



**Communication**  
**Intercultural Communication**  
**Communication as political discourse**

# Communication

What is your definition of communication?

The way to share our feelings, our thoughts, **not only through spoken language but also through body language..**

Any intentional or unintentional attempt or action aimed /meant at sharing information

Such information may be culturally bound

## Communication (n.)

Early 15c., "act of communicating, act of imparting, discussing, debating, conferring," from Old French *comunicacion* (14c., Modern French *communication*) and directly from Latin *communicationem* (nominative *communicatio*) "a making common, imparting, communicating; a figure of speech,"

noun of action from past-participle stem of *communicare* "to share, divide out; communicate, impart, inform; join, unite, participate in," **literally "to make common,"** related to *communis* "common, public, general"

Meaning "that which is communicated" is from late 15c.; meaning "means of communication" is from 1715. Related: *Communications; communicational*.

The transfer of information from sender to receiver... with the information being understood by the receiver.

The proper and correct understanding of the information on the part of the receiver is a very important aspect of communication.

**Can we NOT communicate?**

**Absence of communication may lead to....**

# **COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS OR PURPOSE-S OF COMMUNICATION**



**3 basic purposes:**

**Informing, persuading, entertaining**

# **3 Basic purposes**

## **How do we...**

**Inform?**

**Persuade?**

**Entertain?**

# Types of Communication

**Verbal**

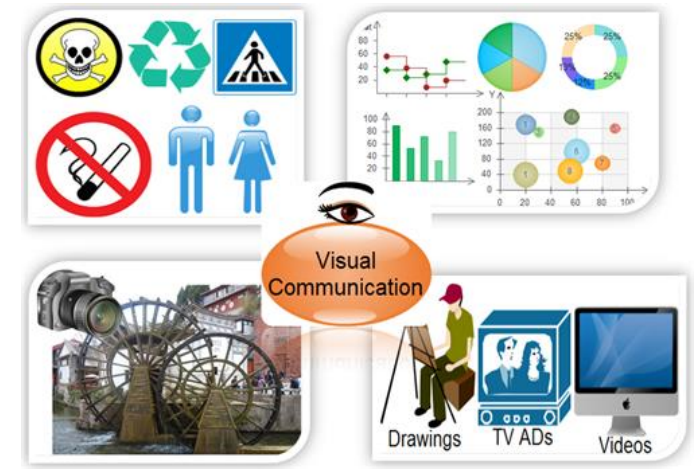


**Non verbal**

**Written**



**Visual**



# Types of Communication

## Verbal



## Non verbal

Verbal communication means any communication involving spoken words or sounds

Non verbal communication involves any type of communication that does not use oratory media to communicate



# Types of Communication



Written communication involves any type of message that makes use of the **written** word.

Forms of written communication include:

## Advantages of written communication:

- Permanent
- Tangible and verifiable record
- It gives the receiver sufficient time to think, act and react.



## HOW ABOUT DIGITAL COMMUNICATION?

## Disadvantages of written communication:

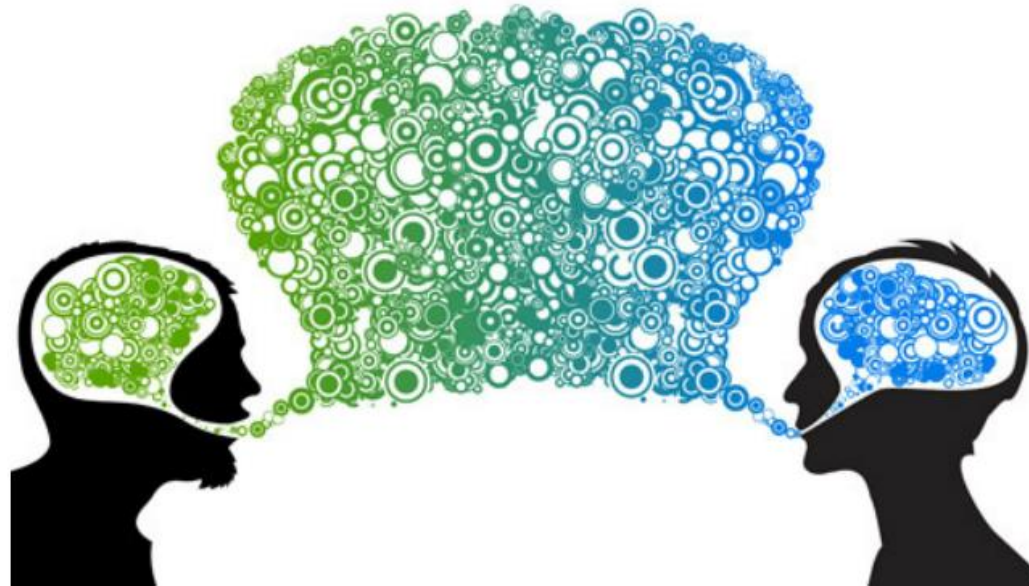
- It is time-consuming
- 2. It is expensive
- 3. It cannot maintain strict secrecy
- 4. It has no scope for immediate clarification if not understood properly.
- 5. Little flexibility se of emergency.

