opinions
 - interpretation based on a new situation
 - interpretation based on experiences

Answer: d

Learning Objective: 2.2 Understand the effect of the three stages of perception on your communication.

Topic: The Perception Process

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

9. The categorizing of events, objects or people without regard to unique qualities or characteristics is most reflective of _____.
- impartiality
 - stereotyping
 - attribution
 - perception

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.3 Identify seven reasons why different people may perceive the same situation in different ways.

Topic: Perceptual Differences

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

10. Bob continually communicates with 28-year-old Lisa as if she were still a child. In Bob's eyes, Lisa will always be "his little girl." This illustrates the fact that _____ can interfere with effective communication.
- a perceptual set
 - dispositional attribution
 - gender
 - situational attribution

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.3 Identify seven reasons why different people may perceive the same situation in different ways.

Topic: Perceptual Differences

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

11. Instead of accepting that external factors influence other people's behavior, George attributes the bank teller's rudeness this morning to being "that kind of person." George's belief reflects _____.
- a perceptual set
 - discrimination
 - profiling
 - a fundamental attribution error

Answer: d

Learning Objective: 2.3 Identify seven reasons why different people may perceive the same situation in different ways.

Topic: Perceptual Differences

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

12. When Janet wakes up on Sunday, the rain outside makes her think to herself what a great day for getting organized. On Monday when she wakes up and it's rainy outside, she thinks to herself how gloomy and depressing the day ahead will be. The difference in Janet's perception can best be attributed to _____.
- physical characteristics
 - cultural background
 - psychological state
 - gender

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.3 Identify seven reasons why different people may perceive the same situation in different ways.

Topic: Perceptual Differences

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

13. Which behavior would be most helpful in improving your communication competence?
- Take the roles of perception at face value.
 - Seek out as much information as possible.
 - Trust your inferences as correct.
 - Always go with your first perception.

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.4 Accurately interpret and check your perceptions to improve your communication competence.

Topic: Improving Perception Competencies and Perception Checking

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

14. Perception checking involves which communication strategy?
- verifying information
 - trusting your intuition
 - making assumptions
 - jumping to conclusions

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.4 Accurately interpret and check your perceptions to improve your communication competence.

Topic: Improving Perception Competencies and Perception Checking

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

15. A statement which is objective and is easily verified is a(n) _____.
- belief
 - inference
 - opinion
 - fact

Answer: d

Learning Objective: 2.4 Accurately interpret and check your perceptions to improve your communication competence.

Topic: Improving Perception Competencies and Perception Checking

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

16. Which statement is the best example of an inference?

- a. Abraham Lincoln was the sixteenth president of the United States.
- b. Thanksgiving was established as a national holiday during the Lincoln administration.
- c. The Gettysburg Address was among the most influential presidential addresses in history.
- d. Abraham Lincoln was assassinated on April 14, 1865.

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.4 Accurately interpret and check your perceptions to improve your communication competence.

Topic: Improving Perception Competencies and Perception Checking

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

17. According to the text, our social identity involves _____.

- a. what we aspire to become
- b. how we see and evaluate ourselves
- c. what we hide from the world
- d. how others see us

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.5 Understand the role perception has in determining self-concept.

Topic: Perception and Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

18. At work, Clarence is always pleasant and efficient and seems to get the job done with a minimum of fuss. At home, Clarence often seems to lose his temper over the least little thing. What do these two situations tell us about Clarence and his self-concept?

- a. No person is an island.
- b. We all manage to maintain a coherent image of our respective selves.
- c. Our perceptions of others and events are usually objective.
- d. We define ourselves and behave differently in different situations.

Answer: d

Learning Objective: 2.5 Understand the role perception has in determining self-concept.

Topic: Perception and Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

19. When someone asks Maria to describe herself, she usually says she is a first-generation Latino-American. This description represents Maria's _____.

- a. self-image
- b. public identity
- c. self-enhancement
- d. self-esteem

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.6 Differentiate among self-concept, self-image, and self-esteem.
Topic: Understanding Self-Concept
Difficulty Level: Moderate
Skill Level: Apply What You Know

20. What is identified as a critical component in the initial development of our self-concept?
- genetic inheritance
 - generational cohort
 - parental communication
 - media

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.6 Differentiate among self-concept, self-image, and self-esteem.
Topic: Understanding Self-Concept
Difficulty Level: Moderate
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

21. Relatively long-lasting principles or standards that guide our behavior are known as _____.
- opinions
 - values
 - beliefs
 - attitudes

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.6 Differentiate among self-concept, self-image, and self-esteem.
Topic: Understanding Self-Concept
Difficulty Level: Easy
Skill Level: Remember the Facts

