

The Communicative Event

A detailed understanding of our clients' needs

IATEFL BESIG Annual Conference

Stuttgart, Germany

November 17, 2012

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What I've learned

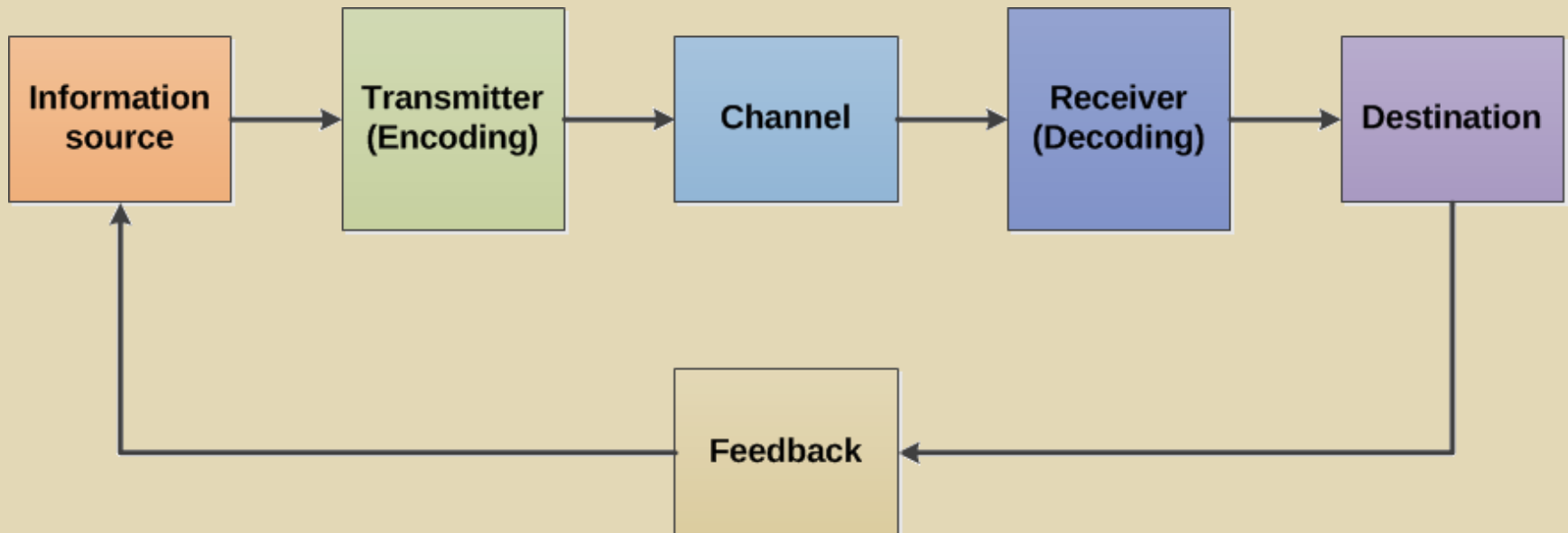
- Learners don't know what they don't know.
- Learners don't particularly care about can do statements.
- Asking them about skills doesn't tell us much (e.g. telephoning, presentations, meetings).
- Current methods are designed to fit the learner to the materials.
- No needs analysis is better than a bad need analysis.
- Language is only one part of communication.

Communication Model

Culture

Communication Skills

Conventions



Communicative Event Form

Name:	Purpose of communication:
Type of communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Email<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone call<input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face meeting<input type="checkbox"/> Virtual meeting<input type="checkbox"/> Resources (documents, web...)<input type="checkbox"/> Conference, seminar, workshop<input type="checkbox"/> Visits/travel<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	Why
Frequency:	Description of situation:
Contacts:	What / How
Country or culture:	Other (successes and challenges):
Who	

Norbert S.

- Late 40s; A2-B1
- SAP Consultant working as freelancer for MNC
- One-to-one lessons, 2 x 90 min per week
- Short-term goal: Improve job performance
- Long-term goal: English as a marketable skill
- Current duties:
 - Handle Level 3 support for enterprise SAP system
 - Project work to improve new versions of the SAP
 - Develop SAP tools and applications for rollout

