

COGS 102B CPR # 3 Text:

On February 12th, an old friend who is now a teacher at Alhambra High School agreed to an interview with me at his house. During the interview, the informant and I spoke about life as a teacher and discussed the steps he took to become a teacher as well as also the challenges of a teacher. When describing his profession, the informant took on interrelated cultural models including a Community-Relationship Model, a Social Networking Model and a Rational Actor Model.

Model 1:

The informant took on a community-relationship model when it comes to political correctness of his profession. As a teacher, there are things one cannot do especially sensitive topics. Unusual behavior as a teacher can lead to serious repercussions that can damage the prospects of a career in teaching. As a teacher, the informant is always cautious about the political and social relationship he shares with his peers and students. He cares enough as a teacher to teach his students valuable lessons; yet if his political correctness is incorrect, he can experience malignant hostility towards him. D'Andrade writes that "feelings generally give rise to desires" but that the "connections between feelings and desires does not seem to be as tight as the means-end relation" (D'Andrade 100). In the teaching profession, the informant shares his desires to share his knowledge with his students but there are always those students that end in the "means-end relation" for specific reasons with the student. An example that indicates with my interview with the informant includes:

19:02 First all, I don't believe there is such a thing as a bad kid. I think there are kids that may not want to learn, who may not be behaving as you would be expecting. They are not bad kids. Teenagers go through a lot of personal issues with their lives. In the classroom, I do my job to teach English. However, you have to take into consideration of the current things happening in some of these children's home. Some of them might come from a broken home, experiencing family issues, or someone they know that joined a gang. It is important for a teacher to understand these kids are still young and still malleable. I think the most important thing as a teacher is to treat your students the best you can and not look down on them.

Of course, the students that eager to learn also need special attention as much as the students who are doing poorly. I believe that in a classroom, fairness is absolutely needed.

As a result, the informant makes his best effort to attempt to teach the students without incurring any hostility.

Model 2:

Beyond the community-relationship model that informant expresses, the informant also expresses concern as a rational actor in his environment. Professor Edwin Hutchins of UCSD writes that “Rational actors do not cause themselves harm or expose themselves to unnecessary danger.” (Finding Cultural Models II PowerPoint Slide, Hutchins, 2012). Furthermore, Hutchins writes “Handling epoxy without a mask is dangerous.” With various times in the cultural model norm as a teacher, despite the low pay, teachers as individuals apparently cannot stand for themselves unless a collective force is in place such as a teacher’s union. The informant mentioned, “At best, it’s around \$60,000. To me, that’s fine. It’s absolutely fine to live on.” As a teacher, individual bargaining is not entirely always present but only collectively present. Thus, in a general K-12 teaching environment, teachers follow a rational actor model where actors of the environment carry out their roles with putting themselves in unnecessary danger.

Model 3:

In a teaching environment, social networking is prevalent as daily encounters with staff, colleagues and students are necessary. When teachers such as the informant mentioned about cliqs in the school, it is apparent that the ideas share amongst colleagues shape the overall cognitive processes of an individual teacher. The informant mentions, “Even amongst teachers, a social hierarchy is present. Some teachers can be cliquish and like parents, there are sometimes colleague hostility. I have learned to overcome these kinds of things.” This significance can ultimately shape how teachers react to specific situations and shape their teaching philosophy.

Ultimately, in a teaching environment, the informant has allowed us to understand there is a significant culture within a school. Community-Relationship Model, a Social Networking Model and a Rational Actor Model carries large roles in a school setting when dealing with parents, colleagues, staff and students.

Works Cited:

- *Finding Cultural Models II* PowerPoint Slide, Hutchins, 2012 UCSD
- D’Andrade, R. (1987). “A folk model of the mind.” *Cultural models in language and thought*. Cambridge University Press.