22. Shraddha enjoys being around outgoing people, but she dislikes those who brag about themselves. Shraddha's feelings about people she prefers reflect a(n) _____.
- standard
 - value
 - belief
 - attitude

Answer: d

Learning Objective: 2.6 Differentiate among self-concept, self-image, and self-esteem.
Topic: Understanding Self-Concept
Difficulty Level: Moderate
Skill Level: Apply What You Know

23. A belief can best be explained as _____.
- a conviction
 - a preference
 - a desire
 - a feeling

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.6 Differentiate among self-concept, self-image, and self-esteem.
Topic: Understanding Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Moderate
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

24. According to the model developed by social psychologist John Kinch, what directly affects or alters our behavior?
- our responses to other's behavior
 - our attitudes and beliefs
 - our perceptions of other's responses
 - our innate self-concept

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.6 Differentiate among self-concept, self-image, and self-esteem.

Topic: Understanding Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

25. Which statement is correct regarding the social identity level of the personal-social identity continuum?
- We can experience all aspects of our self-concept simultaneously.
 - Our personal identity characterizes how alike we are to others.
 - Self-identity has little influence upon our behavior.
 - Characterizing ourselves depends upon comparisons to others.

Answer: d

Learning Objective: 2.6 Differentiate among self-concept, self-image, and self-esteem.

Topic: Understanding Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

26. When we describe ourselves as members of a group, we tend to emphasize _____.
- ways we are similar to other group members
 - what we wish to change about the group
 - ways the group can shape our identity
 - what we dislike about the group

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.6 Differentiate among self-concept, self-image, and self-esteem.

Topic: Understanding Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

27. Jenn likes to document her daily life on Snapchat and Instagram. She posts what she's eating, where she's going and who she is hanging out with. It is clear that Jenn has a high degree of _____.
- online communication apprehension
 - online self-disclosure
 - online communication competence
 - online miscommunication

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.7 Identify social media factors that influence self-concept.

Topic: Social Media and Perceived Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Moderate
Skill Level: Apply What You Know

28. Online social connection is the belief that online communication enables _____.
- apprehension
 - self-esteem
 - social contact
 - miscommunication

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.7 Identify social media factors that influence self-concept.

Topic: Social Media and Perceived Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

29. What is most valued by cultures with a collectivistic orientation?
- the group
 - the self
 - individualism
 - personal achievement

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.8 Characterize the role of culture in determining self-concept.

Topic: Culture and Perceived Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

30. When dealing with individuals with different cultural backgrounds, competent communicators should develop the ability to _____.
- adapt their perceptions
 - focus on personal goals
 - avoid interpretation of stimuli
 - use selective exposure

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.8 Characterize the role of culture in determining self-concept.

Topic: Culture and Perceived Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

31. Which term refers to something that is socially constructed?
- sex
 - cognition
 - gender
 - anatomy

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.9 Characterize the role of gender in determining self-concept.

Topic: Gender and Perception of Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

32. Generally, when does gender consistency develop for most people?
- a. in utero
 - b. at birth
 - c. between ages 4 to 7
 - d. between ages 14 to 17

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.9 Characterize the role of gender in determining self-concept.

Topic: Gender and Perception of Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

33. In research involving videos of 9-month old infants, observers identified the infant as either male or female based on _____.
- a. size
 - b. name
 - c. beauty
 - d. behavior

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.9 Characterize the role of gender in determining self-concept.

Topic: Gender and Perception of Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

34. According to psycholinguist Deborah Tannen, male conversations are _____.
- a. seeking support
 - b. negotiations to reach consensus
 - c. seeking intimacy
 - d. negotiations to gain the upper hand

Answer: d

Learning Objective: 2.9 Characterize the role of gender in determining self-concept.

Topic: Gender and Perception of Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

35. Which type of men and women are identified by psychologists as those most likely to be successful in their interactions and careers?
- a. individuals with strictly male traits
 - b. individuals with strictly female traits
 - c. individuals with neither male nor female traits
 - d. individuals with both male and female traits

Answer: d

Learning Objective: 2.9 Characterize the role of gender in determining self-concept.

Topic: Gender and Perception of Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

36. Mae is a little anxious when it's time for her first mid-term exams in college. But she prepares thoroughly, and expects to get good grades just as she always has. Mae's expectations reflect which aspect of self-concept?
- other-enhancement
 - self-fulfilling prophecy
 - self-enhancement
 - impression management

Answer: b

Learning Objective: 2.10 Explain the roles of self-fulfilling prophecy and impression management as they relate to self-concept.