## Advantages of oral/verbal communication:

- Interaction
- Feedback
- Time-saving

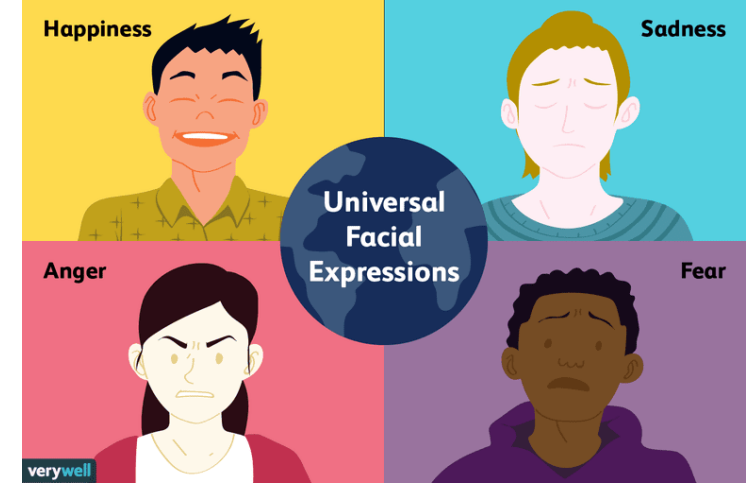
## Disadvantages of oral/verbal communication:

- Lack of time
- Misunderstanding
- Lack of validity



Non verbal communication includes shaking hands, patting the back, hugging, pushing, or other kinds of touch. Other forms of non verbal communication are **facial expressions, gestures,** and eye contact. When someone is talking, they notice changes in **facial expressions** and respond accordingly.

- Proxemics
- Paralanguage
- Body language; posture; proximity



Kinesics is the study of how we use body movement and facial expressions. We interpret a great deal of meaning through body movement, facial expressions, and eye contact. Many people believe they can easily interpret the meanings of body movements and facial expressions in others.

Visual communication is the conveyance of ideas and information in forms that can be seen. Visual communication in part or whole relies on eyesight.



**Visual communication** is a broad spectrum that includes signs, typography, drawing, graphic design, illustration, industrial design, advertising, animation, color, film, and electronic resources.

# Intercultural communication

Why and how do cultures differ?

LANGUAGE, HISTORICAL BACKGROUND  
POLITICAL SYSTEM, EDUCATION, RELIGION,  
ETHNICITY

Habits, traditions, respecting punctuality (time management), proxemics, gender differences, body language, FOOD, AGE, SOCIAL STATUS, NEIGHBOURHOOD

SOCIAL FEATURES

**Intercultural communication refers to.....**

**COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PEOPLE FROM  
DIFFERENT CULTURES AND DIFFERENT CONTEXT**

# Examples of cultural differences





# Examples of cultural differences

## Eye in different culture

- In some cultures, looking people in the eyes is assumed to indicate honesty and straight forwardness , in others it is seen as challenging and rude .
- In Arab culture too little eye contact is regarded as disrespectful .
- In English culture certain amount of eye contact is necessary but too much makes people uncomfortable
- In South- Asian countries direct eye contact is regarded aggressive & rude .



## THE FINGERS ALL TOGETHER



### Italy

'What is this?' or 'What do you want?'  
- usually done with a flick of the wrist.



### Democratic Republic of the Congo

A sign for a small amount of something.



### Turkey

Indicates that something is beautiful or well.



### Egypt

A motion to show you'll only be a minute.





# Intercultural communication

Intercultural communication refers to ..

**COMMUNICATION BETWEEN AT LEAST TWO  
PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT CULTURES**

**ALL COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PEOPLE IS  
INTERCULTURAL**

**True or False??**

**DIFFERENT TYPES OF CULTURES SHAPE  
COMMUNICATION**

# High-context and Low-context cultures

Anthropologist Edward T. Hall first discussed **high-context culture** in his 1976 book titled *Beyond Culture*.

