LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY

COMMUNICATION SKILLS-II

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SYLLABUS

Communication Skills-II

Objectives: To improve sentence construction, grammar and vocabulary; Teach the importance of correct punctuation; Improve writing skills; To inculcate interest in poetry and literature; To teach basic business communication.

Sr. No.	Description
1	Speaking Skills: To enhance the fluency/ efficiency and confidence of using a foreign language/Conversation building.
2	Dialogue writing based on formal / official situations, informal and regularly occurring.
3	Telephone skills: How to handle telephone calls, telephone etiquettes, making phone calls, taking incoming calls.
4	Reading Skills ---To enhance independent reading, comprehension and quick reading of any given texts.
5	Aesthetic appreciation. Poems--- "Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening" & "Ozymandias.''
6	Writing Skills --To reinforce the grammatical structures and to enhance formally structured effective official writing. Grammar – Tenses: Present tenses – [simple & continuous], Past tenses [simple/continuous/ used to would to], Present Perfect and Past Perfect [simple/ continuous], Future [plans/ intentions/ predictions/ going to/ will present simple/ be/ about to /future continuous/ Future Perfect]
7	Parts of Speech – Common errors in English. Use of Capitals and Basic Punctuations-- Comma, full stop, colon, semi colon, hyphen ,Inverted commas, apostrophe.
8	Writing Skills --To reinforce the grammatical structures and to enhance formally structured effective official writing. Basics of official correspondence-- principles of writing general and official correspondence.
9	Format of Basic Formal letter-- placing order, cancellation, enquiry.
10	Guidelines for writing & Planning effective Business letters

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Unit 1: Speaking Skills

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Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Know the principles of effective speaking
- Identify the barriers to effective oral communication and measures of overcome them
- Describe the two sides of effective oral communication: listening and presenting
- Discuss the role of non-verbal communication in speaking
- Explain the concept of public speaking

Introduction

Speaking is something that we all do most often. In all spheres of life, a good speaker is always distinguished from ordinary speakers. To become a good speaker, you must know and practice the guidelines of effective oral communication. Oral communication means spoken communication or communication through speech. A person learns to speak much before writing. It is difficult to decide which one is a more important form of communication: written or oral. But it is perfectly safe to assume that oral communication is the most popular. While everyone speaks before learning to write, it is perfectly possible to think of someone who can use language to speak but not to write.

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In fact, oral communication is not only the most popular but also the most powerful and effective form of communication that occurs between human beings. Compared to it, the volume of written communication is small and confined to formal and official contexts. In offices and business organizations too, people speak much before and much more when compared to, writing. Oral communication takes place through face-to-face talks (both formal and informal), telephone, loudspeaker, etc.

In this unit, you will learn the principles of oral communication, the role of non-verbal communication in speaking and the tips of improving public speaking skills.

1.1 Principles of Effective Speaking

The following steps should be taken to make oral communication effective:

1. ***Clarity:*** The speaker should pronounce his words clearly and correctly. He must talk distinctly and slowly. When a person speaks fast or munches words the oral message is likely to be misunderstood. The way a person speaks his dialogue exercises much influence on the audience. Clarity of expression just is the aim at all times.

2. ***Brevity:*** Oral communications often suffer from too much of talking. When a speaker keeps on talking for long, his message is lost in a sea of words and his listeners tend to become inattentive. Therefore, the message must be kept as short as possible. However, the speaker should not appear unclear, abrupt or discourteous.

3. ***Precision:*** An oral message becomes more effective when it is precise and concise.

Example: It is better to say 'cut down costs by ₹ 100 instead of saying 'reduce costs'. The message should not be vague or incomplete.

Words ought to mean clearly what they are intended to say.

4. ***Right words:*** The first caution is to ensure that you know the meaning of the words that you use. Some words have more than one meaning while some others carry different meanings for different persons. Be sure about what your words will convey to a trained reader.

Example: City, town and metropolis are three different words and care should be exercised before using them.

Therefore, words should be chosen carefully and their meaning clarified in the context of usage. The speaker should not presume that the listener would mean the same thing from a word, which s/he means.

Task You will find that the word 'metro' has at least three different meanings in day-to-day usage. Find out them for yourself. Also find more such words that have multiple meanings.

5. ***Avoid Hackneyed Phrases and Clichés:*** Speakers often use hackneyed phrases and clichés like 'you know', 'I see', 'you see', 'what I mean', 'isn't,' etc. Such phrases interrupt the flow of speech and obstruct the quick grasp of meaning besides causing boredom. Speakers should ensure that they do not use these phrases unconsciously or consciously and a good way of overcoming these phrases is to be conscious about not using them when speaking. Most of us use them as connectives, filling up a gap when we do not have the correct word/phrase. Keeping them consciously out of your usage would mean that you will have

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to remain silent for those gaps. But don't worry. Once you stop using fillers like those, appropriate words will come to you with a little effort at articulation.

6. ***Understand the Listener:*** A good speaker must understand the listener before talking. People vary in terms of their education, culture, intelligence level, maturity, etc. The speaker should put himself in place of the listener and adjust his speech according to the needs and abilities of the listener.

7. ***Natural Voice:*** The speaker should use his natural way of speaking. In order to look sophisticated some speakers use a foreign accent. This reduces the effectiveness of communication. Remember the most efficient speakers across the world are those that speak with a neutral accent. So, a speaker should cultivate a pleasing voice and natural style.

8. ***Logical Sequence:*** Before speaking, different ideas to be conveyed should be arranged in a logical order. It helps to make the speech forceful.

9. ***Conviction:*** A speaker must have conviction in what he says. Careful understanding, sincerity of speech, and intelligent planning are required to develop conviction in speech.

Self Assessment

State whether the following statements are true or false:

1. When a speaker keeps on talking for long, his message is lost and his listeners tend to become inattentive.

2. An oral message becomes more effective when it is precise and concise.

1.2 Barriers to Effective Oral Communication

Several things can prevent the message from reaching the intended recipient or from having the desired effect on the recipient. There may be some fault in the communication system which may prevent the message from reaching. Some of these defects are in the mechanical devices used for transmitting, that is, the medium; some are in the tools we use for communicating, that is, language or other symbols used for encoding; Some are related to the sender or the receiver.

The Barriers or negative forces may affect the effectiveness of communication by acting upon any or all of the basic elements of communication process and sender/receiver/channel.

As the barriers to communication influence the major variables in the communication process, they may be categorized on various bases. Though the list of barriers is exhaustive and there are many ways in which the barriers can be categorized, one of the oldest categorization of barriers is stated below:

1. ***Semantic barriers:*** Different people assign different meanings to one specific message. This is due to the problems with meaning, significance, and the sending and reception of the meaning and content of the message.

2. ***Organizational barriers:*** This type of barrier develops due to the problems with physical distance between members with respect to their functional specialization of tasks, power, authority and status relationship, values held, and ownership of information.

3. ***Interpersonal barriers:*** These barriers also develop in the process of communication. They are based upon the relationships, values held, and attitudes of the participants in the process of communication.

4. ***Individual barriers:*** These are also called psycho-sociological barriers. The problem of this barrier arises due to differences in individual competencies to think and act, which would

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include physical ailments or handicaps. It is also because of individual skills in receiving and transmitting information, which would include poor listening and improper reading skills and adverse psychological conditions.

5. ***Cross Cultural (geographic) barriers:*** Culture is a shared set of values and attributes of a group. The communication barriers are also seen because of time, geographic locations, and the effects of time upon reception of the message and other cross cultural factors.

6. ***Physical Barriers/Channel and media barriers:*** The effectiveness and accuracy of communication is also affected by the physical barriers like distance, noise or channel and the media used in the process. In this category, problems that confront the media used in the process. In this category, problems that confront the issue of how best to communicate a message are included.

Example: It is best to transmit a message face-to-face rather than in writing.

7. ***Technological barriers:*** They are barriers which arise due to technological advancements in the field of communication. Technology generates lot of information, which is beyond the capacity of the recipient. Further, the media advancements on account of technological process increase the barriers.

The ideas and massage have to reach from the transmitter to receive in the same sense. If it does not happen, it is on account of barriers in communication.

Caselet

Outsourcing Backlash Gets Abusive and Ugly

"I don't want to speak to you. Connect me to your boss in the US," hissed the American on the phone. The young girl at a Bangalore call centre tried to be as polite as she could. At another call centre, another day, another young girl had a Londoner unleashing himself on her, "Young lady, do you know that because of you Indians we are losing jobs?"

The outsourcing backlash is getting ugly. Handling irate callers is the new brief for the young men and women taking calls at these outsourced job centres. Supervisors tell them to be 'cool'. Avinash Vashistha, managing partner of NEOIT, a leading US-based consultancy firm says, "Companies involved in outsourcing both in the US and India are already getting a lot of hate mail against outsourcing and it is hardly surprising that some people should behave like this on the telephone." Vashistha says Indian call centres should train their operators how to handle such calls.

Indeed, the furore raised by the Western media over job losses because of outsourcing has made ordinary citizens there sensitive to the fact that their calls are being taken not from their midst, but in countries such as India and the Philippines.

The angry outbursts the operators face border on the racist and sexist, says the manager of a call centre in Hyderabad. But operators and senior executives of call centers refuse to go on record for fear of kicking up a controversy that might result in their companies' losing clients overseas.

"It's happening often enough and so let's face it," says a senior executive of a Gurgaon call centre, adding, "This doesn't have any impact on business."

Source: Hindustan Times, December 21, 2003, New Delhi.

Measures to Overcome Barriers in Communication

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Following are some of the additional measures to overcome the barriers to communication:

- ***Fostering good relationship:*** Strong relationships must be fostered between the employer and the employee in order to avoid misunderstanding and accept each other's viewpoints in order to remove the barriers and to facilitate proper communication in the organization.
- ***Purposeful and well focused communication:*** Communication should be purposeful and directed to an individual. At the end of the Communication, the receiver should not be left to feel that communication had been meaningless or useless.
- ***Coordination between superior and subordinates:*** In case the superior thinks on one line, which is different from the subordinate and vice versa, it will affect the effectiveness of communication. Therefore, there should be good and proper coordination and cooperation between the superior and subordinate for effective communication.
- ***Avoid technical language:*** The specialized language should be avoided. There should be all efforts to use the language commonly understood by the receiver and sender of the message. There should be least use of technical jargons in communication process.
- ***Feedback:*** The selective perception of receiver should be minimized through proper feedback. The drawback of the selective perception should be explained to minimize the barriers.
- ***Accuracy:*** There should be accuracy in the message to be transmitted between parties to the communication to improve its effectiveness.
- ***Clarity in message:*** The message to be transferred should be clear, practical accurate and without any ambiguity.
- ***Communication of organizational philosophy:*** Efforts have to be made in a planned way to sensitize people with the organizational philosophy. It should be properly communicated to its employees so that they give proper attention to their day-to-day communication.
- ***Flat organizational structure:*** The organization should have clear cut and simple organization structure. Tall hierarchical structure should be removed, and it should be changed to flat structure to avoid excessive control of information. Wrong information to be transferred to anyone in the organization will prove detrimental. Proper redesign of organizational structure will reduce the status gap. Status effect can occur when one person is considerably higher in the hierarchy than another.
- ***Division of labour:*** There should be proper division of labour between the persons in order to reduce information overload and prevent delay in information transfer.
- ***Organization policies:*** The organization should formulate their policies in such a way that it will give full advantage to all members of the organization. It should be flexible and easy to implement. While organization's goal must be clear, everyone must know about his position, his right in the organizational communication. The network has to be fully developed so that no such type of barriers exists. Moreover, there should be consistency when message a passed from sender to receiver. One should not introduce his own view in the message. It must be clear and understood by everyone easily. Timeline in message should be there. If it is not passed in time, such message will be of no use.
- ***Minimize semantic problem:*** People use either the same word in different ways or different words in the same way.

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Did u know? There are 15 different meanings of the word 'charge' in the English language. They also occur when people use jargons or professional shorthand which they expect other to understand, or language which is outside the other's vocabulary.

- ***Proper communication channels:*** If one wants immediate action from the receiver, there is no need to send a lengthy discussion report. One would probably pick up the telephone or go to his office to tell him what to do. Remember also that one picture is worth a thousand words, and in this age of computer graphics, the information can be produced more quickly in this way too.
- ***Right feedback:*** Although one-way communication is quicker, two-way communication is more accurate. In complex situations, it helps both sender and receiver to measure their understanding and improves their joint commitment to the task. It enables both parties to identify and correct misunderstanding leading to a higher quality of reception and acceptance.

To communicate effectively, we need to overcome all the barriers and own skills to improve the existing communication abilities.

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

3. …… barriers occurs due the fact that different people assign different meanings to one specific message.
4. …… barriers are also called psycho-sociological barriers.
5. …… hierarchical structure facilitates effective oral communication.

1.3 Two Sides of Effective Oral Communication

The two sides of an effective oral communication are listening and presenting. The meaning and role of listening and presenting in effective oral communication are discussed below:

1.3.1 Listening

God gave us one mouth to do two jobs: eat and speak, but He gave us two ears to do just one job: to listen.

Out of the four Communication Skills: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, the most crucial is listening. Drivers fail to listen carefully to directions given by the traffic policeman and roadside people and lose their way. Workers fail to perform their duties effectively as they have not listened to their supervisors. Students are denied credit for assignments, if they have not completed the task as instructed. Sometimes, the consequences of bad listening are insignificant, other times they are not. In most of the cases, bad listening creates more problems. The importance of effective listening cannot be overstated because it is crucial to the success of organizations and individuals alike.

A study of communication preferences by first line managers and supervisors has found that listening is perceived as the most important communication skill. Listening cannot be ignored in performing jobs effectively. Based on a survey covering a million workers, it appears that companies which encourage upward communication and listen to their employees perform better than other companies. Research findings also testify to the relationship between listening and organizational effectiveness. The more the listening, the more will be the effectiveness of organizations.

