

## Unit 4: Key Concepts

**Anxiety/uncertainty management:** Theory by William Gudykunst to define how humans effectively communicate based on their balance of anxiety and uncertainty in social situations

**Communication accommodation theory:** Theory developed by H. Giles which explores the various reasons why individuals emphasize or minimize the social differences between themselves and their interlocutors through verbal and nonverbal communication

**Convergence:** The process through which an individual shifts his or her speech patterns in interaction so that they more closely resemble the speech patterns of speech partners

**Direct style:** Manner of speaking where one employs overt expressions of intention

**Divergence:** A linguistic strategy whereby a member of a speech community accentuates the linguistic differences between his or herself and his interlocutor

**Elaborated code:** A cultural context wherein the speakers of a language have a variety of linguistic options open to them in order to explicitly communicate their intent via verbal messages

**Genderlect:** A variety of speech or conversational style used by a particular gender (originated by D. Tannen)

**High context:** Cultural orientation where meanings are gleaned from the physical, social, and psychological contexts

**Indirect style:** Manner of speaking wherein the intentions of the speakers are hidden or only hinted at during interaction

**Interlocutor:** Person with whom one speaks

**Low context:** Cultural orientation where meanings are encoded in the verbal code

**Overaccommodation:** Exaggerating accommodating someone else's verbal and nonverbal communication style

**Pragmatic transfer:** The influence of learners' pragmatic knowledge of language and culture other than the target language on their comprehension, production, and acquisition of L2 pragmatic information

**Pragmatics:** The study of how language is actually used and the effect that language has on human perceptions and behaviors

**Register:** A variety of a language used for a particular purpose or in a particular social setting

**Restricted code:** A cultural context wherein the speakers of a language are limited as to what they can say or do verbally. A restricted code is a status-oriented system.

**Rich point:** We realize that a culture is different from ours when we face some behaviours which we do not understand; rich points are those surprises, those departures from an outsider's expectations that signal a difference between source language/culture and target language/culture

**Sociolinguistics:** The study of how language is used in society, including its differences among cultures, age groups, genders, social class, etc.

**Speech act:** An utterance that has performative function in language and communication

**Speech code:** Any rule or regulation that limits, restricts, or bans speech beyond the strict legal limitations upon freedom of speech or press found in the legal definitions of harassment, slander, and libel

**Standpoint theory:** Central concept is that an individual's own perspectives are shaped by his or her social and political experiences

**Thick description:** Description of a human behavior that explains not just the behavior, but its context as well, such that the behavior becomes meaningful to an outsider

**Uncertainty:** The amount of predictability in a communication situation

**Uncertainty reduction theory:** Theory whose major premise is that when strangers first meet, their primary goal is to reduce uncertainty