High-context cultures are those in which the rules of communication are primarily transmitted through the use of contextual elements (i.e., body language, a person's status, and tone of voice) and are not explicitly stated. This is in direct contrast to **low-context cultures**, in which information is communicated primarily through language and rules are explicitly spelled out.

It is important to note that no culture is completely high-context or low-context, since all societies contain at least some parts that are both high and low. For example, while the United States is a low-context culture, family gatherings (which are common in American culture) tend to be high-context.

Some common characteristics of high-context cultures include:

- ✓ Primarily use non-verbal methods to relay meaningful information in conversations, such as facial expressions, eye movement, and tone of voice.
- ✓ The situation, people, and non-verbal elements are more important than the actual words that are communicated.
- ✓ People are comfortable standing close to each other.
- ✓ The preferred way of solving problems and learning is in groups.
- ✓ Members of the culture place emphasis on interpersonal relationships.
- ✓ Trust must be developed before any business transaction begins

**JAPAN, CHINA AND OTHER ASIA COUNTRIES;  
BRAZIL, AND OTHER SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES,  
SOME TRIBAL GROUPS IN AFRICA AND MOST AFRICAN COUNTRIES**

# High-context and Low-context cultures

In the same book, Anthropologist Edward T. Hall discussed a **low-context culture**, described as a culture that communicates information in a direct manner that relies mainly on words. Low-context cultures do not rely on contextual elements (i.e., the speaker's tone of voice or body language) to communicate information. They take a more direct and explicit approach.

Members of low-context cultures have many relationships that last for a short amount of time or exist for a specific reason. Following procedures and keeping sight of the goal are important in accomplishing any transaction.

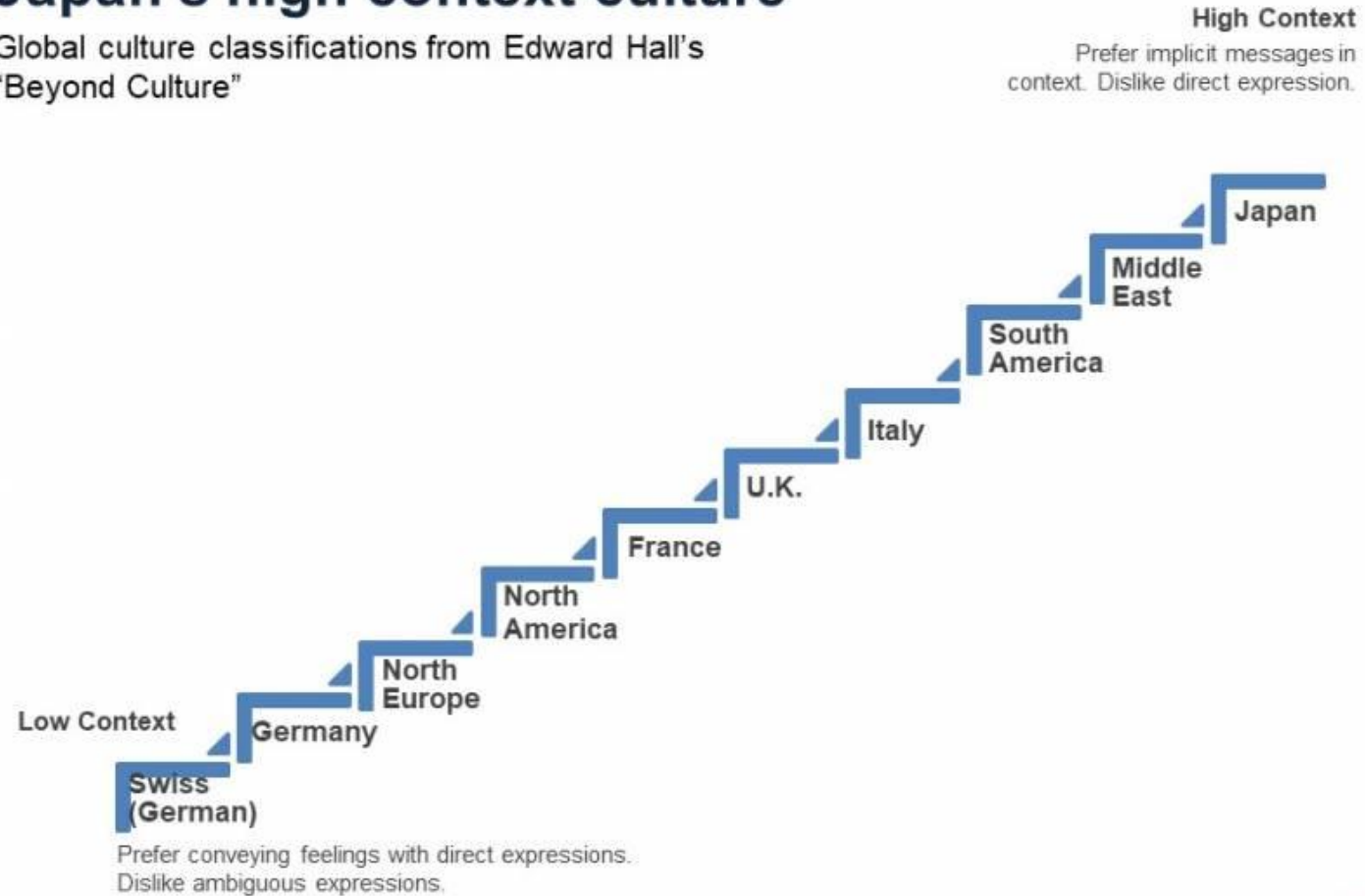
The cultural rules and norms need to be spelled out so that people who are not familiar with the culture know what the expectations are.