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Besides beings critical to organizational effectiveness, listening is also a determinant of individual efficiency and effectiveness. When evaluating an individual's competence as a communicator, the listening ability of that person is a major consideration. Without a demonstrated ability to listen well, a person cannot be considered as an excellent communicator.

Did u know? While investigating the link between communication and health researchers in the US had observed that a dog's blood pressure rises when the dog barks, and drops when the dog is quite. They later on found that the same holds true for humans. Our blood pressure also rises when we talk and rapidly drops when we listen. Hence, from the point of view of maintaining good health, listening is better than speaking.

Employers are becoming increasingly aware that listening relates to almost all forms of business communication. It is an essential skill in gathering information for running every activity of a business. It is also important in working in a small group, in interviewing as a management tool or to get a job, and in communicating effectively across cultures. Executives have to understand the importance of listening with respect to development of writing skills, reading skills and speaking skills.

Notes A research study conducted long back found that organizational message with a comprehension rating of 100% at the board level gets reduced to 20% by the time it trickles down to the worker:

Board	100%
Vice President	63%
General Supervisor	56%
Plant Manager	40%
General Foreman	30%
Worker	20%

A similar distortion takes place in upward communication by the time the message reaches the top managers from the workers. If a worker wants to communicate any message upwards, the top management consisting of the board may get only 20%.

No oral communication can be effective without proper listening on the part of the receiver of the message. A tactful manager can positively handle the grapevine or informal channel of communication by 'empathic' listening.

Poor listening may defeat the very purpose of oral communication. It has been found by authorities on the subject that generally people retain only about one fourth of what they hear after two days. In this way listening becomes the weakest link in oral communication.

A few basic observations about listening will clarify the concept of listening:

- Listening is the accurate perception of what is being communicated. It is the art of separating fact from statement, and accusation.
- Listening involves the following four major operations. They are as follows:
  - Hearing,
  - Understanding,
  - Retaining, and
  - Recalling

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- Listening is not the simple ability to decode information. It is a two-way exchange in which both parties involved must always be receptive to the thoughts, ideas, and emotions of the other.
- Listening is a mental activity and hearing is a physical activity. Listening includes hearing. In hearing, we get sounds but we do not use mind. In listening, we have to understand, retain and recall also. Listening is a natural process.
- God has given us two ears and one tongue. It indicates that listening is more important than speaking.
- The average listener who hears a 10-minute presentation will hear, understand, and retain only half of what was said. Forty-eight hours later that portion drops another 25 percent. Part of the reason for poor listening ability is the educational system which emphasizes the speaker at the expense of the listener. The system focuses major attention on reading, writing, and speaking skills – not on listening skills.
- Yet another study show that 45 percent of the total working hours are spent on listening, 30 percent on speaking, 16 percent on reading, and 9 percent on writing.
- Writing and speaking skills improve with practice. It is not in the case of listening skills. It will improve only by consciousness and concentration.
- Listening is a process in perpetual motion. It begins when one hears or observes what is being said, continues as one stores and correlates the information, than begin again with one's reaction.
- Listening is possible through observations. Hence, eyes help to get non-verbal communication of the speaker.
- For developing listening skills, little effort is being made by educators and trainers. In order to improve reading, writing and speaking, instructors continuously guide and help others. Rarely do we find such effort for listening.
- Recognition is being given to best speakers. Rarely, we find a situation when best listeners are appreciated.

1.3.2 Presenting

In addition to the informal face-to-face communication that goes on many of us, under different circumstances, have to make formal presentations. From time to time we participate and speak in committee meetings, conferences, seminars, classrooms, group discussions, etc. In fact public speaking and oral reporting is an essential part of a student's, teacher's as well as a manager's job.

Presentation means presenting something before people on some formal occasion. It is also known as 'public speaking'. The term 'presentation' is preferred perhaps because the purpose of a presentation is defined more precisely than that of a public speech. Moreover, presentation is done before a select audience whereas in a public speech the audience is not selected. Presentation can be defined as a formal event characterized by teamwork and use of audio-visual aids. The main purpose of presentation is to give information, to persuade the audience to act and to create goodwill. A good presentation should have a good subject matter, should match with the objective, should best fit the audience, and should be well organized.

Developing presentation skills is an art where most of the training and learning require greater focus and attention. Executives, non executives, instructors, trainers and administrators need to strengthen their skills with respect to their presentations before varied target groups.

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Need for Oral Presentation

Oral presentations play a vital role in many situations today. Successful oral presentations can boost the career of an employee while failure to present well can block career progress. Need for oral presentation may arise on several occasions, some of which are given below:

1. Presenting one's understanding of a concept/topic to others in a class.
2. Presenting a new business plan.
3. Launching a new product/service.
4. Making a sales proposal.
5. Starting a training course/session.
6. Participating in a conference /seminar.
7. Explaining a plan or strategy to a group.

Across most of these situations an oral presentation can be straightforward but it can also be complex involving an elaborate complex that includes various media, reports, and several speakers. Most of the presentations you must have seen so far try:

1. To present the findings of research to a group of experts in fairly academic style;
2. To speak to the public about corporate issues and hazards; and
3. To sell products or services to clients.

They rarely address complex group presentations or presentations to a class or a small group.

While it is important to learn speaking skills from those presentations, talks given to small groups are probably more important to your working and learning career. Thus, this section focuses on informal and in-house presentations. An informal talk is related to complex and highly formal speaking, with a persuasive core that expands and contracts according to the scope of the task.

Self Assessment

State whether the following statements are true or false:

6. Listening is the accurate perception of what is being communicated.
7. Hearing is a mental activity and Listening is a physical activity.

1.4 Learning the Art of Non-verbal Communication

"Non-verbal Communication" refers to the type of communication which involves speech or words. By non-verbal communication, we mean all communication that involves neither written nor spoken words but occurs without the use of words. Thus, this is the wordless message received through the medium of gestures, signs, body movements, facial expressions, tone of voice, colour, time, space, style of writing and choice of words.

Animals communicate their deepest feelings through gestures, cries, whistling, cooing and many other signals known to each other. It is we human beings, who have evolved the language of words to convey our thoughts in a structured manner. Still, many a times, we tend to convey many of our feelings by smiling, patting, frowning, shouting or other such wordless clues. At other times, we also lace our words with different tones, gestures and facial expressions, to give a deeper meaning to our words.

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The verbal and non-verbal messages together form the total meaning of the message communicated. There is something said and something implied with every message communicated. For a full understanding of the message, we should know what has been communicated through words and without them.

1.4.1 Characteristics of Non-verbal Communication

The following are the key characteristics of non-verbal communication:

1. ***It is instinctive in nature:*** Non-verbal communication is quite instinctive in nature, that is, it indicates the attitude, instincts and feelings of the speaker.
2. ***It is less conscious:*** Words are spoken after due thinking and with conscious effort. Depending on the situation we have to make a more or less conscious effort in these/choice of words. The non-verbal part of communication, on the other hand, is less deliberate and conscious as most of the expressions, gestures, etc included in non-verbal communication are mostly unconsciously expressed, as the speaker may not even be aware of these signs.
3. ***It is subtle in nature:*** Spoken and written words are quite obvious and easy to see, listen and understand, whereas, non-verbal communication is very subtle, and needs skill to be understood and expressed.
4. ***It is complimentary to verbal communication:*** Non-verbal communication does not stand alone on its own and neither does it completely substitute Communication with words; it complements Verbal Communication and makes it more effective. As an example, when we watch a movie, the dialogues are made more impressive by the way they are delivered, with the modulations in the voice, other gestures and signals.
5. ***It forms the larger part of the overall communication activity:*** On scientific analysis it has been found that the different aspects of communication account for percentages stated below:

Table 1.1: Extent of Non-verbal Communication

Management Impact	Types of Communication
55 percent	Facial expression, body position, gestures
7 percent	Words
38 percent	Tone of voice and inflection

Non-verbal Communication speaks much louder than words.

"A cry of agony is powerful than a tale of woe".

1.4.2 Classification of Non-verbal Communication

Exchange of messages without words, which take place between two parties, fall within the category of non-verbal communication. It includes all wordless signs, symbols, gestures, facial expressions, colours, setting of the surroundings, time, and so on. The non-verbal communication can be classified into the following categories:

1. Kinesics: Body Language
2. Proxemics: Space Language
3. Time Language
4. Para Language
5. Sign Language

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Kinesics or Body Language

'Kinesics' literally means 'body movements'. Bodily movements, gestures and body language is an important factor, especially in face to face communication, as here the message is communicated by a number of factors like facial expressions, eye movements, gestures. Body language is the reflection of thought, feelings and position.

All bodily movements, postures, gestures etc., are guided by our thought processes, emotions etc. By nodding our head, blinking our eyes, waving our hands, shrugging our shoulders and various other ways we send out signals and messages that often speak louder than words. That is why this area of enquiry has been called 'body language'. Just as language uses sets of symbols to convey meaning, our body, consciously as well as unconsciously or instinctively, carries messages, attitudes, status relationships, moods, warmth/indifference, positive/negative feelings and so on. We have, however, to infer these meanings from body symbols. We look for these symbols in the face and eyes, gestures, posture, and physical appearance each of which has its own functions.

Importance of Body Language

Regarding the importance of body language, management consultant Nancy Austin says. "When people don't know whether to believe that they are hearing or what they are seeing, they go with the body language- it tells the truth. You can play fast and loose with words, but it's much more difficult to do that with gestures." Psychologist Paul Ekman says, "We talk with our vocal cords, but we communicate with our facial expressions, our tone of voice, our whole body".

Kinesics or Body Language includes:

1. Facial Expressions
2. Eye Contact
3. Gestures
4. Body Shape and Posture
5. Appearance

Facial Expressions: A popular saying goes like this "The face is the index of the heart". Whatever we feel deep within ourselves is at once reflected in the face. It is very important in any face-to-face communication event. We convey so much without speaking a word.

Example: Let us consider the facial expressions generally associated with happiness, surprise, fear, anger, sadness, bewilderment, astonishment and contentment. Let us also consider a smile, different kinds of smile, a frown, corners of lips the position of the eye brows, the cheeks-whether drawn up or back or dropping, the jaw, nose/nostrils and the chin.

We can easily mark all the signals sent through these parts of the face by others and observe our own expressions by looking at ourselves in a mirror. Every facial muscle is an instrument of communication.

The face and eyes are the most expressive means of body communication. Dale Leather has found that 10 basic classes of meaning can be communicated by facial expression. They are:

- Happiness
- Surprise
- Fear
- Anger

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- Sadness
- Disgust
- Contempt
- Interest
- Bewilderment
- Determination

Eye Contact: The eyes play an important role in face-to-face communication. Eye contact is one of the most powerful forms of non-verbal communication. When we look at somebody's face we focus primarily on his eyes and try to understand what he means. The eyes, along with the eyebrows, eyelids and the size of pupils convey our innermost feelings. Authority relationships as well as intimate relationships are frequently initiated and maintained with eye contact. Eye contact builds emotional relationship between the listeners and speaker.

- Eyebrows and eyelids raised and combined with dilated pupils tell us that the person is excited, surprised or frightened.
- Eyebrows with upper and lower eyelids closed and combined with constricted pupils tell us that the person is angry or in pain.
- Looking at somebody for a long time shows the intensity of our interest in him. If the eye contact is brief, or we take our eyes off the person very soon, it indicates nervousness of embarrassment on our part. Prolonged eye contact can signal admiration.
- Direct eye contact of more than 10 seconds can create discomfort and anxiety.
- Generally people's eyes approach what they like and avoid what they do not like. Eye contact between a speaker and audience increases the audience's assessment of the speaker as a credible source.
- People generally maintain more eye gaze and mutual eye gaze with those whose approval they want, those to whom they bring good news, and those to whom they like. They also do so with people towards whom they feel positive and whom they know and trust.
- Averted eyes show anger, hurt feelings, and a hesitancy to reveal the inner self. They also reveal negativism and the need to increase psychological distance as in an elevator, waiting room, or other small space.

Eye behavior communicates in many ways. It shows emotions. It establishes conversational regulators. It also monitors feedback. It serves as a reminder. The eyes not only supply information, they receive it as well. Major aspects of communication are covered through eyes. Of course, eye contact and eye movements convey-their meaning in combination with other facial expressions.

Gestures: In addition to facial expressions and eye contact, another import element of kinesics is the use of gestures. Gestures are the physical movements of arms, legs, hands, torso and head, made to express or help to express thought or to emphasize speech. They play a very important role in conveying meaning without using words.

Ekman and Friesen have identified five types of body gestures:

1. ***Emblems:*** A large number of body movements have come to be identified as a substitute for verbal translations. They often replace verbal message entirely. Such symbols become emblems. The list is long and comprehensive and it includes about seventy of such emblems.

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Example: A few examples in this regard are as follows:

Patting the stomach – "I'm full of food".

Nodding the head up and down – "Yes" or "I agree".

Patting the adjacent seat – "Sit besides me"

Shaking fist – "I'm angry"

Yawning – "I'm bored" or "I'm angry"

Cupping hand behind ear – "I can't hear you"

Clapping hands – "I approve"

Placing first finger on lips – "Be silent"

Circling the first finger parallel with the side of the head – "that person's crazy" or "that person's stupid"

Forming the first and second finger in the shape of a "V" – "Peace" or "Victory"

Shrugging shoulders and raising palms of hand upward – "I don't know"

Scratching the head – "frustration".

Tapping finger against skull – "I'm thinking"

Taping finger on own chest – "Me"

Standing at side of road and pointing thumb in direction of traffic – "I'd like a ride" (hitchhiking)

Waving –"Hello," "Good bye," Come here," "Here I am."