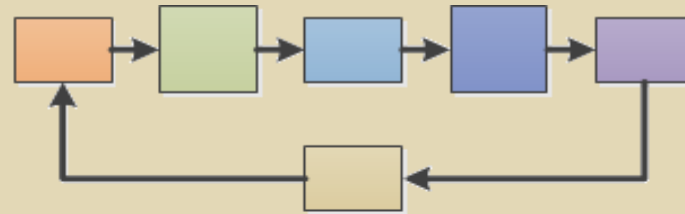
Example

Name: <i>Norbert</i>	Purpose of communication: <i>To give the manager a status report on ongoing projects, discuss problems</i>
Type of communication: <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone call <input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face meeting x Virtual meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Resources (documents, web...) <input type="checkbox"/> Conference, seminar, workshop <input type="checkbox"/> Visits/travel <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	Description of situation: <i>No agenda, no visuals, no minutes. Manager talks about the SAP projects. He directs questions to the attendees about their parts of the project. Problems are discussed as they arise.</i>
Frequency: <i>once a month</i>	
Contacts: <i>SAP teams in the US and Germany, 8 people</i>	Other (successes and challenges): <i>Americans dominate conversation. Americans are in conference room, Germans are at their desks with headsets. Difficulty keeping up with conversation.</i>
Country or culture: <i>USA</i>	

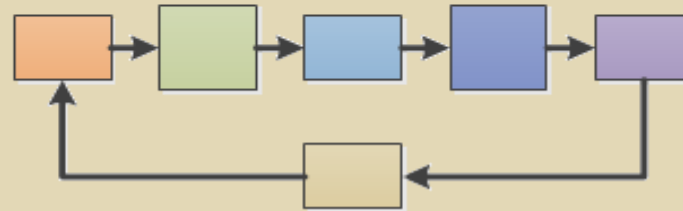
Communicative Events



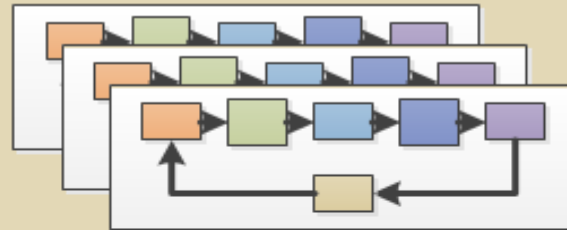
Norbert
SAP Consultant



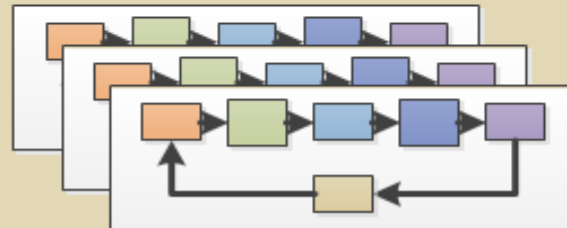
Incident
Tickets



Clarify
Incident
Tickets



Project
Updates



Project
Workshops

Analysis

Name:		Purpose of communication:	
Type of communication:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Inco	Name:		Purpose of communication:
<input type="checkbox"/> Outg	Type of communication:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Tele	<input type="checkbox"/> Inco	Name:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Face	<input type="checkbox"/> Outg	Purpose of communication:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Virtu	Type of communication:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Undi	<input type="checkbox"/> Tele	Name:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Conf	<input type="checkbox"/> Face	Purpose of communication:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Visit	<input type="checkbox"/> Virtu	Type of communication:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Othe	<input type="checkbox"/> Undi	Name:	
Freque	<input type="checkbox"/> Tele	Purpose of communication:	
Contac	<input type="checkbox"/> Face	Type of communication:	
Countr	<input type="checkbox"/> Virtu	Name:	
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	<input type="checkbox"/> Visit	Name:	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Othe	Purpose of communication:	
	Freque	Type of communication:	
	Contac	Name:	
	Countr	Purpose of communication:	
		Type of communication:	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Incoming email <input type="checkbox"/> Outgoing email <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone call <input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding resources (documents, web...) <input type="checkbox"/> Conference, seminar, workshop <input type="checkbox"/> Visits/travel <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	
		Description of situation:	
		Frequency:	
		Contacts:	
		Country or culture:	
		Other (successes and challenges):	

- Which functions are common to all?
- Where does vocabulary overlap?
- What skills training would impact effectiveness?
- What training will make the biggest impact...
 - now?
 - in 6 months?
 - in a year?

Norbert's Scheme of Work

Incidents	Projects	Meetings	General
Describing problems and fixes	Asking and answering questions	Listening (authentic US / India accents)	Small talk
Describing a process	Give a status report	Checking for clarification	Showing interest (giving feedback)
Reporting past actions	Making suggestions	Interrupting and preventing interruption	Linear grammar
Email phrases (formal and informal)	Talking about timelines	Virtual meeting phrases	Working with Americans

Prioritize

	High Frequency	Low Frequency
High Value	Train Now Practice Often	Train Just in Time Refresh
Low Value	Opportunity Training	Time Wasters

Questions

For more information / questions

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Ongoing conversation at:

Business English Ideas

<http://businessenglishideas.blogspot.de/>

Summary

- Understanding the key communicative events is a direct way to assess needs.
- Communicative event analysis creates a simple check list of training objectives.
- Fit the materials to the learner, not vice versa.

Thank you!