Communication is expected to be straightforward and precise, and the use of words must effectively convey the entire message.

# High-context and Low-context cultures

## Japan's high context culture

Global culture classifications from Edward Hall's "Beyond Culture"



# High-context and Low-context cultures

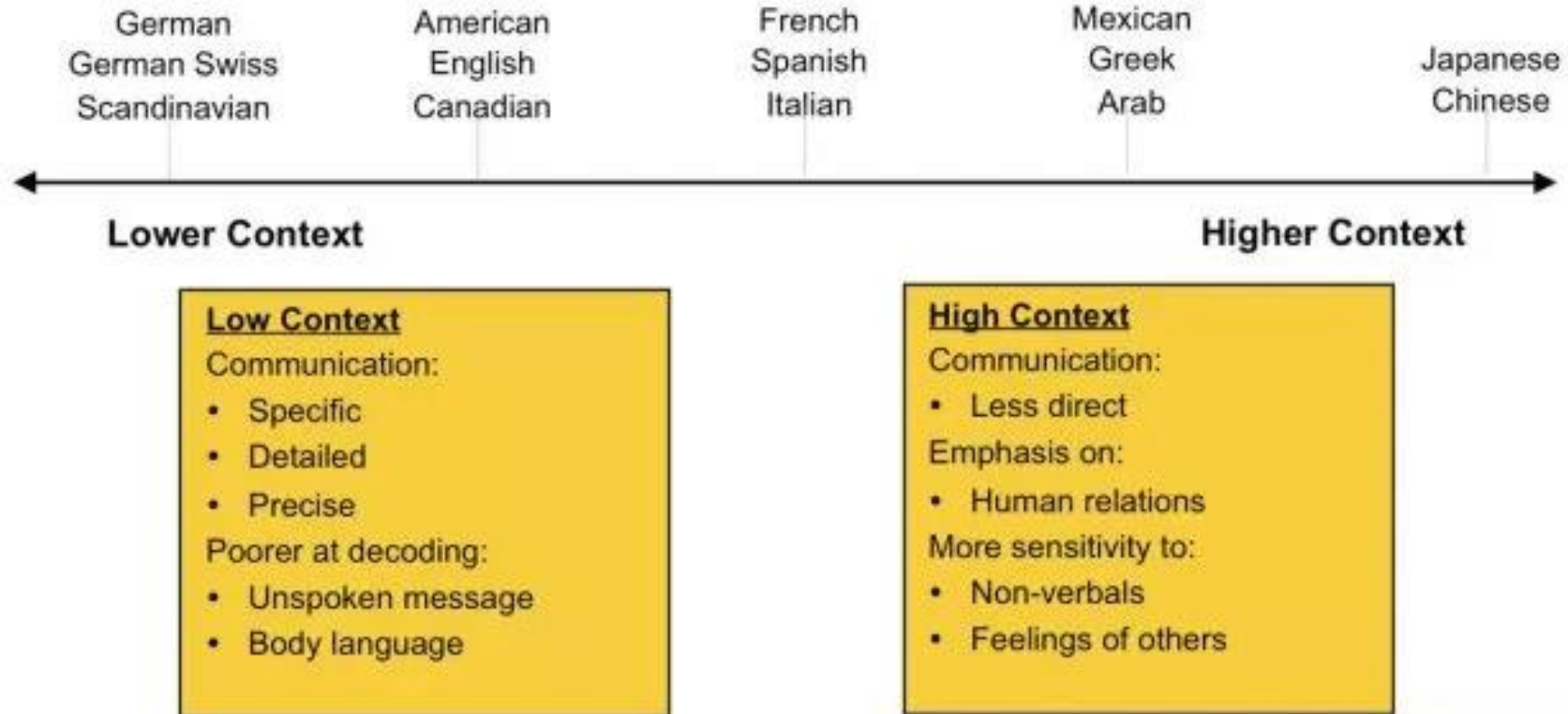
Hofstede, 1996 - Values Framework

## Collectivism vs. Individualism

<b>Collectivist</b>	<b>Individualist</b>
Extended families/groups provide protection; require loyalty	Individual responsible for self and immediate family
Harmony important; direct confrontations avoided	Speaking one's mind = honesty
High-context communication (Hall)	Low-context communication (Hall)
Relationships prevail over task	Task prevails over relationship
Private life invaded by group(s)	Everyone has right to privacy
Ultimate goal: harmony and consensus	Ultimate goal: self-actualization

Adapted from UBC Centre for Intercultural Communication 2005

# High-context and Low-context cultures



# High-context and Low-context cultures

## High vs. Low context cultures

Features of high context cultures	Features of low context cultures
Communicate through high context messages	Communicate through low context messages
Many things are left unsaid, allowing the culture to explain.	The communicator needs to be much more explicit.
People feel responsible for their family and their subordinates at work	Independence and individualism is emphasized.