2. ***Illustrators:*** They are directly tied to verbal language. These gestures illustrate the words, which a speaker is saying. When a speaker says, "My third and final point is…" and holds up three fingers, this gesture is an illustrator.

3. ***Regulators:*** Regulators control oral communication by alerting the sender to the need to hurry up, slow down, or repeat something.

Example: Frequent glances at the watch or drumming finger on the table when someone is talking with other.

When someone is delivering a long speech and the other person wants to restrict him, the other person may show his watch to regulate the other person.

4. ***Displays:*** These indicate emotional states, such as anger or embarrassment, and usually occur in facial expressions. Display differs from the three previous types in that people have for less control over them. Many people, for example, have felt their faces turning red because they were angry or embarrassed. However, there is little, which they can do to control this effect display.

5. ***Adaptors:*** They are the gestures over which people have little control. Frequently people are not conscious of performing such gestures. Stifling a yawn or clasping the hands to the face in fear are adaptor gestures. They are automatic and are not planned.

It is important to note that gestures are not used individually but in relation to another person, and acquire meaning at particular times. Speech and gestures go together, and, therefore, have

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to be properly coordinated. In the absence of speech-gesture-co-ordination, we experience confusion and discomfort. Although Gestures are spontaneous, we can learn to monitor and use the positive gestures and minimize the negative ones.

Positive gestures: Positive gestures are body signals which make us look relaxed, confident and polite.

Positive listening gestures include:

- Leaning a little towards the speaker
- Tilting the head
- Eye contact with the speaker
- Gently nodding the head in agreement.

Good speaking Gestures include:

- Keeping the hands open
- Avoiding clutching them or folding them across the chest.

Walking with the head upright, hands swinging freely by the sides.

Negative gestures: Negative gestures include body movements which give a negative impression about us. These are categorized as below:

Signs of Nervousness:

- Hands in the pocket
- Covering the mouth with the hand while speaking
- Scratching
- Biting nails
- Glancing sideways
- Drumming fingers
- Tapping the feet
- Wringing hands
- Crossed arms or legs
- Setting the hair with hands
- Sitting on the edge of the chair
- Speaking too fast, or too slow
- Straightening the tie
- Clearing the throat too often
- Blinking the eyes a lot
- Clicking the pen
- Playing with the paper weight
- Adjusting the glasses up the nose
- Head, Body Shape and Posture

Head: In any face-to-face communication or meeting or interview the way we hold our head is very important. Everybody is aware of the age-old saying. “Hold your head high”. It is a sign

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of honor and self-respect, confidence, integrity and interest in the person/persons before us. A head bent low, depending upon the situation, would show modesty, politeness or quietness. On the other extreme a head drawn too far backwards or stiffly held straight up indicates pride or haughtiness. Head jerks indicate insolence, rejection or agreement, depending upon the context and personality of the person concerned. Nodding the head side way or back and forth conveys the intended meaning more eloquently than words.

Body Shape: Behavioural scientists have studied the shapes of our bodies and have broadly put them in the following types:

Ectomorph: Thin, youthful and tall, Mesomorph: strong, athletic, muscular, and bony.

Endomorph: Fat, round and soft.

We cannot do much about the shape of our body, but we can no doubt put it to effective use. Both our body shape and posture affect what we think about ourselves, how we relate to others and how others relate to us or respond to our moves.

Mostly we act spontaneously, whether we meet a friend or participate in a meeting. But we do become self-conscious while appearing for an interview or making a presentation. On such an occasion we try to make the best possible impression.

Posture: A person's general posture, even without specific gestures, communicates meaning. The body position of an individual conveys variety of messages. It is the position of the body or of body parts. For example, superiors usually take a more relaxed posture than their subordinates. Posture is also a way to demonstrate interest in another person.

Several writers have concluded what when you lean forward to the persons to whom one is speaking with, you demonstrate interest in that person. Sitting back, on the other hand may communicate lack of interest. It is difficult to assess exactly the meaning of postures. Warren Lamb says that a person's posture and gesture can tell much about how effectively the person will perform in an organization.

Appearance: Appearance, for our purpose, includes clothing, hair, jewellery, cosmetics etc. All these may seem unrelated to body language, but on having a closer look we find that they are very meaningfully related to our face, eyes, gesture etc.

Did u know? A famous writer has said that a man is recognized by his "dress and address"; "Dress" does not need any explanation. By address he means the way a person speaks to other. Every occasion has its own particular type of dress.

It may be formal or informal. It is normally a part of an organization's work rules to have a formal suit for the working hours. Certain organizations have a uniform for all levels of workers. If one changes from the formal dress to informal or casual he is easily noticed, and his dress speaks volumes about his attitude to life, to work, to his colleagues and his own feelings. It is not just the dress or clothes that are important for any occasion but also shoes, hair style, perfume etc., that convey 'meaning' in nonverbal form.

Proxemics or Space Language and Surroundings

Just as 'Kinesics' is the study of body language, 'Proxemics' is the study of how we communicate with the space around us. Proxemics is made from "Proximity", which means nearness, and includes the space around us and our physical environment or surroundings. It is a complicated matter indeed, but in order to make our communication effective we must take all these factors into account and put them to the best possible use. Scientific studies have been made in respect of all these factors separately as well as how they influence each other. Any organization or individual, critically influenced due to communication can draw great benefit from the findings of these studies.

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Space Language

The space around its contents convey a definite meaning. Of course, it requires some effort on our part to arrange them meaningfully, and on the part of others to understand or interpret the meaning. In other words, it tells that how people communicate with space. How close or far they stand in relation to another person, where they sit in a room, or how they arrange the office furniture which has a real impact on communication.

One of the major writers on this type of communication is anthropologist Edward T. Hall. He has identified three major types of space: feature-fixed space, semi-fixed feature space, and personal space.

1. ***Feature-fixed space:*** Feature-fixed space refers to buildings and other fairly permanent structure, such as walls. The manner in which buildings are laid out and the sequence of rooms and offices have a considerable influence on communication. The person will probably communicate more with those individuals whose offices are closer to his own rather than with those further from him. There are evidences which reveal that bigger the fixed place, the higher will be the status of the individual in an organization.

2. ***Semi-fixed feature space:*** The placement and arrangement of moveable objects, such as desk and chairs, is referred to as semi-fixed feature space. Currently, a great deal of emphasis is placed on how business offices are arranged. In addition, the quality of furniture has considerable influence on the status of the individuals and this is clearly communicated non-verbally. Frequently, the superior person will come from behind the desk and his face-to-face with the subordinate to make it easier to communicate.

3. ***Personal space:*** Our interaction with the people around us has rather a well-defined or well-understood spatial dimension. Conversely we can say that the spatial dimension or distance between us and other people tells us something important about our relations and the nature of our communication with them. This branch of proxemics has come to be regarded as "personal space language". Edward T. Hall has done very useful and interesting work in this area. Placing ourselves in the centre we can present the space around us in the form of the following concentric circles:

   (a) Intimate zone – physical contact/touch to 18 inches.

   (b) Personal zone – 18 inches to 4 feet.

   (c) Social zone – 4 to 12 feet.

   (d) Public zone – 12 feet to as far as we can see and hear.

   (a) *Intimate distance/zone:* This ranges from actual physical contact to about 18 inches from another person. Communication and interaction within this distance are intimate activities. Mostly, only our family members, closest friends and selected people enter this area. Those selected people are indeed 'special' people, whatever the reasons for their special status. It has special significance for our communication with these people.

   In the language used within this small, intimate, perhaps private circle, not many words are used. In organizations, confidential information is often communicated within the intimate distance. When two friends meet each other after a long gap, they hug each other. Eye contact, handshake, pat on the back or shoulders is quite noticeable. The major form of intimate contact in business organization is of course, the handshake. Most people respond positively to men who give a firm handshake.

   (b) *Personal distance/zone:* This range from 18 inches to four feet. Interaction in this zone includes causes and friendly conversation including conversation with close friends,

colleagues, associates and visitors. Here we rise above the closed circle of intimacy around us. Although communication in this circle is also mostly personal in nature, it is relaxed and casual for most of the time. It permits spontaneous unprogrammed talking or discussion. However, certain important decisions may be taken in this circle.

(c) *Social distance/zone:* It ranges from four feet to about twelve feet and has very aptly been called the social space. We use this space mostly for formal purposes, and the relationships within this circle are more official. We do most of our business within this area. While feelings, emotions, shared likes and dislike may come up in the intimate and 'personal' space, more reason and planning are used in the 'social' space. It is therefore, of paramount importance in business. Much of the communication in organizations is done in the social zone.

(d) *Public distance/zone:* It ranges from 12 feet to the limits of visibility and hearing. Communication at public distance is considered in public speaking. A good deal of communication within and outside an organization takes place at this range. We can very well imagine the nature of communications/speaking in this space becomes even more formal. The attachment of the 'intimate' and 'personal' space is substituted by the detachment of perception, objectivity of approach and formality of communication/speaking. We have to raise our voice so as to be heard by others whose group is almost always larger in this space. That is why it has been called 'public' space.

Space Use

Proxemics is also concerned with the use of space by groups of people. The ways groups of people use the space assigned to them determines their respective places and interaction patterns. For example, people who begin conversation and those seated at the front are usually considered leaders of the group. If the same people are seated in a row, their communication pattern will be of a different nature. People seated around an oval table are likely to communicate in the form of a conference.

Everyone is aware of some of the ways space is used to communicate in business organizations. Experts have identified three basics principles about the use of space as it relates to status within the organization:

1. For higher status people in the organization, more and better quality space is allotted.

Example: In many organizations, the president has the most attractive office, while the vice president, the department's heads, and lower level employees have smaller offices.

The number of windows in the office and the way the office is furnished are also commensurate with rank of position. This is clearly evident that better the quality place, the higher will be position or status of the individual.

2. The higher people in the organization are being protected within their territory. Their territories are closed. Many times the more status a person has in the organization, the more difficult it is to see that person. Outer offices and secretaries often are used to protect the high-status person. Even gates are manned with security people of such people.

3. For higher people in the organization, it is easier to invade the territory of lower status personnel. The superiors usually can enter the subordinate's office at will. The supervisor also has the ability to phone the subordinate at almost any time. This is the privilege. However, the subordinate usually does not have his access to the supervisor.

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Surroundings

Our surroundings or physical environment speak their own nonverbal language. It is a vast area. It is, therefore, worthwhile to cover only two important aspects of our physical context-colour and layout or design for the purpose of nonverbal communication. Through our sensory perception we get meaning from our surroundings, in the same way as through our choice of colour and design we send out definite signals to others.

Colours

Most of us know that different colours are associated with different behaviour patterns, attitudes and cultural backgrounds. People make serious efforts to choose the right colour for any significant moment and indifference to choice of colour is regarded as lack of cultivation.

Some colours are universally known to be associated with gaiety, cheerfulness or pleasant circumstances. Pink, yellow, red, purple, blue, green are gay colours. Black and gray, on the other hand, are associated with negative feelings, melancholy or somber mood. White is generally associated with purity or peace. All this shows that there exists what we may call a 'colour language'. For successful communication it is important to have the right choice of colour of our clothing, home and office interiors, upholstery and decoration pieces.

Layout and Design

Like 'colour language', there is also a 'layout and design language' as a part of non-verbal communication. The space arrangement of an office, carpeting or its absence, the furniture and its design everything conveys a meaning. Everybody is impressed by a 'tastefully' furnished office, the layout of a lobby/dining hall/conference room/reception desk. It is for this very reason that so much attention is being paid to the architecture and furnishing of offices/hotels/houses of executives in modern times. All this is aimed at conveying the mood/personality/outlook/vision of the organization. Behind all this is the vision of the successful communicators.

Time Language

Time language is another type of nonverbal communication. In it we communicate with others in terms of time by showing them, in our own cultural way, what time means to us. We do this mostly by symbolizing time, and by sending out signals regarding the importance of time and so on. In this connection, it is important to note that 'time management' is now one of the most important parts of the overall management. TMI (Time Managers International) is one of the most important American consultancy companies. It renders valuable advice to business organizations in respect of optimal use of time.

Business community all over the world knows the worth of time. It has been pointed out that "scientific managers of the late 1800's equated the worth of time with money." And then we are reminded repeatedly that "time is money". It is this consciousness of the worth or importance of time and its crucial role in productivity that has led to the invention of many time saving devices. In fact time pervades our thinking and dominates our communication. All communication is meant to be suitably timed. We get/send out/covert signals about whether anybody/anything is early or late. While people in the West are very much time conscious and attach highest importance to punctuality, people in the East have a more relaxed attitude to it.

The way we use and structure time can send intentional and unintentional message about what we value and whom we considered important. This is called chromatics.

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Para Language

Closer to actual verbal (oral) communication, and always accompanying body language, is paralanguage. It is non-verbal because it does not involve words. But without it words do not convey their intended meaning, 'Para' means 'like'. Hence, 'para language' literally means 'like language' and 'paralinguistic' is the systematic study of how a speaker verbalizes his words/speech. It is defined as "a type of non-verbal communication that includes articulation, pronunciation, rate, pitch, volume, pauses and other vocal qualities. While verbal communication consists of the 'what' or the content of words, paralanguage involves the 'how' of a speaker's voice or the way in which the speaker speaks. On careful observation and analysis we find that a speaker intentionally as well as unintentionally uses a vast range of hints and signals".

If someone asks his friend to go to movie or to a particular restaurant for dinner – one may respond, 'Yes, I would love to go' but let his tone of voice betrays his words and convey that he has little or no interest in going. The reaction of his friend to the response will communicate the message is right direction. At times people mean to communicate a particular message through the use of paralanguage.

Example: The phrase "I would like to help you" can convey several meanings, depending upon the para language employed. By changing emphasis on each of the words of this sentence, different meaning may be drawn.

