



# **BES-103 CRITICAL THINKING**

Decoding Communication



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# Agenda

- False premises
- Denoted and connoted meanings
- Latent messages

# False premises

False premises refer to assumptions or statements that are factually incorrect or not supported by evidence. They can lead to flawed reasoning or faulty conclusions.

“All birds can fly. Penguins are birds.  
Therefore, penguins can fly.”

False premise: "All birds can fly." This premise is incorrect as not all birds have the ability to fly.

# False Premises

Example: "All dogs have wings. Max is a dog. Therefore, Max can fly."

▷ Explanation: The false premise in this example is the claim that all dogs have wings. In reality, dogs do not have wings, so the premise is false. Therefore, the conclusion that Max can fly is based on a false premise.

Example: "If you eat chocolate every day, you will live forever. John eats chocolate every day. Therefore, John will live forever."

▷ Explanation: The false premise in this example is the assumption that eating chocolate every day guarantees immortality. This premise is not supported by any scientific evidence or logical reasoning. Therefore, the conclusion that John will live forever is based on a false premise.

# False Premises

- ▷ Example: "All scientists are dishonest. Sarah is a scientist. Therefore, Sarah must be dishonest."
- ▷ Explanation: The false premise in this example is the generalization that all scientists are dishonest. This assumption is unfair and unsupported, as it is not true that all scientists are dishonest. Therefore, the conclusion that Sarah must be dishonest is based on a false premise.
- ▷ Example: "If it's raining, then the grass will be wet. The grass is wet. Therefore, it must be raining."
- ▷ Explanation: The false premise in this example is the assumption that if the grass is wet, it means that it is raining. This overlooks other possible explanations, such as the grass being wet due to recent irrigation or dew. Therefore, the conclusion that it must be raining is based on a false premise.
- ▷ Remember that false premises can weaken the validity of an argument or lead to flawed reasoning. It is essential to critically evaluate the premises of an argument to ensure they are true and supported by evidence or reasoning.

# Denoted meanings

The denoted message is a direct, explicit, and objective interpretation of a particular term.

Example:

**"She's a human"**

Denoted meaning: This statement refers to a person being a literal human.

# Connoted Meaning

Connoted meanings, on the other hand, are the subjective, associated, or implied meanings that go beyond the denoted definition of a word. They are influenced by personal experiences, cultural contexts, and emotions.

Example:

**"She's a snake."**

The connotation here implies that the person is untrustworthy, cunning, or deceitful, similar to the negative characteristics often associated with snakes in various cultural contexts.

# Denoted and Connoted

Example: "Home"

Denoted Meaning: A place where one lives, a dwelling.

Connoted Meaning: Warmth, comfort, security, a sense of belonging.

The denoted meaning of "home" is a physical place of residence. However, the connoted meaning suggests a deeper emotional and psychological attachment to the place, evoking feelings of comfort and security.



# Denoted and Connoted

Example: "Youthful"

Denoted Meaning: Having the qualities or characteristics of youth.

Connoted Meaning: Energetic, vibrant, fresh.

The denoted meaning of "youthful" describes someone or something that embodies the traits of youth. The connoted meaning, however, suggests positive attributes such as energy, vibrancy, and freshness.

# Denoted and Connoted

▷ What is the Denoted and Connoted Meanings for the following words:

1. Rose
2. Shark
3. Crown
4. Wall

# Latent Messages

- ▷ Latent messages refer to hidden or underlying meanings or intentions within a communication, text, or piece of media. These messages may not be explicitly stated but can be inferred or decoded through critical thinking and analysis.

# Latent Messages

- ▷ Example: A company releases an advertisement for a luxury car featuring a young, attractive couple driving through scenic landscapes and enjoying a lavish lifestyle.
- ▷ Latent Message: The advertisement implies that owning the luxury car will lead to happiness, attractiveness, and an aspirational lifestyle. It suggests that purchasing the car will fulfill desires for status, success, and admiration.

# Latent Messages

1. Advertising: An advertisement for a fast-food chain shows a group of happy, slim people enjoying their meals without any visible health concerns.
  - ▷ Latent Message: The advertisement implies that consuming fast food regularly will not have negative consequences on one's health or physical appearance. It may suggest that indulging in these food choices is harmless and enjoyable, potentially downplaying the health risks associated with such diets.

# Latent Messages

2. Political Speech: A politician delivers a speech advocating for stricter immigration policies, emphasizing the need to protect national security and preserve cultural identity.

▷ Latent Message: The speech may convey a subtle message of xenophobia or nationalism. While the stated intention is to prioritize national security, the underlying message could be that immigrants pose a threat to the country and that preserving cultural identity requires limiting immigration, potentially fostering divisive sentiments.

# Latent Messages

3. Television Show: A popular reality TV show features contestants competing for a cash prize by engaging in backstabbing and manipulative tactics.

▷ Latent Message: The show may send the message that achieving success and financial gain is contingent on being deceitful or immoral. It may normalize or glorify unethical behavior by presenting it as a means to win or get ahead in life, potentially influencing viewers' perception of acceptable social behavior.

# Latent Messages

4. News Reporting: A news article about a high-profile court case prominently features the defendant's previous criminal record and personal struggles.

▷ Latent Message: The article may subtly suggest the defendant's guilt by focusing on their troubled past. By emphasizing negative aspects of the defendant's life, the article could shape readers' opinions and predispose them to view the defendant in a negative light, potentially influencing the perception of their innocence or guilt.



# Activity

▷ Give three examples of Latent Messages.