

Interpersonal

Week 8 notes - Communication

Communication

- Men and women interact/communicate differently
- Men prefer side-by-side interactions
- Women prefer face-to-face interactions

Interruptions

- Men and women have different expectations about communication based of their preferred style
- **Goal of interruption** → re-establish dominance

→ functions

1. **Confirmation** → clarification or agreement (“mm-hmm”)
2. **Rejection** → disagreement
3. **Disconfirmation** → making light of speaker’s statement and changing topic

→ **Zimmerman & West 1975**

- Little evidence that men cause all interruptions (studies from 1965-1991)
- 6/20 studies showed men interrupting
- 13/20 studies showed men and women interrupting
- 2/20 showed women interrupting men

→ **Kennedy & Camden - 1983**

- Women interrupted more than men
- 50% were confirmation interruptions
- Conclusion → no support for belief that men interrupt more

Language

- Women more polite than men

Tag Questions

- Interpreted differently based on speaker
- Women use them to promote conversations
- EX: “it’s nice outside, **isn’t it**”?
- Men use them during uncertainty

→ Credibility of Speaker

- **Low cred:** uses of tag questions → messages not persuasive
- **High cred:** uses of tag questions → messages more persuasive

Qualifiers/Hedges

- Women use qualifiers
- “I guess” or “i think” or “sort of” or “you know”
- Indicates uncertainty

Back Channeling

: verbal and non-verbal responses to someone’s utterances

- Ex: brief statements, head nodding/shaking, uses of “hmm” or “right”\

Emotionality

- Women are more emotional, expressive, and sensitive
- Women converse w affective orientation
- Men use instrumental orientation
- Women more expressive than men

→ **Newman et al - 2008**

- 14,000 written texts by men and women expressed their thoughts, emotions and doubts and used more verbs

Separate Culture Hypothesis (**Wood - 1994**)

: each sex develops unique ways of communicating, expressing intimacy, emotions, and support

- Proposed men and women are from diff cultures
- Issues: circular and cannot be tested empirically

Focus of Relationships

→ any relationship

- Women emphasize affective skills
- Men emphasize technical skills

→ intimate relationship

- Both genders placed high value on affective skills

Brain Wiring

- Discovered male and female brains develop similarly up to around puberty and later diverge
- Male and female brains have diff developmental trajectories

Skill-Specialization Hypothesis

- Relies on similarities and differences
- Men and women are part of the same culture but are socialized differently
- Leads to acquisition of different skill sets

- Women are socialized to develop emotional support skills, men are not

Mulac - 2006

- Transcribed texts from speeches of men and women
- Asked participants to identify gender of speaker
- Found that we perceive male and female speakers differently which perpetuates gender stereotypes
- Women speakers: viewed as more literate, agreeable, beautiful
- Male speakers: stronger and aggressive