Voice

The first signal we receive or use is our voice. Everybody knows how important voice is. It tells us so much about the speaker's sex, background, education, training and temperament. There are all kinds of voices – clear, musical, raucous, cultivated, pleasant, unpleasant and so on. Unless damaged by some injury to the vocal cords or some neurological problem, the human voice normally does a satisfactory job. In other words it conveys the meaning of the message. In certain jobs it is absolutely necessary for the applicant or employee to have a clear and pleasant voice. For example, jobs involving the use of telephone, announcing, tape-recording etc. require very clear voice.

The message, however, may not be effectively conveyed if we do not take care of the following points in the use of our voice:

1. ***Pitch Variation:*** Most of us introduce wide variations in pitch while speaking. It is necessary to catch the listener's attention and to keep him interested in us. Those who speak in monotones (single tone, without variation) fail to keep the listener's attention. That is why the word 'monotonous' has come to be used as a synonym for 'boring'. Many speakers are not aware of this weakness on their part. Once they become aware of it, the problem can be solved.

   A high pitch may indicate nervousness, anxiety, tension, fear, surprise, dynamism, anger, joy, cheerfulness, or impatience. A low pitch may show affection, sadness, boredom, pleasantness, intimacy or empathy.

2. ***Speaking speed:*** Fluency in a language is not the same thing as the speed of speaking. We do, however, speak at different speeds on different occasions and while conveying different parts of message. As a general rule we should present the easy parts of a message at a brisk pace because it is likely to be understood easily and soon. On the other hand, the difficult, complicated, highly technical part of information should be conveyed at a slower pace.

3. ***Pause:*** The pace or speed of speaking is also accompanied by pause. We cannot, and should not, go on speaking without pausing voluntarily or involuntarily. But the pauses have to be

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at the right moments. Incorrect use of pauses can create problems. A pause can be highly effective in emphasizing the upcoming subject and in gaining the listener's attention. But it must also be noted that frequent, arbitrary pauses spoil the speech and distract the listener's attention. It is, therefore, very important for a speaker to carefully monitor his pauses.

4. ***Non-fluencies:*** Speech is not always a continuous string of meaningful words. There are, as we have noted above, pauses scattered at intervals. These pauses are very often inserted with sounds or utterances like 'ah', 'oh', 'uh', 'um', 'you know', 'ok' etc. They are also sometimes inserted with laughing, yawning or chuckling. Sometimes they may be effective by inviting the listener's attention or by giving a nonverbal edge to the verbal communication. They are called 'non-fluencies'. It is rather interesting to see that carefully and sparingly used they add to the fluency of the speaker, give him time to breathe or relax, make the listener more alert and get the message conveyed overtly or covertly. But too frequent insertion of these non-fluencies irritates the listener.

5. ***Volume variation:*** Volume is another voice quality that frequently conveys meanings, especially in conjunction with rate. We must speak loud enough for all of our audience to hear, but not too loud. The loudness of our voice should be adjusted according to the size of our audience. Softness and loudness in volume determines the meaning specifically. Voice volume tends to vary with emotional and personality characteristics. Loudness of voice seems to occur in conjunction with anger, cheerfulness, joy, strength, fearlessness, activity, and high status. Softness in volume appears with affection, boredom, sadness, intimacy, empathy, fear, passivity, weakness, and low status.

6. ***Pronunciation:*** People pronounce words differently. There variations in pronunciation convey different meanings to different people.

Word Stress

Word stress is of crucial importance in communication or transmission of the intended meaning. By putting stress or emphasis on a word here or a word there in the same sentence or utterance we can change the whole meaning.

Example: Let us read the following series of statements, emphasizing the underlined word in each:

<u>Vaishnavi</u> sings like a nightingale.

Vaishnavi <u>sings</u> like a nightingale.

Vaishnavi sings <u>like</u> a nightingale.

Vaishnavi sings like a <u>nightingale</u>.

Even though the same words are used in these sentences/statements, we give different meaning to them by concentrating on the underlined words.

It is not always whole words that are emphasized in this way. Stressing or emphasizing syllables or parts of spoken words also changes the meaning as, for example, in the following words:

Conduct	(Noun)	Conduct	(Verb)
Accent	(Noun)	Accent	(Verb)

This way of looking at language takes us into the area of phonetics that is the science of speech sounds. Every educated speaker knows how important it is to put stress or force or emphasis on the word or part of word concerned.

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Mixed Signals: Very often problems arise because of 'mixed signals – saying one thing in one way and using words that convey the opposite meaning. It should be our constant effort to make sure that the 'what' and the 'how' of our message are in harmony. As receivers, we should concentrate on how the message is sent and the meaning of the words. All communication takes place within a matrix of role-relationships, particular contexts, at particular times, in a particular language or a dialect of that language, at regional, national or international levels, and so on. All these factors influence the paralinguistic character of the communication. If the signals get mixed up, the intended message will not be conveyed, or will be wrongly or inadequately interpreted.

Any properly educated person is careful about his voice quality, stress, production of vowel and consonant sounds, consonant-clusters, sound in connected speech, suitably spaced pauses and so on. There must be consistency between what is intended and what is conveyed.

Sign Language

Communication is a process involving the use of mutually understood signs/symbols between the sender and the receiver of a message or piece of information. Language is the most sophisticated or systematic set of symbols. The evolution of any language takes a long time, normally running in centuries. But communication has always been taking place.

From time immemorial man has been using signs and symbols mutually understood between at least two persons, and more usually among people belonging to a group or tribe, or trade. These signs, symbols, signals and indicators have generally been of two types-visual and audio or sound signals. Smell, touch and taste also communicate because sensory perception and impressions are a necessary part of human existence.

Did u know? But the most powerful or effective of them is the visual element. That is why we have the Chinese proverb, "A picture is worth a thousand words". The reason is that we take much of our information – more than 50 percent – through the gateway of our eyes.

Visual Signs

Regarding the importance of visual element in communication, Lesikar and Pettit say, "As we know from our study of communication theory, words are imprecise conveyors of meaning. Thus, it is little wonder that we frequently have difficulty in communicating through words… You will need to use pictures of some kind to help communicate your information."

- How effectively pictures communicate becomes clear from the paintings, murals and engravings found on the walls of ancient caves, temples and such other buildings. They tell us a lot about the tribes or races or rulers or traders, their religion, their hunting or other adventurous deeds, their art and so on. Their symbolic and communicative value has been a subject of serious study.
- The tradition of drawing pictures for communicative purpose continues. Posters and pictures-big and small, real-life drawings as well as cartoons/caricatures, statues and effigies are freely used for general information as also for business purposes. Everybody is familiar with the picture of ghastly, skeletal paws symbolizing the deadly, grip of drugs and so on.
- Maps and diagrams are an essential part of a book of geography, science, economics and history in the same way as no pamphlet of tourism and hotel industry, oil refinery or motor company is complete without nice-looking colorful photographs.

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- In the same way lights-green or red at traffic points, railway stations and airports, a red bulb outside the operation theatre of a hospital, a neon hoarding, a revolving light an top of a VIP vehicle or an ambulance serve their purpose very effectively without using words. Lights are also used to indicate whether somebody is in or out, and to mark the celebration of a special occasion. Colours of flags, white or black and the colours of flowers in a vase or bouquet speak volumes about the feelings of the communicator.

Many of these drawings and photographs have a local or somewhat limited appeal in the sense that, at a time, only a particular section of people will be interested in them. But a very much larger number of signs, and symbols speak a 'universal language' understood by anybody anywhere.

Audio/Sound Signals

Side by side with visual, signals, audio or sound signals have always been in use since the very beginning or civilization, and have very conveniently been adopted by the world of business. Different kinds of drumbeat were used by people living in jungles in olden times, as we are told in our history and geography books. But drumbeating is very much in use in modern times also to convey or share different kinds of feelings on different occasions or celebrations. In one way or another drumbeating is essential part of many communities' culture. Its immediate impact is to arouse and gather the hearers.

Closely allied to drumbeats, so for as volume is concerned, are the alarm signals. There are various kinds of alarm signals, fire alarms, accident, casualty alarms, air raid or assault alarms, VIP motorcade alarms, machine breakdown alarm and so on. Various kinds of sirens, hooters, whistlers etc., are used for these purposes. The main idea is to caution the listener and take the right step. Blowing a horn serves a similar purpose. A clock or watch alarms makes us aware of time and programme our schedule.

No office is complete without a buzzer, press button bell, electrically operated bell and other such sound signaling systems. They put the concerned people on alert, send out signals whether a visitor is welcome or whether it is time to leave.

Touch

This mode of communication is our earliest means of making contact with others. It has actually become essential to human development. Babies and children need to be touched in order to grow, flourish, and avoid numerous health problems. Touch even seems to improve a child's mental functioning as well as physical health. In our life touch plays an important role in how we respond to others and to our environment, and it can communicate many messages. When we appreciate someone, we pat on his back. Parents and elders bless their younger ones by touching their head. Younger people express respect by touching the feet of elderly people. By shaking hands, we show our warmth and affection to each other. When two friends after a long gap hug each other, it shows their warmth and affection.

Touching can show tenderness, affection, encouragement and the full range of emotions.

Example: The infant begins its communicative life largely through the sense of touch. As the baby is a hugged, kissed, cradled, cuddled and stroked, human exchange being to unfold.

Psychologists contend that the denial of extensive touching can have untold negative impact upon the infant's development.

Touching actions serve as regulators. They act as both conveyors and elicitors of positive as well as negative feelings. Touching conveys the total range from highly impersonal to highly personal meanings. The touch will be of four types:

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- ***Intimate touch:*** A child and mother usually touch to each other to shower affection. Two friends/brothers meet each other after a long gap is also an intimate touch.
- ***Friendly touch:*** When two people meet, they touch their shoulders and back to show their warmth and it is a friendly touch.
- ***Professional touch:*** Doctor examines their patients by touching. Surgeons operate their patients.
- ***Social touch:*** Handshake is one of the commonest forms of this kind of touch. When a teacher touches his student to encourage him, it is social touch. By touching the head of younger ones, blessings are bestowed by the elder ones.

Case Study **Wave: Advertising Radio FM Brand**

A young, gorgeous woman is standing in front of her apartment window dancing to the 1970s tune, "All Right Now" by the one-hit band Free. Across the street a young man looks out of his apartment window and notices her. He moves closer to the window, taking interest. She cranks up the volume and continues dancing, looking out the window at the fellow, who smiles hopefully and waves meekly. He holds up a bottle of wine and waves it, apparently inviting her over for a drink. The lady waves back. He kisses the bottle and, excitedly says, "Yes." Then, he gazes around his apartment and realizes that it is a mess. "No," he exclaims in a worried tone of voice. Frantically, he does his best to quickly clean up the place, stuffing papers under the sofa and putting old food back in the refrigerator. He slips on a black shirt, slicks back his hair, sniffs his armpit, and lets out an excited, "Yeah!" in eager anticipation of entertaining the young lady. He goes back the window and sees the woman still dancing away. He points to his watch, as if to say "Come on. It's getting late." As she just continues dancing, he looks confused. Then a look of sudden insight appears on his face "Five," he says to himself. He turns on his radio and it "too is playing" All Right Now The man goes to his window and starts dancing as he watches his lady friend continue stepping. "Five, yeah," he says as he makes the "okay" sign with his thumb and forefinger. He waves again. Everyone in the apartment building is dancing by their window to "All Right Now." A super appears on the screen: "Are you on the right wavelength?"

Questions

1. Why do you suppose that this commercial relies primarily on non-verbal communication between a young man and a gorgeous woman?
2. Would any of the non-verbal communications in this spot (ad) not work well in another culture?

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

8. Non-verbal communication is …… to verbal communication.
9. Kinesics means …… .
10. …… expressions are a part of body language.
11. …… are the physical movements of arms, legs and limbs.

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12. …… is the study of how we communicate with the space around us.
13. …… means 'like language'.
14. The word …… expresses its meaning.
15. Use of mutually understood symbols is done in …… .

1.5 Public Speaking Skills

Public speaking is a talk given to a large gathering whose content is light. It is given on occasions like an anniversary or an inauguration. Its purpose is usually to encourage, appreciate, congratulate or entertain; it is followed by applause from the audience.

Persons in responsible positions must be good speakers as there are many occasions when they are required to address an audience. Being able to speak well is an asset in any profession. Speaking skill can be cultivated and developed with some knowledge of the formal aspects of public speaking, and with practice.

The most important requirement for public speaking is its preparation. Even persons who have natural skill in speaking need preparation to deliver a good speech.

1.5.1 Tips for Good Public Speaking

Speeches are difficult for most of us. The techniques can be adopted to improve the public speaking.

- ***Selection of the topic for speech:*** Your first step in formal speech making is to determine the topic of your presentation. In some cases, you will be assigned a topic, usually one within your area of specialization. In fact, when you are asked to make a speech on a specified topic, it is likely to be because of your knowledge of the topic. In some cases, your choice of topic will be determined by the purpose of your assignment, as when you are asked to welcome a group or introduce a speaker. In your search for a suitable topic, you should be guided by three basic factors. The first is your background and knowledge. The second basic factor is the interests of your audience. The third basic factor is the occasion of the speech. Your selection should be justified by all three factors.
- ***Preparation of the speech:*** After you have decided what to talk about, you gather the information you need for your speech. This step may involve searching through your mind for experiences or ideas, concluding research in a library or in company files, gathering information online, or consulting people in your own company or other companies. In short, you do whatever is necessary to get the information you need. When you have that information, you are ready to begin organizing your speech. Although variations are sometimes appropriate, you should usually follow the time-honored order of a speech: introduction, body and conclusion.
- ***Guidelines for the introduction of the speech:*** The introduction of a speech has much the same goal as the introduction of a written report: to prepare the listeners (or readers) to receive the message. But it usually has the additional goal of arousing interest. Unless you can arouse interest at the beginning, your presentation is likely to fail. The techniques of arousing interest are limited only by the imagination. One possibility is a human-interest story, for storytelling has strong appeal. Humour, another possibility, is probably the most widely used technique. Other effective ways for gaining attention at the opening are by using quotations and questions. In addition to arousing interest, your opening should lead into the theme of your speech.