Topic: Self-Fulfilling Prophecy and Impression Management

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

37. Before his job interview, Anderson buys a new suit and gets a haircut. On the morning of his interview, he tells himself that he is a great candidate for this job and that the interviewer is sure to like him. Anderson's preparations are a type of _____.
- impression management
 - other-enhancement
 - low self-esteem
 - self-fulfilling prophecy

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.10 Explain the roles of self-fulfilling prophecy and impression management as they relate to self-concept.

Topic: Self-Fulfilling Prophecy and Impression Management

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

38. According to Gonzales and Hancock, why does social media use tend to enhance our self-esteem?
- eliminates our communication anxiety
 - helps us practice our social skills
 - information we post is usually positive
 - increases our social contacts

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.10 Explain the roles of self-fulfilling prophecy and impression management as they relate to self-concept.

Topic: Self-Fulfilling Prophecy and Impression Management

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

39. The way we want to appear to others is referred to as our _____.
- perceived self
 - social self
 - presenting self
 - real self

Answer: c

Learning Objective: 2.10 Explain the roles of self-fulfilling prophecy and impression management as

they relate to self-concept.

Topic: Self-Fulfilling Prophecy and Impression Management

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

40. Which strategy is essential to improving self-concept?
- Make a commitment to improve or change.
 - Ignore why you are unhappy.
 - Focus on your best qualities, and forget about the negative ones.
 - Set overly optimistic goals.

Answer: a

Learning Objective: 2.11 Identify six ways to improve self-concept.

Topic: Enhancing Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Essay Questions

- Identify and explain the three stages of perception.

Answer:

- The first stage of perception is awareness of our surroundings and selecting what we attend to out of all of the stimuli before us. Selection occurs when we mentally sort one thing from another, based on our previous experiences.
- Second, we organize the information we perceive in a way that makes sense to us. Organization is the sorting, organizing, or categorizing of information.
- Third, we interpret or assign meaning to the information we perceive. Interpretation is the assigning of meaning to stimuli. We use our experiences, both past and present, as well as the opinions of others to help interpret the meaning of stimuli.

Learning Objective: 2.2 Understand the effect of the three stages of perception on your communication.

Topic: The Perception Process

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

- Selective exposure, selective attention, and selective retention: define each, and explain the relationship they have with each other.

Answer:

- Selective exposure is the deliberate process of making choices to experience or avoid particular stimuli. Selective attention is the process of focusing on specific stimuli while ignoring or downplaying others. Selective retention occurs when we process, store, and retrieve information that we have already selected, organized, and interpreted.
- These activities in the perception process are related because they all build on each other. We first have to make a choice regarding what we want to be exposed to, and then from all of those competing stimuli, we must determine which to attend to and which to ignore. As a result, we become selective regarding what information we want to retain for future use.

Learning Objective: 2.2 Understand the effect of the three stages of perception on your communication.

Topic: The Perception Process

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

3. Define proximity in terms of perception. Why is this a faulty method of organizing information?

Answer:

- Proximity is the grouping of two or more stimuli that are close to one another based on the assumption that, because objects or people appear together, they are similar.
- It is not unusual to think that people whose appearance, nationality, race, and origin are similar and who reside in the same community or belong to the same organization (fraternity, sorority, club, church, etc.) perceive others, events, and activities in the same way. For us to assume that they do would not only be inaccurate, but also wrong. We must be careful not to categorize or to communicate as if those who appear together think, behave, and believe the same way on every issue or situation. Competent communicators verify and do not categorize individuals based on their proximity to one another.

Learning Objective: 2.2 Understand the effect of the three stages of perception on your communication.

Topic: The Perception Process

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

4. Discuss the concept of perceptual set. Provide an example that demonstrates it in terms of communication.

Answer:

- A perceptual set is a fixed, previously determined view of events, objects, or people. It allows our experiences to control or focus our perceptions so that we ignore information that is different or has changed about an event, object, or person. It is a form of stereotyping.
- Student examples will vary.

Learning Objective: 2.3 Identify seven reasons why different people may perceive the same situation in different ways.

Topic: Perceptual Differences

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

5. When we communicate with others, a variety of things might influence our perceptions and behaviors. One substantial factor affecting our communication encounters is our own cultural background. Explain how one's cultural background influences communication. Provide an example from your own communication experiences that illustrates your answer.

Answer:

- Culture is "a set of interpretations about beliefs, values, norms, and social practices that affect behaviors of a relatively large group of people." A culture evolves through communication, beliefs, artifacts, and a style of living shared among people. A group's culture usually includes similarities in religion, language, thinking, social rules, laws, perceptions, communicative style, and attitudes, all of which contribute to a group's identity as distinct from that of other cultural groups.