The concept of 'face', i.e. strong public image.	No concept of 'face'.
If a member's face is threatened, the whole group's honour is in danger	Everyone is responsible for themselves

**How face-saving affects communication**





# High-context and Low-context cultures

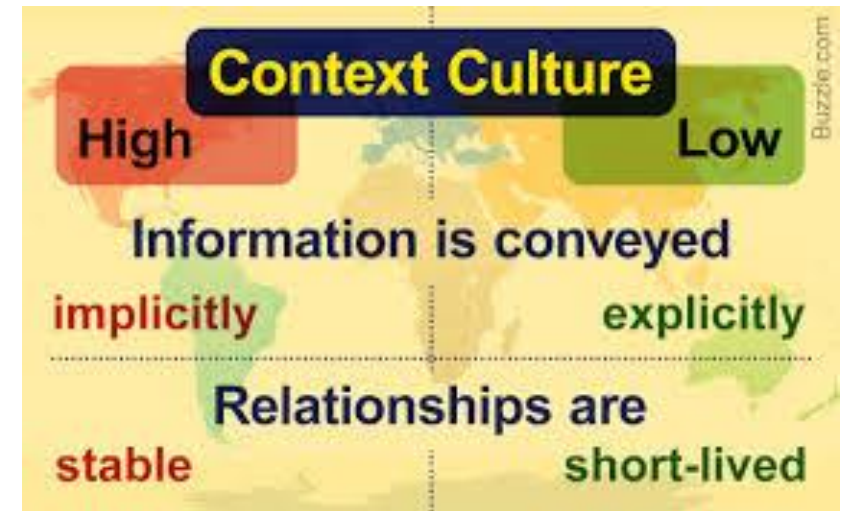
## “First name basis”

### High Context Culture

- In high context cultures people are often referred to by their last name as well as the appropriate honorific.
- To address someone by their first name would suggest you are very close.
- It is possible to offend someone by using their first name if they do not like you, or perhaps felt you just were not close enough to make it appropriate.

### Low Context Culture

- In low context culture it is common to refer to people mostly by their first name, you may be close friends or have just met, in both situations it is completely appropriate.
- It is not uncommon to address those older than you by first name.
- People of authority such as bosses and teachers may ask you to refer to them by their first name, the “Mr.” or “Mrs.” might make them feel uncomfortable due to the superiority the pre-fixes imply.



# Trends and consequences of intercultural communication

- ✓ Globalization
- ✓ Multicultural workforce

**Can you give a definition of these two trends?**

GLOBALIZATION IS...

MULTICULTURAL WORKFORCE REFERS TO....

# Communication as political discourse

Partington and Taylor (xii-xvii)

Language is a crucial part of communication, as we have seen.