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- ***Guidelines for organizing the body of the speech:*** Organizing the body of your speech is much like organizing the body of a report. You take the whole and divide it into comparable parts. Then you take those parts and divide them. You continue to divide as far as it is practical to do so. In speeches, however, you are more likely to use factors rather than time, place, or quantity as the basis of division because in most speeches, your presentation is likely to built around issues and questions that are subtopics of the subject. Even so, time, place, and quantity subdivisions are possibilities. You need to emphasize the transitions between the divisions because, unlike the reader who can see them, the listeners may miss them if they are not stressed adequately. Without clear transitions, you may be talking about one point and your listener may be relating those ideas to your previous point.
- ***Conclusion remarks of the speech:*** Like most reports, the speech usually ends by drawing a conclusion. Here you bring all that you have presented to a head and achieve whatever goal the speech has. You should consider including these three elements in your close: (1) a restatement of the subject, (2) a summary of the key points developed in the presentation, and (3) a statement of the conclusion. Bringing the speech to a climatic close—that is, making the conclusion the high point of the speech—is usually effective. Present the concluding message in strong language—in words that gain attention and will be remembered. In addition to concluding with a summary, you can give an appropriate quote, use humour, and call for action.

Task Listen to various chat shows and speeches given by CEOs and spokespersons to enhance your listening as well as public speaking skills.

1.5.2 Importance of Public Speaking

In an organization, there is always a paucity of effective speakers who can positively speak about business. Lack of this ability makes public to see business in a negative light. Poor presentation of business managers to the outsiders can be a cause of business failure. Hence, it is through external communications that business presents its message to the public. There is a need in business for persons that can effectively present organizational viewpoint to the outsiders.

Public speaking is important in many different ways, because it encompasses so many aspects of our lives, we will consider public speaking from the standpoint of the individual, the organization, and society in which, we live.

The Individual

When you apply for a job, the employment interviewer evaluates you on the basis of certain characteristics. Your ability to communicate is one such characteristic, and it comes across clearly in an interview. Your ability to communicate not only influences whether you are hired but it determines your progress on the job. Employers realize that it is the ability to communicate that often separates an exceptional employee from the average ones. Being able to organize your thoughts and give a public speech is another significant determinant of your personal and professional success. When you speak and others listen and respond to your comments, it affects the way you see yourself and how others see you. Being able to give an effective public speech enhances your self-esteem; you feel good about yourself.

Notes

The Organization

It has been said that an organization is only as good as the individuals who comprise it. It could also be said that an organization communicates only as effectively as do its individual members. Business has been blamed for many of the problems facing society. Such issues as the effects of automation upon employment and discrimination in hiring must be addressed by people speaking for business organizations. The energy crisis, product liability, and the use of nuclear energy represent other important problem areas. Much anti-business sentiment is due to public unawareness of the business position on such matters. There is a need in business for people who can effectively present the organizational viewpoint to the public. The average business organization does a poor job of acquainting the public with its contributions to society.

From a communication standpoint, it does not matter how pure the motives of the organization are. What the matter is, what the public knows about such things and how the public responds to this knowledge of a company's activities. Unless the public is made aware of what business is doing and why, the best of intentions on the part of business will be of no avail. Only through effective external communications can business present the information that is most likely to result in a desirable image. One of the most important and effective formats in which to present that information is the public speech.

The Society

We live in a society in which the free expression of ideas is not merely tolerated, but encouraged. Issues are analyzed and point-of-views are presented in many different formats. Newspaper editorials, town hall meetings, and discussions (or arguments) are a few settings in which opinions are aired on those subjects about which the participants feel strongly. Our society thrives on this free expression of ideas, for it is through such interchange that a balanced perspective is maintained. When a certain point of view ceases to be expressed, however, perhaps for the lack of someone willing and able to speak out, that viewpoint no longer influences society. It is often through public speaking that ideas are presented for public evaluation. This was as true in the preliminaries to the Declaration of Independence as it is today in election campaigns at all levels. It is as evident at an annual meeting of stockholders' as at a monthly union local meeting. For lack of an effective speaker, a good idea may fail to get consideration. A lack of articulate opponents may result in the passage of legislation of little merit. Continuation of our free society requires willing and articulate people of every view.

Self Assessment

State whether the following statements are true or false:

16. Persons who have natural skill in speaking need no preparation to deliver a good speech.
17. Being able to organize your thoughts and give a public speech is a significant determinant of your personal and professional success.

1.6 Summary

- Oral communication means spoken communication or communication through speech. A person learns to speak much before writing.
- The Barriers or negative forces may affect the effectiveness of communication by acting upon any or all of the basic elements of communication process and sender/receiver/channel.

Notes

- To communicate effectively, we need to overcome all the barriers and own skills to improve the existing communication abilities.
- The two sides of an effective oral communication are listening and presenting.
- Out of reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, the most crucial is listening.
- Presentation means presenting something before people on some formal occasion. It is also known as 'public speaking'.
- Nonverbal communication, or body language, is a vital form of communication. When we interact with others, we continuously give and receive countless wordless signals.
- All of our nonverbal behaviors—the gestures we make, the way we sit, how fast or how loud we talk, how close we stand, how much eye contact we make—send strong messages.
- Public speaking is a talk given to a large gathering. Impromptu, extemporaneous, memorized and manuscript are modes of delivery in public speaking.

1.7 Keywords

Gestures: Gestures are the physical movements of arms, legs, hands, torso and head, made to express or help to express thought or to emphasize speech. They play a very important role in conveying meaning without using words.

Kinesics: 'Kinesics' is the systematic study of body language works through facial expression, eye contact, gestures, head position, body shape, posture and appearance. Body language accounts for more than half of all communication.

Non-verbal Communication: Communication without the use of spoken or written words.

Oral Communication: Communication that involves words emanating from the mouth.

Para Language: 'Para' means 'like'. Hence, 'paralanguage 'literally means' like language' and 'paralinguistic' is the systematic study of how a speaker verbalizes his words/speech. It is defined as "a type of non-verbal communication that includes articulation, pronunciation, rate, pitch, volume, pauses and other vocal qualities.

Proxemics: Proxemics' is the study of space language. Any successful communicator makes effective use of it. Distance wise the space around us can be divided into four kinds-intimate, personal, social and public. Only very social or important people enter our intimate space.

Space Language: The space around its contents and us convey a definite meaning. Of course, it requires quite some effort on our part to arrange them meaningfully, and on the part of others to understand or interpret the meaning. In other words, it tells that how people communicate with space.

Time Language: Time language is another type of nonverbal communication. In it we communicate with others in terms of time by showing them, in our own cultural way, what time means to us.

1.8 Review Questions

1. Discuss principles of successful oral communication.
2. Write a note on effective listening and how it can add value to your speaking skills.
3. Describe the relevance of correct pronunciation and word stress in oral communication.
4. Explain the importance of proper usage of space in oral communication.

Notes

5. Explain the barriers to communication. Also discuss the measures to overcome those barriers.
6. Explain the two sides of effective communication.
7. Discuss the different types of non-verbal communication.
8. Why is listening, the most crucial out of all the communication skills?
9. "Non-verbal communication, when used along with verbal communication completes the communication." Discuss.
10. Discuss the tips for good public speaking and importance of public speaking.

Answers: Self Assessment

1. True	2. True	3. Semantic
4. Individual	5. Flat	6. True
7. False	8. Complimentary	9. Body language
10. Facial11.	Gestures	12. Proxemics
13. Paralanguage	14. Stress	15. Sign Language
16. False	17. True	

1.9 Further Readings

Books

Lesikar, Flatley, *Basic Business Communication*, 10th Edition, Tata Mcgraw Hill, p.433.

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Meenakshi Raman, Prakash Singh, *Business Communication*, Oxford University Press, 7th Impression 2008.

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Notes

Unit 2: Using a Foreign Language

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Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Realise what a foreign language is and how you can learn one
- Know how you can learn to speak a foreign language fluently and confidently
- Discuss the benefits of learning a foreign language
- Identify the career options in foreign language
- Know the popular languages of the world

Introduction

A foreign language is a language that is native to some other country. It can also be referred to a language that is not spoken in the native country of a person.

Example: For an Englishman living in India, Hindi is a foreign language.

These two features do not exhaust the possible definitions, however, and the label is seldom applied in ways that are variously deceptive or factually inexact. For many students, language practice comes to an end once class is over. One reason is that students are unaware of how to use their English, German, Japanese, or Russian, outside the confines of the classroom.

Knowledge of one or more foreign languages can be useful in a wide range of careers. For some jobs, such as translating, interpreting and language teaching, language skills are one of the main requirements. For other jobs a combination of languages and other qualifications, knowledge or skills may be needed.

Notes

Example: People with languages plus IT, law, finance or sales skills are much sought-after.

In this unit, you will learn to use a foreign language effectively.

2.1 Learning Foreign Languages

Assuming you want to speak more than you want to read that language, perhaps the best way is the way children learn: first by listening, then by repeating or speaking. Little by little children learn vocabulary and only much later do they learn reading and grammar. Learning another language needs to be fun, otherwise, you may it hard to stay devoted. You need to be patient and celebrate small achievements. Following tips would help you to learn a foreign language in a systematic manner:

- ***You should spend required time:*** By far the most important factor is how much time you devote to the language. The more time you spend with the language, the faster you will learn. This means listening, reading, writing, speaking, and studying words and phrases. This does not mean sitting in class looking out the window, nor listening to other students who do not speak well, nor getting explanations in your own language about how the language works. This means spending time enjoyably connected to the language you are learning.
- ***You should listen and read every day:*** Listen to audio tapes wherever you are on your MP3 player. Read what you are listening to. Listen to and read things that you like, things that you can mostly understand, or even partly understand. If you keep listening and reading you will get used to the language. One hour of listening or reading is more effective than many hours of class time.
- ***You should focus on words and phrases:*** Build up your vocabulary, you'll need lots. Start to notice words and how they come together as phrases. Learn these words and phrases through your listening and reading. Read online, using online dictionaries, and make your own vocabulary lists for evaluation. Soon you will run into your new words and phrases elsewhere. Gradually you will be able to use them. You should not worry about how accurately you speak until you have accumulated ample words through listening and reading.
- ***You should take responsibility for your own learning:*** If you do not want to learn the language, you won't. If you do want to learn the language, take control. Choose content of interest that you want to listen to and read. Seek out the words and phrases that you need to understand your listening and reading. Do not wait for someone else to show you the language, nor to tell you what to do. Discover the language by yourself, like a child growing up. Talk when you feel like it. Write when you feel like it. A teacher cannot teach you to become fluent, but you can learn to become fluent if you want to.
- ***You should relax and enjoy yourself:*** Do not worry about what you cannot remember, or cannot yet understand, or cannot yet say. It does not matter. You are learning and improving. The language will gradually become clearer in your brain, but this will happen on a schedule that you cannot control. So sit back and enjoy. Just make sure you spend enough time with the language. That is the greatest guarantee of success.

2.1.1 Speaking a Foreign Language Fluently and Confidently

Although English is spoken by a vast amount of people worldwide, it is still not the number one spoken language in the world. For those of us who only speak English and find ourselves in situations where English knowledge is not enough, it is very difficult to find our way around.

Notes

Example: Visiting country where English is not the first language or in some cases not spoken at all or meeting a client from another country who cannot speak English.

The following guidelines will help you in improving your hold over a foreign language:

- Purchase a Dictionary that is an English-Desired Language Dictionary

Example: An English-Spanish Language Dictionary

- Learn a new language the way you learned your native language, one word at a time.
- Purchase and upload the language CD's into your iPod
- Subscribe online to newspapers in the desired language
- Sign up to receive emails in the desired language
- Go to the website of the country(s) that speak that language and practice reading in the language
- Practice writing in the language
- Practice speaking in the language even if your speech is broken
- Befriend people who are native speakers of the language you want to speak, either by meeting them personally or on social media
- Dine at the restaurants and practice ordering food in the new language
- It is said that over 80% of communication is non-verbal. Do you know the customs and body language of your target language? Learn it and your ability to communicate (and your confidence) will increase exponentially.
- If you cannot learn the language on your own even after trying several times and for several days, consult a reputed language teaching institute.

Caution Beware of the fake institutes/second-rate institutes that promise to teach you a foreign language within 30 days or 60 days.

Task Study the non-verbal aspects of communication of any one country and compare them with the Indian non-verbal communication.

2.1.2 Benefits of Learning a Foreign Language

Once you have a learned a new language, you will be amazed at how much easier it is to understand a third language. Very soon you will be speaking or at least have an understanding of every major language that exists. The benefits of speaking a foreign language are many. Some of them are listed below:

- Your social circle will expand. You will have the opportunity to meet far more people than you would have thought possible. No need to spend Saturday nights alone.
- There will be increased career opportunities. Professionals who speak second language are called for travel and business purposes. Moreover such people also get to use new technologies and ideas. They also get to seek out more opportunities in the community.

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- Most of the world's literary and artistic works have been written in languages other than English. A translation of a text can never be fully true to the intent, beauty, style, and uniqueness of its original.
- When you are able to read in another language without having to stop and translate every other word, then you have mastered the language. Research shows that knowledge of other languages boosts students' understanding of languages in general and enables students to use their native language more effectively.
- Learning another language gives the learner the ability to step inside the mind and context of that other culture. Without the ability to communicate and understand a culture on its own terms, true access to that culture is barred.
- As globalization and mobility and communications are bringing the world ever closer together, ever more urgent is the need for global citizens to be competent in other languages.
- Learning a second language also acts as an added benefit if you tend to travel a lot to foreign countries.