- Your views on work, education, freedom, age, competitiveness, personal space, cleanliness and hygiene, gender, loyalty, death and mourning, etiquette, health, status differentiation, bodily adornment, courtship, family, art, music, technology, and the like, all play a role in your cultural identity. Your views also affect how you communicate and interact with others.
- Student examples will vary.

Learning Objective: 2.3 Identify seven reasons why different people may perceive the same situation in different ways.

Topic: Perceptual Differences

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

6. Becoming a competent communicator involves perception checking. Explain the three steps involved in perception checking, using an example to demonstrate your response.

Answer:

- Describe the observed behavior.
- Think of at least two interpretations of the behavior—inferences.
- Finally, verify your interpretation. This would immediately clarify any possible misunderstandings.
- Student examples will vary.

Learning Objective: 2.4 Accurately interpret and check your perceptions to improve your communication competence.

Topic: Improving Perception Competencies and Perception Checking

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

7. Briefly define values, beliefs and attitudes. How are these concepts related?

Answer:

- Relatively long-lasting principles or standards that guide our behavior or judgment of what is important in our lives are called values.
- An evaluative judgment in terms of likes and dislikes about oneself, others, events, ideas, or objects is called an attitude.
- A belief is a conviction or confidence in the truth of something that is not based on absolute proof.
- Making clear and absolute distinctions among values, attitudes, and beliefs is difficult because they are interrelated. Attitudes help determine self-concept, but unlike values, they are more narrowly defined. The relationship between values and attitudes is close because values are reflected in our attitudes. Attitudes differ from beliefs in that attitudes include an evaluation of whether someone or something is good or bad. Beliefs, in turn, reflect the perception of whether something is true or false. Your attitudes and beliefs may change because of your experiences, but your values endure.

Learning Objective: 2.6 Differentiate among self-concept, self-image, and self-esteem.

Topic: Understanding Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

8. Discuss the personal-social identity continuum. Using this model, describe your personal identity and your social identity as a member of this class.

Answer:

- The personal-social identity continuum is a concept reflecting how individuals perceive themselves differently depending on where they are at a particular moment in time. The personal identity end of this continuum refers to thinking of ourselves primarily as individuals. The social identity end refers to thinking of ourselves as members of specific social groups. Because it is impossible to experience all aspects of our self-concept simultaneously, the specific aspect of our identity that is prominent at any given moment influences how we think about ourselves, and this in turn has consequences for our behavior.
- Our personal identities are prominent, and this is likely to result in self-descriptions that emphasize how we are different from others.
- At the other end of the personal-social identity continuum, we can perceive ourselves as members of a group, which means we emphasize the ways we are similar to other group members. At the social identity level, we describe ourselves in terms of the attributes shared by members of our group as well as what differentiates “our group” from other groups.
- Student examples will vary but must reflect two separate identities. One must emphasize how the student differs from others. The other must emphasize how the student is similar to members of the group (classmates).

Learning Objective: 2.6 Differentiate among self-concept, self-image, and self-esteem.

Topic: Understanding Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

9. Why is aging considered a social construct? How has your culture affected your view of aging and the elderly?

Answer:

- Aging is not only a biological inevitability, but it also can be a social construct. According to Giles et al., people look at the aging process differently, for example, depending on the country in which they live. They point out that when “young adulthood” begins and ends depends upon the country: For example, in the United States it begins at 17 and ends at 28, while in Bulgaria it begins at 16 and ends at 32. Middle age in the United States begins at 33 and ends at 59, while in Mongolia it begins at 29 and ends at 45. Elderly age begins in the United States at 61 and in Ghana at 50.
- In Western societies, it is common to hold negative attitudes about people perceived as old. This seemingly unfavorable perception often translates for some into stereotypes that can be harmful because they shape our expectations of aging as well as how younger people behave and treat older people. For example, some stereotypes imply older people are less competent, slow-thinking, hopeless, naïve, selfish, lonely, depressed, and so on. These stereotypes can potentially affect older people’s self-concepts and ultimately how they communicate and see themselves.
- Student examples will vary but must reflect a view of aging supported by cultural detail.

Learning Objective: 2.8 Characterize the role of culture in determining self-concept.

Topic: Culture and Perceived Self-concept

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

10. Most of us also have areas of our self-image we would like to improve or change. How could you enhance your own self-concept? Select one area to improve, and explain how you might go about this process.

Answer:

- Student examples will vary.
- Response should discuss most of the following steps:
 - Decide what you would like to change or improve about yourself.
 - Describe why you feel the way you do about yourself.
 - Make a commitment to improve or change.
 - Set reasonable goals for yourself.
 - Decide on the specific actions you are going to take.
 - Associate with positive people whenever possible.

Learning Objective: 2.11 Identify six ways to improve self-concept.

Topic: Enhancing Self-Concept

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts