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COMM 101

Activity Report #2

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During my senior year of high school I met a foreign exchange student from the Ukraine. I met her in my pre-calculus class where I would occasionally help her solve some math problems. This began the **initiating stage** (Chapter 6, Term #1 – p.111) of our friendship. When I explained how to solve some problems, at times she would ask me to explain it again. I believe this is because I would occasionally use **jargon** (Chapter 4, Term #2 – p.74) associated with the American culture that she was unaccustomed to. Eventually I realized that the exchange student was receiving **incongruent messages** (Chapter 5, Term #3 – p.80), from her perspective, some of my nonverbal messages confused/contradicted my verbal messages. This was due partly to her being from a different culture and not having spent much time in America. Eventually I began to use **confirming language** (Chapter 4, Term #4 – p.75) i.e. “Yes that is correct, great job!” or “You had the right idea, but there are minor mistakes”. On top of this I began to regulate both the **pitch** and **rate** (Chapter 5, Terms #5-6 p.87) at which I was speaking in order to help her understand and interpret what I was saying easily. This helped my message get across clearly and reinforced positive communication. Once we became more familiar with one another, we began to discuss the differences/similarities between our cultures. One thing that is somewhat similar are the **artifacts** (Chapter 5, Term #7 – p.89), or clothing, that our culture tends to wear. One difference was our cultures openness to same sex marriage, her culture tended to **stereotype** (Chapter 4, Term #8 – p.68) people that are attracted to the same sex. Her culture thought of them as people that are “bad” and should be shunned. Throughout the semester her and I began to know one another through **self-disclosure** (Chapter 6, Term #9 – p.108) we learned one another’s likes and dislikes, and became educated on our cultures. Eventually she returned to Ukraine where our friendship quickly moved to the **circumscribing stage** (Chapter 6, Term #10 – p.112), we rarely communicated, and when we did it was through social media.

This assignment challenged me due to the fact that I had to remember the ways in which I communicated with the foreign exchange student, and then had to apply it to what we learned in class and through the book. But it helped me build a template in my mind of how I can improve my communication with others and not just with foreign exchange students. Recognizing my communication style seems to be the first step to improving my communication.