Example: If you speak Spanish well, you get an added advantage while travelling to Latin countries or if you speak English then you get advantage in most of the countries of the world.

Because learning a language involves a variety of learning skills, studying a foreign language can enhance one's ability to learn and function in several other areas. People who have learned foreign languages show greater cognitive development in areas such as mental flexibility, creativity, and higher order thinking skills, such as problem-solving, conceptualizing, and reasoning.

Learning another language and culture gives you the unique opportunity of seeing yourself and your own culture from an outside perspective. There are aspects of your language, yourself, your life, and your own culture that you accept as absolute and universal or that you have never even considered until you encounter a culture and people who do things in a much different way than you're used to.

Self Assessment

State whether the following statements are true or false:

1. When learning a foreign language, patience and devotion is required.
2. Regular reading and listening to audio tapes will take you closer to the foreign language.
3. A teacher can teach you become fluent at a foreign language.
4. While learning a foreign language, you should learn one word at a time.
5. At first, you should try to learn the language by yourself rather than enrolling in an institute.
6. Learning another language gives the learner the ability to step inside the mind and context of that other culture.

2.2 Careers and Foreign Language

If businesses are to effectively compete in a global economy, they must learn to deal with other cultures on their own terms. Companies that plan to do business abroad therefore have a dire need for bilingual or multilingual employees. Businesses that intend to compete internationally need employees who can competently communicate in the locales where they do business. Employees who speak one language can communicate only with people who speak that same language.

Notes

Business is not the only area of employment where language competencies are needed, however. Multiple government agencies, the travel industry, engineering, communications, the field of education, international law, economics, public policy, publishing, advertising, entertainment, scientific research, and a broad array of service sectors all have needs for people with foreign language skills.

International organisations and embassies employ language specialists for secretarial, executive and public relation assignments as well as for translations and interpretations jobs. Translators are also found to be employed with industries, publishing houses, government and research organisations. Other job opportunities for language specialist lie with the travel and tourism sector, hotel industry, exhibitions and fairs, airlines offices, export agencies, radio stations and trade organisations. Teaching can also be given a thought. For pursuing a career in teaching, a teacher should be a graduate in that foreign language and must have a teaching degree.

Compensation varies with the kind and the place of work.

Example: A career in teaching can earn anything from ₹ 10000/- p.m to ₹ 20000/- p.m. A Lecturer's pay scale is between ₹ 10000/- p.m. to ₹ 13000/- p.m. and professors can expect over ₹ 18000/- p.m. Those working as translators get paid between ₹ 50/- to ₹ 100/- per page. An interpreter gets paid on hourly basis and at present the rate varies from ₹ 300/- to ₹ 500/- per hour. For those working with embassies can get paid between ₹ 8000/- p.m. to ₹ 10000/- p.m.

Though the fact is that opportunities for regular employment are far and few and are mostly in metropolitan cities, but on attaining professional qualification in foreign languages, one can work in the following areas:

- ***Teaching:*** The most common of all the available career options in foreign language is teaching. Teaching of foreign language is just like teaching any other language. For newcomers, it is advisable to start with teaching. As a teacher, a person gets enough opportunities to enhance his skills. As far as teaching jobs are concerned, many institutions are offering courses in foreign languages and so jobs exists at all levels. Those reluctant to engage themselves in a full-time profession, can take private tuition as well.

- ***Translating:*** Translators translate written material from one language to another. The kind of material involved may include product manuals, business reports, business correspondence, legal documents, websites, subtitles for films, song lyrics, and literature.

  To be a translator you need the ability to write and express yourself very well in the target language, usually your native tongue, and a good knowledge of the source language(s), usually foreign languages. Fluency in the source language(s) is not essential, but you definitely need an excellent understanding of the written version of the source language and the culture of the people who speak it. Specialist knowledge of other subjects, qualifications in translation, and membership of a professional association are also very useful.

- ***Interpreting:*** Interpreters work with the spoken word at conferences, meetings, trials, hospitals and anywhere else that interpretation is needed. There are two types of interpreting: simultaneous or conference interpreting and consecutive interpreting.

  Simultaneous interpreting usually happens at big conferences and meetings and involves the interpreter sitting in a soundproof booth listening on headphones to delegates giving speeches in a foreign language and at the same time, speaking a translation in their (the interpreter's) native language into a microphone so that delegates who speak that language can understand what's going on. Simultaneous interpreting is a high-pressure, high-stress and usually well-paid job. Simultaneous interpreters often work in teams with each individual interpreting for 15-20 minutes at a time.

Notes

Consecutive interpreting involves giving a translation after speakers have spoken, and often translating in both directions between languages. Consecutive interpreting may occur at smaller meetings, discussions between politicians, business people and journalists, and also in courtrooms and hospitals.

- ***Freelancing:*** Often, after pursuing courses in foreign languages, people like to work as freelancers. These people get work in translation bureaus, research organisations, international organisations like UNO, FAO, foreign companies, Reserve Bank of India, publishing houses etc. Expertise in foreign language coupled with other additional qualifications in areas like management, tourism, hospitality industry, airlines can be even fruitful and better the chances for employment opportunities.

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

7. The most common of all the available career options in foreign language is …… .
8. …… transform written material from one language to another.
9. …… can be of two types – conference and consecutive.
10. …… interpreting involves giving translations after the speakers have finished their speech.

2.3 Important Foreign Languages

Every foreign language is important in its own right but here we will list some popular languages that students generally want to learn:

English

The English language has become the language of international communication. There are approximately 1,302,275,670 English speakers in the world (2010 figure, source for all figures: internetworldstats.com).

You need to learn English language to improve your understanding. Many experts believe the language to be an easy access to knowledge. Once you understand and speak English you can easily get hold of valuable information. The fact that most online references and textbooks are written in the English language imply that it can improve your knowledge. In addition, major percentage of the world's population speaks English. So if you don't know to speak English you'll be considered out of the league.

Case Study

English as a National Foreign Language

India has two national languages for central administrative purposes: Hindi and English. Hindi is the national, official, and main link language of India. English is an associate official language. The Indian Constitution also officially approves twenty-two regional languages for official purposes.

Dozens of distinctly different regional languages are spoken in India, which share many characteristics such as grammatical structure and vocabulary. Apart from these languages, Hindi is used for communication in India. The homeland of Hindi is mainly in the north of

Contd...

Notes

India, but it is spoken and widely understood in all urban centers of India. In the southern states of India, where people speak many different languages that are not much related to Hindi, there is more resistance to Hindi, which has allowed English to remain a lingua franca to a greater degree.

Since the early 1600s, the English language has had a toehold on the Indian subcontinent, when the East India Company established settlements in Chennai, Kolkata, and Mumbai, formerly Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay respectively. The historical background of India is never far away from everyday usage of English. India has had a longer exposure to English than any other country which uses it as a second language, its distinctive words, idioms, grammar and rhetoric spreading gradually to affect all places, habits and culture.

In India, English serves two purposes. First, it provides a linguistic tool for the administrative cohesiveness of the country, causing people who speak different languages to become united. Secondly, it serves as a language of wider communication, including a large variety of different people covering a vast area. It overlaps with local languages in certain spheres of influence and in public domains.

Generally, English is used among Indians as a 'link' language and it is the first language for many well-educated Indians. It is also the second language for many who speak more than one language in India. The English language is a tie that helps bind the many segments of our society together. Also, it is a linguistic bridge between the major countries of the world and India.

English has special national status in India. It has a special place in the parliament, judiciary, broadcasting, journalism, and in the education system. One can see a Hindi-speaking teacher giving their students instructions during an educational tour about where to meet and when their bus would leave, but all in English. It means that the language permeates daily life. It is unavoidable and is always expected, especially in the cities.

The importance of the ability to speak or write English has recently increased significantly because English has become the de facto standard. Learning English language has become popular for business, commerce and cultural reasons and especially for internet communications throughout the world. English is a language that has become a standard not because it has been approved by any 'standards' organization but because it is widely used by many information and technology industries and recognized as being standard. The call centre phenomenon has stimulated a huge expansion of internet-related activity, establishing the future of India as a cyber-technological super-power. Modern communications, videos, journals and newspapers on the internet use English and have made 'knowing English' indispensable.

The prevailing view seems to be that unless students learn English, they can only work in limited jobs. Those who do not have basic knowledge of English cannot obtain good quality jobs. They cannot communicate efficiently with others, and cannot have the benefit of India's rich social and cultural life. Men and women who cannot comprehend and interpret instructions in English, even if educated, are unemployable. They cannot help with their children's school homework every day or decide their revenue options of the future.

A positive attitude to English as a national language is essential to the integration of people into Indian society. There would appear to be virtually no disagreement in the community about the importance of English language skills. Using English you will become a citizen of the world almost naturally. English plays a dominant role in the media. It has been used as a medium for inter-state communication and broadcasting both before and since India's independence. India is, without a doubt, committed to English as a national language. The impact of English is not only continuing but increasing.

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Notes

Questions

1. What are the benefits of having English as a national language?
2. Do you think, we can consider making any other foreign language one of our national languages?

Source: http://www.usingenglish.com/comprehension/9.html

Mandarin

Mandarin is basically spoken in Mainland China, Taiwan and Singapore. With approximately 1,372,226,042 speakers, Mandarin is the most spoken language in the world. The spoken language is not as hard as people would think. The grammar is about as complex as in English, but the vocabulary takes more effort to learn, since it is not related at all to the English vocabulary. Learning Chinese, you understand better why linguist speak of a language as the spoken part only: there's no relationship whatsoever between what you hear (the word) and what you write (the character). This is why it is considered by many as the most difficult language to learn.

Did u know? It takes three to four years at least to learn to read, but you can speak in one year!!!

For many people, this is also the language of the future, with China becoming more powerful every year and a huge economy that buys and sells all over the world.

French

French, as the name suggests, is the native language of France and many French colonies. Speaking French will be very useful in many countries besides France, such as North Africa, Québec, and in many "black" African countries.

Did u know? There are about 75 million native French speakers, but a further 55 million know it as a communication language.

French will open you one of the world's largest economies, France, and allow you to do business in various North African countries where French is the lingua franca of the business intelligentsia. Also, France is the most visited country on earth, so knowledge of the language will come in handy while travelling to France.

French is not very difficult to learn and speak. It will take around 10-12 months to learn, if you dedicated an hour to it every day.

Task Translate the introduction portion of this unit into French. Use a English-French dictionary/grammar book and internet for help.

German

German, as the name suggests, is the native language of Germany. Apart from Germany, it is widely spoken in Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Luxembourg, and in regions of Italy and Belgium. There are approximately 94,842,656 German speakers in the world. If you deal with Germany or Austria, either as a tourist or for business, speaking German is a key asset.

Notes

Caution The problem is that you need to speak it well, since the Germans like precision and exactness.

German is a language of immense economic use in the German-speaking countries. However, it does not enjoy the lingua franca status of English, French or even Spanish.

Again, like French, German is not very difficult to learn and with dedicated practice, one can learn to speak German in 12-14months.

Spanish

Spanish is one of the most popular languages of the world. You can speak Spanish in more than 25 countries. Approximately there are 423,085,806 people who speak Spanish. The language is spoken in a very similar way all over the world.

The combined GDP of all Spanish-speaking countries is one of the highest for any language, surpassed only by English and Japanese. If you do business with Spain or the Americas, Spanish is a must, since many businessmen do not speak other languages very well.

Note Spain is the world's second most visited country and knowledge of Spanish can come in handy while travelling to Spain but also other exciting countries such as Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Costa Rica.

Spanish is not very difficult to learn and with around 300 hours of devoted study, you should be able to speak it with some fluency.

Other Languages

Portuguese: spoken mainly in Portugal and Brazil, it is fairly easy to learn and speak. Since, Brazil is emerging as an important destination for business and travelling, learning the language can be helpful.

Arabic: though it is spoken widely in rich economies like Saudi Arabia and UAE, this language is very confusing and not easy to learn. The problem is that if you wish to converse on the street, you will have to learn one of the many colloquial dialects, which are only spoken in a few countries.

Japanese: Japan is the world's second largest economy and ships millions of high quality products all over the world, such as cars and electronics. The Japanese roam the world as investors and tourists. They are generally pleasant people to deal with and speaking their language is definitely a big asset if you deal with them in your job.

Italian: Italy, again, is one of the largest economies in the world and Many Italian businessmen, even those who deal with clients outside Italy, do not speak anything but Italian. If you speak Italian you can normally directly deal with the owner or his children and get better terms. Also, Italian vacation is probably on every individual's wish list, so there also the language can be helpful.

Notes

Self Assessment

Match the following sets:

Set A	Set B
11. English	(a) Spoken in Austria
12. Mandarin	(b) One of the chief languages of Mexico
13. French	(c) Most spoken language in the world
14. German	(d) Has many colloquial dialects
15. Spanish	(e) Widely spoken in many North African countries
16. Arabic	(f) Has second highest number of speakers

2.4 Summary

- A foreign language is a language that is native to some other country. It can also be referred to a language that is not spoken in the native country of a person.
- Knowledge of one or more foreign languages can be useful in a wide range of careers. For some jobs, such as translating, interpreting and language teaching, language skills are one of the main requirements.
- Learning another language needs to be fun, otherwise, you may it hard to stay devoted. You need to be patient and celebrate small achievements.
- Once you have a learned a new language, you will be amazed at how much easier it is to understand a third language. Very soon you will be speaking or at least have an understanding of every major language that exists.
- Businesses that intend to compete internationally need employees who can competently communicate in the locales where they do business. Employees who speak one language can communicate only with people who speak that same language.
- Some of the jobs that you can take up after learning a foreign language are teaching, translating, interpreting and freelancing.
- Mandarin is the most spoken language in the world, followed by English. Other popular languages include French, German, Spanish, Japanese, Italian, Arabic and Portuguese.