Powerful institutions and individuals use language to construct their power but also to maintain it.

The relationships between LANGUAGE and POWER is thus very close, and can be examined from different perspectives:

**For example, from the study of THE POLITICS OF LANGUAGE**

Fluency in a particular language can be an important factor in gaining access to influential position in society, to being successfully heard, understood....

Fluency in a powerful language CAN BE EVEN MORE IMPORTANT

# Communication as political discourse

## Politics of language - Partington and Taylor (xii-xvii)

Fluency in a powerful language CAN BE EVEN MORE IMPORTANT

**POWER LANGUAGES** are....

LANGUAGES WHICH FOR VARIOUS REASONS (MILITARY, ECONOMIC, CULTURAL) BECAME PROMINENT.

In Europe's history which were the powerful languages?

Greek, Latin, Hebrew (also in the Middle East where Arabic substituted all of them after the Arab military conquest of the region).

The power of Chinese Mandarin in China. The role and status of Italian in Italy

**AND ENGLISH???**

**Communication as political discourse:  
Politics of language - Partington and Taylor (xii-xvii)**

**AND ENGLISH???**

One standard, many sub-standards deriving from the same dialect  
Spread of English as a second-language

Fluency in English (or other powerful languages) as a second-  
language: **WHAT ADVANTAGES?**

**CONSEQUENCES:**

Multilingualism, suppression of other languages

## Communication as political discourse:

### Language AND Power - Partington and Taylor (xii-xvii)

- In society there are empowered and disempowered groups.
- Various degrees of empowerment
- Different access to different social services and opportunities

LANGUAGE RESOURCES: tools that give users the opportunity of being heard.

Immigrants to the UK and US and poor English language skills (it can also apply to other countries and other languages):

THE SOURCE AND THE RESULTS OF SOCIAL ISOLATION OF SOCIAL GROUPS (WOMEN..), OF POOR WORKING CONDITIONS AND STANDARD OF LIVING...

## **Communication as political discourse:**

### **Language AS Power - Partington and Taylor (xii-xvii)**

**Language as a principal means of acquiring and exercising power in modern societies, with a focus on the English-speaking world**

The principal use of language in politics is for **PERSUASION** in debates in two POLITICAL arenas:

AMONG POLITICIANS...BUT ALSO PUBLICLY: IN THE MEDIA, BOTH MAINSTREAM AND SOCIAL MEDIA

«Any political action is prepared, controlled and influenced by language»  
(Schaffner 1997)

POLITICS IS NOT ONLY CONDUCTED THROUGH LANGUAGE, MUCH OF POLITICS IS LANGUAGE: «politics partly consists in disputes which occur in language and over language» (Fairclough 1989)

## Communication as political discourse:

### The Power of Persuasion- Partington and Taylor (xii-xvii)

Politics in democracies:

The power of persuasion of the masses through mass media (traditional mainstream and social). Persuasion achieved by the SKILLFUL USE OF LANGUAGE.

Political language can be inspirational and galvanising AT BEST:

(Declaration of Independence, Gettysbourg address, MLK's speeches, Churchill's speech, ecc.)

AT WORST:

*«Political language.... Is (often) designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind»*

(George Orwell 1946)



# Communication as political discourse:

## The Power of Persuasion- Partington and Taylor (xii-xvii)

### ISSUES OF CONCERN

Power of persuasion of the media is impressive:

- ✓ Concentration of ownership of media companies in the hands of few giants of communication can be dangerous;
- ✓ Sound, objective information of mainstream media is in question, i.e. treatment of drama, tragedies, creating alarmism.
- ✓ Rise of social media and blogging allowing individual a voice, with the consequence of getting unreliable information
- ✓ Epidemic of accusations, violent language, fake news to attack one's opponents and their credibility
- ✓ Conversely, ownership of media resources by governments brings obvious dangers of censorship of dissident opinion.
- ✓ Non-pluralistic states now have a voice thanks to global media (Al-Jazeera, Press TV, Russia Today)

## Communication as political discourse:

### The Power of Persuasion- Partington and Taylor (xii-xvii)

#### POLITICS IS CONDUCTED THROUGH LANGUAGE

*«Communication is the currency of politics.*

*Politicians trade in discourse and argument, public statements and speeches, pamphlets and manifestos. The way they express themselves determines who they are and whether or not they will succeed in their profession. Keeping quiet for a politician is as useful as a shopkeeper who never opens his store”.*

N. Corlett 2013 (<https://www.communication-director.com/issues/power->