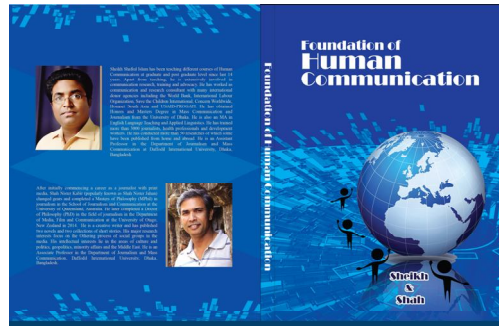


## UNDERSTANDING HUMAN COMMUNICATION FROM YOUR OWN CONTEXT

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*Foundation of Human Communication*. (2015). Sheikh Shafiul Islam & Shah Nister Kabir. Dhaka: Anyadhara. 160 pp., BDT 400, \$ 50. ISBN: 978 984 503 2102

*Foundation of Human Communication* (2015) is a recent contribution of Sheikh Shafiul Islam and Shah Nister Kabir to the academic practices of communication studies in Bangladesh. It is the first ever attempt to make the basics of communication understandable from local context in this country. The authors tried to draw a comprehensive picture of human communication on proverbial canvas of the readers and they succeed in deed.

Since the inception of journalism education in Bangladesh in 1962, human communication has been taught and understood by using the books written by the foreign writers particularly from USA. With the analysis and example from the west, students always face difficulty to get oriented with the preliminaries to human communication in their early days of university education. It is found sometimes that the students perceive human communication partially or in a wrong way. This sort of misconception turns them into fear about communication studies which is a great challenge to utilize the students'

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potential properly in the sectors of applied communication. In that case we can rather consider this book as an 'Oriental Attempt' to understand and apply human communication not only in academic arena but also in our daily life.

In *Foundation of Human Communication* the authors introduced the basic aspects of human communication which are distributed in ten chapters. The first chapter contains definition, value, purposes and scope of communication. The second chapter illustrated the emergence, nature, types, tires and principles of human communication. Components, models, types and meaning of human communication are discussed in chapter three and four. Basic forms of communication with adequate discussion are available from chapter five to seven. Strategies and techniques of successful conflict management and developing communication skills are discussed in chapter eight. An overview of attitude and credibility which play very crucial role in human communication process is available in chapter nine. The last chapter contains types and nature of communication research and some essential and mostly used research methodology.

As I mentioned earlier, students face challenges to understand human communication and mostly fail to correlate the analysis and example since all the books they read are coming from the other part of the world with unfamiliar social context. But this is not the only reason. The authors of those books use comparatively advanced English to write the books which also causes another drawback in the learning process of human communication in Bangladesh. The foremost strength of *Foundation of Human Communication* is, the book is written so lucidly that while reading it the readers will surely go through a feeling as if someone is talking about the fundamentals of human communication sitting in front of them. Using simple language, I want to name it 'communicative language' to define and discuss human communication is not usually found in the available books in this discipline. From this perspective the authors of *Foundation of Human Communication* are remarkably successful in communicating the subject human communication to the readers in more communicative way.

Appropriate examples from local context and experiences added a unique value to this initiative. In most of the cases the authors analyzed the concepts from socio-economic, cultural and political context of Bangladesh and gave examples from the same. For example, while describing 'minimizing myths and misunderstanding' as a function of communication the authors cited an event from political unrest of recent years in this country which is the propaganda of

Moulana Delwar Hossain Saydeei's visibility in the moon. Another one of this section is about people's misconception about contraceptive uses in this country in 1970s. The authors described how effective communication can minimize this kind of myths and misunderstanding in a given society.

Numbers of images and illustrations have been used in this book which will help the readers to understand the concepts more appropriately. More appreciable thing is some of the illustrations have been prepared by the authors which are unique in nature. Research in Communication which is the last chapter of this book is an exclusive section in its kind. Readers will get a comprehensive scenario of communication researches which are usually carried out in Bangladesh. Brief discussion on basic communication research methodology and sample data collection format will be of a great help to the undergraduate students and may encourage them to move forward with immense enthusiasm.

Besides the strengths of this book the authors could give a second thought regarding some issues. There are some repetitions in the earlier chapters. Types of communications were described in chapter two while the same is also available in chapter four. This would be more justified if they could give an overview in the introductory chapter and go for the details later. Some headlines are confusing in this book. Chapter two is named as Human Communication: Emergence, Definition and Nature, but types, tires and principles of communication are also discussed in this chapter. Chapter six is named as Interpersonal and Group Communication but this chapter contains Organizational Communication additionally. Content analysis and discourse analysis are two separate methods in communication research arena, but in this book authors labeled both of them in one which can confuse the readers about their uniqueness.

Lack of coherence is found in some topics. For example, while listing down the functions of communication it can be arranged in a way that readers will be oriented with the primary ones then the secondary and the other ones. But in this section the functions of communication have been discussed in a scattered way. While discussing the basics of interpersonal communication, interpersonal relationship development has been discussed in such a way as if establishing relationship is the only dimension of it. When the relationships turn into personal from impersonal level we can call it relational development. In that sense interpersonal relationship development is positive relational changes which take place over the time. The authors described briefly 'Relationship Deterioration' while writing about 'Five-stage model of Interpersonal

Relationship'. If they would discuss relationship development, stability and deterioration in a comprehensive manner alongside the model, the readers could get a complete understanding about interpersonal relationships. Leadership is discussed in chapter eight under Communication Skills and Handling Situation which is a bit unusual. If leadership had been discussed in chapter six under Group Communication it would be more appropriate.

'Perception' is an essential topic while talking about self in communication. Chapter five of this book would be more inclusive with this one. Language is the ultimate tool of human communication. The authors could put more focus on this to give the readers a fundamental idea about the communication process. Similarly, nature and role of culture in human communication is an important topic to be discussed in such a book. Though some resources have been cited for topic-wise discussion, a list of references is unavailable in this book. There is a list of books and journals for further reading at the end of the book but it is found that some references used in the text are not available in this list.

A book on human communication that is worthy of its subject must introduce the readers to the dynamic interaction of a number of diverse fields. The authors of *Foundation of Human Communication* deserve to get this recognition that they met this requirement with their knowledge, experience and sincere effort. As the book has been designed following the curricula of universities and keeping the comprehension level of the beginners in mind, the undergraduate students of communication studies will be more benefited by reading this book. Moreover, the teachers, researchers and other stakeholders in human communication can also make a good use of it. In this competitive world and age of information and communication those who want to survive as excellent communicators, this book is for them.