2.5 Keywords

Foreign Language: Any language used in a country other than one's own

Freelancing: Working on a contract basis for a variety of companies, as opposed to working as an employee for a single company

Interpreter: One who translates orally from one language into another

Native Language: The language that a person acquires in earliest childhood; also, the primary language of a community

Translators: People who convert written material from one language to another

Notes

2.6 Review Questions

1. Describe the concept of a 'foreign language'.
2. 'To learn a foreign language, you should learn as a child does'. Explain.
3. State the basic principles to be kept in while if one wants to learn a foreign language.
4. Is knowledge of English and being able to speak English enough to deal with people globally? Why, or why not?
5. Discuss the benefits of speaking a foreign language.
6. 'Learning another language and culture gives you a better understanding of your own culture'. Substantiate.
7. Discuss the career prospects in foreign language.
8. Who are interpreters and translators? What is the difference between the two?
9. Write short notes on: English and Mandarin as foreign languages.
10. What are the benefits of learning French, German and Spanish?

Answers: Self Assessment

1. True	2. True	3. False	4. True
5. True	6. True	7. Teaching	8. Translators
9. Interpreting	10. Consecutive	11. (f)	12. (c)
13. (e)	14. (a)	15. (b)	16. (d)

2.7 Further Readings

Books

Dinesh Chander Kapoor and Shikha Kapoor, *Ajanta French in Two Months*, Ajanta.

Dinesh Chander Kapoor, *Ajanta Chinese in Two Months*, Ajanta .

Manuela Cook, *Teach Yourself Portuguese*, Hodder Publication.

Online links

http://how-to-learn-any-language.com/e/index.html

http://www.linguanaut.com/

http://www.learnalanguage.com/

http://www.omniglot.com/language/why.htm

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Unit 3: Conversation Building

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Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- State the meaning and importance of formal face-to-face conversation
- Identify the advantages of face-to-face conversations in a formal environment
- Discuss the ways to improve formal face-to-face conversation
- Realise the need and significance of face-to-face informal conversation in an organization
- Describe the various methods to make your informal conversation effective

Notes

Introduction

Face-to-face communication can be defined as communicating one's thoughts through words to the person/people in front. Such thoughts may be ideas, opinions, directions, dissatisfaction, objections, your emotions and pleasures.

When it comes to business, face-to-face communication is very important for the reason is that one has to deal with a variety of people throughout the day. There may be a single day in which you may have to deal with people who have different culture, ages and with different levels of experience.

It is quite obvious that the way in which you converse with a family member or friend around your same age, is quite different from the way in which you deal with your day to day business clients. With the former, you interact with a lot of confidence, but with the latter, the higher is his importance for you – the higher is the preparation that you make before talking to him. More so, because you cannot talk anything and everything in front of him. You have to ensure that all that is being said is meaningful as well as useful for the organisation that you are working for.

Thus it is necessary to have proper skill when using verbal communication while dealing face-to-face with different people.

3.1 Formal Conversation

Formal communication can be defined as, a conversation that strictly adheres to rules, conventions, and ceremony, and is free of colloquial expressions. It connotes the flow of the data by the lines of authority formally acknowledged in the enterprise and its members are likely to communicate with one another strictly as per channels constituted in the structure. Thus, it is a purposeful effort to influence the flow of communication so as to guarantee that information flows effortlessly, precisely and timely.

It emphasizes the essence of formal channel of communication. The different forms of formal communication include; departmental meetings, conferences, telephone calls, company news bulletins, special interviews and special purpose publications.

Face-to-face communication is an integral part of the modern business communication. The skills involved are effectively used in meetings, presentations, telecommunication, video-communication and all such formal and informal occasions (these days, it is not unusual to find professionals talking business at informal occasions like wedding of some client's daughter etc.).

Spoken communication is riskier in the terms that you need to be very specific of what you say and might even sometimes have to think on your feet. One must remember that communication is more than just talking. It's building and maintaining relationships.

Experts say that communication is composed of different methods: words, voice, tone and non-verbal clues. Of these, some are more effective in delivering a message than others. According to research, in a conversation or verbal exchange:

1. Words are 7% effective
2. Tone of voice is 38% effective
3. Non-verbal clues are 55% effective.

Non-verbal clues include:

1. Body language (e.g., arms crossed, standing, sitting, relaxed, tense),
2. Emotion of the sender and receiver (e.g., yelling, speaking provocatively, enthusiastic)

Notes

3. Other connections between the people (e.g., friends, enemies, professional similarities or differences, personal similarities or differences, age similarities or differences, philosophical similarities or differences, attitudes, expectations).

In other words, WHAT you say is not nearly as important as HOW you say it!

Example: A dull message delivered by a charismatic person, filled with energy and enthusiasm will be accepted as brilliant.

An excellent message delivered by someone who is not interested in the topic, will not engage the enthusiasm of its intended audience.

3.1.1 Advantages and Disadvantages

Like everything else in this world, formal conversation too has its own advantages and disadvantages. Let us go through the following discussion to understand the same.

Advantages

1. The official channels facilitate the habitual and identical information to communicate without claiming much of managerial attention. Thus formal communications are easier to enforce, to monitor and to improve.
2. The institutionalisation of communications, by the implementation of formal communication channels, may contribute to assign a positive value to the communications within the enterprise culture, thereby encouraging people to communicate.
3. Formal communications are better suited to formal and stable business processes.
4. Formal communications per se usually increase reliability and traceability. They may also better justify investments which contribute to the improvement of communications in terms of efficiency, reliability, and security.
5. A strong vertical division of work requires formal communications up and down hierarchical levels of management.
6. Face-to-face conversation develops empathy between the speaker and the audience.

Disadvantages

1. In informal, or unstable processes, formal communications may introduce a lack of flexibility in the processes and prevent the organisation from adapting them or treating special cases.
2. Formal communications may hit some psychological barriers, and may be not used. Actor capabilities to use formal communications must then be assessed and possibly improved.
3. Formal communications may put constraints on actors which decrease their efficiency; therefore the actors would have a negative attitude towards using them.
4. Communication through channel of command greatly obstructs free and uninterrupted flow of communication.
5. Formal communication is generally time consuming, cumbersome and leads to a good deal of distortion.

Notes

3.1.2 Oral Fluency Development

In business transactions that involve face to face interaction between individuals or groups of individuals, it is not enough to be able to talk, speak, discuss, argue or negotiate an issue. A manager should be able to converse or discuss persuasively, effectively and convincingly. To do so, he must know the skills of oral communication. Oral communication skills should include the following abilities:

1. Help in problem solving.
2. Resolve conflict.
3. Influence people to work together.
4. Persuade others to be involved in organizational goals.
5. Be assertive without being aggressive.
6. Develop listening skills.
7. Be an effective negotiator.

Figure 3.1: Elements of Formal Communication

Source: www.ncls.org.au

Tips for Effective Oral Communication

According to Francis J Bergin, oral communication is characterized by seven C's: candidness, clarity, completeness, conciseness, concreteness, correctness and courtesy.

These act as principles for choosing the form and content of oral communication. Oral communication should provide a platform for a fair and candid exchange of ideas.

It takes more than a black tie or beautiful gown to fit into a formal setting. How you appear is only part of the challenge since just about anyone can dress up and look nice. Even more important is the way you present yourself through conversation.

A loud booming voice points towards the lack of social graces and gives those in your company the impression that you're an overbearing or even uneducated person. Likewise, a barely audible voice is irritating, to say the least. Here are some useful tips, which the communicator should follow in order to make his oral communication more effective:

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1. ***Consider the objective:*** Since formal conversations require to be concentrating on a central idea, it is important that the speaker(s) consider the objective prior to the meeting.

2. ***Be confident:*** To be a little nervous is OK for all important tete-a-tetes but all said and done, will you ever like talking to a corporate representative who is not sure what he's going to say next? Or who doesn't show enough confidence while talking a big business plan?

3. ***Think about the interest level of the receiver:*** First of all you need to be aware of the fact that you must be flexible with people depending on the circumstances. Let us say you are presenting a speech in front of an audience at work, and you express your thoughts using business vocabulary. Now what if your audience where to be unfamiliar with the terms you are using, it is without question you will notice the audience lose focused attention to what you are saying, so then you must be flexible and change the way you are expressing your thoughts by using words that are more comprehendible to the audience.

4. ***Be brief and precise:*** The people in business don't have time to listen to long speeches or monologues until and unless they are of extreme utility to them. By the way nobody again has that much of time to deliver long speeches in business!!! So for all good reasons, always be brief and precise about what you are talking.

5. ***Give full facts:*** It is important for you to back up your opinions or statements with facts. In order to have references about your subject it is suggested to read and study about it. Like for example, if you where to discuss the issue that we are all facing today such as the world's economy for instance, and then you may obtain the facts from the news paper, the news, Internet, and you can even get it from books.

   You always want to support your opinions with facts since it makes verbal communication much easier to express when it comes to expressing an idea. Such suggestions if applied may result to improve your verbal communication.

6. ***Use polite words and tone:*** To talk in a loud manner may give the impression of an arrogant and overbearing personality. It may also speak of how uneducated you are. At the same time, speaking in an inaudible manner may indicate a person with little social skills. In both cases, you may end up irritating a lot of guests and this could mean social suicide. Your voice either draws people to you or turns them away. Speak in a modulated tone and do away with the awkwardness.

   People hate it when they have to strain to hear what someone is saying or when they have to ask the person to repeat. And, it's extremely rude to whisper, particularly for the purpose of excluding others in present company. Try to speak in a moderate tone but never a monotone.

   How you laugh is also important in a formal setting. Loud, boisterous laughs point towards social inadequacy and poor upbringing. Other do-nots are covering your mouth when you laugh, snickering, or laughing aloud with food in your mouth. And don't gesture wildly when conversing or laughing.

7. ***Be sensitive and courteous to others:*** Put on silent mode or turn off your nifty gadgets like cellular phones, personal digital assistants or something similar. If you were to take a very important call, leave the premise and do it privately, away from the group. Don't take calls within your circle or while the other person you are talking to is beside you. It is rude to do this.

   To be one is to have the ability to not only speak properly but to also listen when spoken to. Allow other people to also share their opinion. Interrupting them while they are talking is thoughtless and disrespectful. For some people, it may mean you are being argumentative and hostile.

Notes

Call people by their appropriate names. If you are familiar with each other, call each other by first names. If you are in a conversation with a VIP or maybe your boss, call them by their appropriate titles e.g. Sir or Madam.

Some people may find difficulty in carrying a conversation while dining at the table. In this case, basic table manners must be applied, such as: avoid talking when your mouth is full. And if the other guest is also in the middle of chewing his food, let him eat quietly first and engage him in a conversation when he is done.

Avoid interrogating too much; especially if this is the first time you have been introduced to the person. Be aware of their body language as this could indicate whether or not you are already going over the boundaries of asking too many questions about them.

8. ***Develop new areas of conversation:*** Conversations in a formal format may at times end up in discussions on many topics ranging from politics to business or sports and entertainment. However, discussing lives of other people such as your common friends or acquaintances, particularly when they are also invited guests in this event, should be avoided. Mentioning a few things about your personal life is acceptable. But also be conscious of sharing too much. Avoid hogging the conversation because talking too much about yourself may either bore other guests or alienate them.

9. ***Maintain eye contact:*** Eye contact is crucial. It is a way to engage other people into the conversation. Avoiding eye contact may indicate your lack of interest with the person you are with and that could be insulting. However, don't overdo it to the point of staring, as this is also rude.

10. ***Exhibit positive gestures and body language:*** Nobody is interested in even talking to a person who doesn't have a positive body language. In formal conversations, how you speak through your body language is as important as what you speak verbally.

    It is for this reason that your hand movements must be limited to your own space since other guests may find your gestures inexcusable. To overstretch, reach over, slap, clap, playfully punch or high-five someone in a formal social setting is a no-no. Perhaps the one allowable physical contact you may have with another guest is a very firm handshake.

11. ***Be a good listener:*** Carl Rogers, in On Becoming a Person, notes that, "The whole task of psychotherapy is the task of dealing with a failure in communication …… the major barrier to mutual interpersonal communication is our very tendency to judge, to evaluate, to approve or disapprove, the statement of the other person, or the other group …… Real communication occurs when we listen with understanding – to see the idea and attitude from the other person's point of view, to sense how it feels to them, to achieve their frame of reference in regard to the thing they are talking about."

By listening, you are giving respect to the person speaking and showing that you understand what they are saying. If you misunderstand what they are trying to say, you can both work to clarify the message.

By practicing your listening skills, you will also develop better speaking skills. If you listen to where people misinterpret what you say, you will find ways to make it clearer. Your frustration at being misunderstood will disappear and you will assume less about what you hear because you have confirmed it with the speaker.

Remember, listening is not the same as hearing. Hearing is using the ears to acknowledge the sound of something. Listening means understanding from the perspective of the speaker.

Notes

Don Gabor, in his book 'Speaking Your Mind in 101 Difficult Situations', gives these tips for using TACTFUL conversations:

(a) T = Think before you speak

(b) A = Apologize quickly when you blunder

(c) C = Converse, don't compete

(d) T = Time your comments

(e) F = Focus on behavior - not on personality

(f) U = Uncover hidden feelings

(g) L = Listen for feedback

Other DO's and DON'Ts to Accompany T-A-C-T-F-U-L Strategies

DO be direct, courteous and calm

DON'T be rude and pushy

DO spare others your unsolicited advice

DON'T be patronizing, superior or sarcastic

DO acknowledge that what works for you may not work for others

DON'T make personal attacks or insinuations

DO say main points first, then offer more details if necessary

DON'T expect others to follow your advice or always agree with you

DO listen for hidden feelings

DON'T suggest changes that a person cannot easily make.

Let us see the difference between formal and informal conversations.

Example:

Formal Conversation

Greetings		Introductions		Good-byes	
Sample sentence	**Sample response**	**Sample sentence**	**Sample response**	**Sample sentence**	**Sample response**
Hello, Mr. Sharma	Hello.	Dr. Williams, I'd like to introduce you to Ms Richa.	It's a pleasure to meet you. /Pleased to meet you.	It was nice meeting you.	It was nice meeting you too.
Hello, doctor.	Hello.				
Good morning.	Good morning.			It was nice to see you.	Same to you.
Good afternoon.	Good afternoon.				
Good evening.	Good evening.			Have a good day.	Thank you. You too.
How are you?	Fine, thank you.			Good night/ Goodbye.	Good night/ Goodbye.

Notes

Informal Conversation

Greetings		Introductions		Good-byes	
Sample sentence	**Sample response**	**Sample sentence**	**Sample response**	**Sample sentence**	**Sample response**
Hi.	Hey. Hi.	Anil, this is Javed. He's in my team.	Hi Javed. Nice to meet you.	Nice meeting you.	You too.
How are ya?	I'm good. All right.			Take it easy.	
How are things?	Pretty good.	Hi. My name's Jonathon.	I'm Danish. Nice to meet you.	Take care.	
How's it going?	OK. Not bad.			I'm off.	OK, bye.
How are doing?	I'm doing good.			I gotta go.	See ya. See ya later. Bye.
What's up?	Nothin much. Not a whole lot. Nothin. Nothin special. Not much.			So long.	
What's new?				See ya.	
What's happenin?				See ya later.	
What are you up to?				Bye.	
What's goin on?					

3.1.3 Improving Presentation Skills

A presentation is more complex and is delivered to a small, knowledgeable audience at a conference, seminar or business meeting. Its purpose is more concretely and precisely defined. Its purpose is usually to inform, explain, persuade or present a point of view. It is followed by a question-answer session.

Speaking before an audience is an opportunity for the speaker to express his own point of view. If he is unable to overcome the initial fear and nervousness, the whole floor is literally going to unfold before him. He would be able to keep the audience engrossed in listening to what he wishes to state.

Making effective presentations to groups or key individuals is a regular part of an executive's job. Delivering a clearly understandable message that gains the support of the listeners obviously requires expertise in public speaking. Less obviously, it requires that you understand the perspective of your audience and be willing to adjust your presentation based on feedback during the session.

Experts tell us that public speaking ranks highest on the list of situations people fear most (followed by death!). Overcoming this fear requires education and practice, practice, practice!

Few of us are born to be excellent public speakers. We offer encouragement to those who feel insecure – don't give up! Organizations such as Toastmasters (and many others) offer proven techniques for overcoming fear and assistance in mastering master speaking skills. We have seen, many people become accomplished speakers, who in the past became speechless when asked to speak in public.

Developing presentation skills is an art where most of the training and learning require greater focus and attention. Executives, non executives, instructors, trainers and administrators need to strengthen their skills with respect to their presentations before varied target groups.

Notes

Elements of a Presentation

Presentations have three major elements:

1. ***Presenter/Speaker:*** The person who is giving the presentation.
2. ***Audience:*** The people for whom the presentation is meant. The audience usually shares some common characteristics, like they all belong to a particular age group or profession or any other such attribute.
3. ***Specific content:*** This is the content of the presentation, which is formulated with a major objective to be achieved.

Steps in Presentation: There are some basic steps which need to be kept in mind at the time of making a presentation. How successful one is at the end of the delivery, is contingent upon the amount of labour that has gone into the preparatory stages.

1. Know your subject! This is most important.
2. Prepare for the speaking situation (outline, writing the entire presentation, delivering it to friends or whatever works for you). Even professional public speakers take time to prepare themselves.
3. Prepare outlines and overheads to help develop your confidence in your presentation (part of knowing your topic well).
4. Have your outline (or overheads, slides or note cards) with you to refer to as you make the presentation and to trigger your thoughts as you speak.
5. In the early stages of your preparation, ask someone you trust to listen to your presentation and give you honest feedback in a one-on-one situation. Ask them what works well and what needs improvement. The more important the results of your presentation are to you, the more important it is to get help in refining your presentation.
6. Take classes where you are able to develop presentations and have them critiqued (e.g., classes in public speaking or verbal presentation skills, Toastmasters).
7. Tape your presentation (videotape is best) and ask others to critique your presentation. Watch yourself and learn to look for subtle body language clues to your confidence or insecurity.
8. Talk to people you respect about how they learned to speak well. Ask them to coach you (if that is appropriate) or try to find someone you admire who will work with you.
9. When you are confident, relaxed and enthusiastic about your topic, that comes through strongly to your audience. Remember how much comes through non-verbal clues.
10. Ask for feedback from your audience about your presentation and pay attention to what they say.
11. In workshops, ask the participants to introduce themselves, state why they are there and what they hope to gain from the presentation. (This is most appropriate if you are making a speech or giving a class to strangers). Based on the participants' needs and expectations, you may adjust your presentation as you go through it.
12. In a management presentation especially (e.g., to present your new budget or present sales information), stop occasionally to ask if people understand what you have said.
13. If you have an executive coach (or someone who can play that role), have them sit in on your presentations and help you pick up clues from the group. (We did this very effectively

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with one of our clients who had been promoted to department manager. We used hand signals and other cues to let her know when she was going too fast, too slow or missing the body language of an executive group where she gave regular presentations.)

14. And, most of all – Practice, practice, practice!

To enhance one's presentation skill it is absolutely imperative to secure the help of the six great helpers – the five W's and the one H. The concept of incorporating them as extremely useful tools in the art of writing fiction was first propagated by Rudyard Kipling. Subsequent to this, experts in various disciplines realized their need in specific areas. Communication too, incorporated them as helpers to explain the basic concepts of presentation and interaction. These are as follows:

1. Why
2. Who
3. Where
4. When
5. What
6. How

Why: The purpose of presentation must be clear to the speaker. It is necessary to be aware of the real reason for making a presentation.

Who: Who is my listener? Knowledge about the co-participant is important in meeting communication demands.

Where and When: These imply the place and the context. After your message is formulated, try and visualize the position of your receiver. Where would he be when he receives it? The format and tone of your message should change in accordance with the place where it is going to be delivered.

What: This obviously focuses round the subject matter on the message. What exactly, do you wish to communicate and what is the need to do so.

How: How do we achieve the right effect? To what purpose can we use the five W's so as to secure the undivided attention of the audience? We can achieve this effect by the tone at the delivery which we adopt to deliver the message.

It is really not all that difficult making presentations in front of a large gathering if a few factors are kept in mind. Primary among them is the attitude towards the situation as well as the audience. You definitely need to be positive. In case there is even an iota of doubt regarding the stance to be adopted towards the participants, you must remove or substitute it. The speaker should emerge as an assertive communicator, whose thought, process is positive as evidenced through his body sport or oral presentation.

The speaker has to break the ice and gain acceptance. If he can succeed in doing so, the presentation is a success and the speaker's skills, laudable. It needs a lot of effort but once a positive start has been made, the going is not all that tough, as the audience will themselves endeavour to make the entire session a successful one.

Task Prepare a presentation on 'Ways to Striking Effective Formal Conversation' and present it before your friends and family members. After finishing the presentation, conduct a question-answer round in form of a conversation.

Notes

3.1.4 Persuasion

Persuasive communication may be defined as the process through which people attempt to influence the beliefs or actions of others. In many cases persuasive communication involves people who are important to each other. In a persuasive communication process one wants to alter the beliefs, attitudes, intentions, or behavior of another by the conscious and unconscious use of words and non-verbal messages. (Ilardo, 1981). Persuasive communication is used to influence both individuals and groups to accept a particular position or belief. If one wants to influence other person or group he or she must have a clear understanding of the audience.

Process of Persuasion

In a persuasive communication the desired result can be achieved through a process of communicating to other. This process has different stages which are as follows:

1. Making the audience aware to the problem
2. Making them understand the problem
3. Understanding the proposed solution
4. Visualisation of the proposed solution
5. Understanding how audience will act in response.

On the very first stage, the awareness stage of the persuasive communication, there is an introduction to the nature of the problem or situation. Audience understanding of the problem requires a concise and clear problem statement from the speaker's point of view. It is important at this stage to show how the problem is relevant to the audience or in other words how it is affecting them. The second stage of this communication is to find out the solution, which in many cases is prepared in advance. Now the speaker explain the solutions and guides the audience to imagining how the proposed solution will be beneficial to them. Finally, the speaker gets the feedback from the audience, finalises the solution and deciding what actions, individually and collectively, must be taken.

3.1.5 Participating in Discussion

The Group Discussion is a personality test, most popular with public/private sector undertakings, government departments, commercial firms, and other organizations, used to screen candidates, after the written test. It is a part of oral communication.

The entire study of communication would remain incomplete if there was no analysis of the system of Group Discussions (GDs). To gauge/judge the mettle of students prior to their entry into any organization, the communication skills of each one of them are tested vis-á-vis other equally, academically, competent candidates.

It primarily evaluates one's ability to interact in a group on a given topic. One's group behaviour means so much for one's success as a manager or an executive, responsible for co-ordination and organization of activities of groups of individuals. The GD evaluators, therefore, focus on group dynamics rather than contents of the discussion.

Qualities needed for group discussion: GDs are held with a particular purpose in mind. It may be to select a suitable candidate for a job or suitable candidate as student for admission to a particular course. In any of these cases, the aim is to select a person owning distinct leadership qualities. There are certain qualities, which are looked for during a GD.

Notes

1. Leadership qualities
2. Knowledge of the subject matter
3. Analytical ability
4. Clarity of thought
5. Conviction and flexibility

3.1.6 Debates

Debate is a formal method of interactive argument. Debate is a broader form of argument than logical argument. In logical argument only the consistency from axiom is examined. Though logical consistency, factual accuracy as well as some emotional appeal to audience are important elements of the art of persuasion. In debating, one side often prevails over the other side. Debate can be in form of formal framework or informal framework. In a formal framework, there are rules for people to discuss an issue. Informal debate is a common occurrence, but the quality and depth of a debate improves with knowledge and skill of its participants as debaters.

3.1.7 Conference

A conference is a meeting of a large group of persons assembled for the purpose of discussing common problems or activities. The number of participants may be anything from 50 to 500 or more. A large conference is divided into small groups for the purpose of discussions. The participants may not be from the same organization.

The word "Conference" is normally used to describe a gathering of a larger scale, for a specific purpose. One usually refers to Annual Conference or Bi-annual conference, zonal or regional conference, two day conference and so on, suggesting longer duration and larger participation. Business plan conferences are regularly held in business organizations. The advent of innovative methods like teleconference and video conferencing has facilitated interactive communication between participants, without necessitating physical presence of all concerned at one venue.

The type of preparations and attentions for details in relation to the conferences are by and large, the same as those of meetings. Sometimes, the conferences may also have the features of a function, in which case, the presence of a Chief Guest, introduction of the speaker or dignitary, invocation, lighting of the lamp, presentation of bouquets, and distribution of brochures and other details become relevant. The check list for meetings suggested earlier will have to be suitably modified to plan for and accommodate all details. We also normally come across words like 'Summit' to describe a meeting of the heads of states and 'Retreat' to describe temporary retirement or getting away from the hindrance of routine and hectic schedules from serious business meetings. Viewed in that context, meeting, meet, conference, workshop, seminar, study circle, and symposium etc., are by their nature, platforms which facilitate interactive communication and therefore the most appropriate terms may have to be used.

The conference is a tool of learning and training and development. Members pool together and share their knowledge and experience, and discuss their problems. It is an enriching activity. It does not have a task to complete; and conclusions that are arrived at during the discussions are included in a report of the conference. Copies of the reports are given to participants and their organizations and may also be sent to various authorities concerned with the subject of the conference. A conference does not have any authority, but it may make recommendations since the participants are persons who have experience and are engaged in the activity and are directly affected by the state of affairs in the field.

Notes

3.1.8 Interview

An interview is a conversation between two or more people (the interviewer and the interviewee) where questions are asked by the interviewer to obtain information from the interview.

Depending on the objective of the interviewer, the interviews can be of many types.

Examples:
1. Employment-related interview
2. Job interview
3. Case interview
4. Informational interview
5. Exit interview
6. Webcam interview
7. Cognitive interview
8. Stress interview

Out of all these, stress interview needs a special mention. As the name suggests, a stress interview is conducted for assessing the ability of the interviewee to face high levels of strain or mental pressure. Certain types of jobs, which are regarded as difficult assignments, do require the person concerned to process relatively greater emotional and mental strength to deal effectively with people and situations. Security forces dealing with border events, police personnel in responding to violent mobs and arson, industrial relations personnel in organizations dealing with militant unions, etc., are some examples of situations where an unperturbed and tactful response would be desirable. In order to carry out the job effectively, the person concerned should be able to face the situations boldly, keep cool even under extreme provocation, and not buckle under pressure. This calls for a certain temperament and disposition. The members of the panel, conducting the stress interviews are generally well versed in conducting such specialized interviews. They may be curt and businesslike. They provoke, challenge and corner the candidate into submission or accepting the unacceptable or find fault with the candidate's actions.

3.1.9 Paralinguistic Features

If you paid attention, while discussions, we have been referring to some paralinguistic features every now and then. Closer to actual verbal (oral) communication, and always accompanying body language, is paralanguage. It is non-verbal because it does not involve words. But without it words do not convey their intended meaning, 'Para' means 'like'. Hence, 'para language' literally means 'like language' and 'paralinguistic' is the systematic study of how a speaker verbalizes his words/speech. It is defined as "a type of non-verbal communication that includes articulation, pronunciation, rate, pitch, volume, pauses and other vocal qualities". While verbal communication consists of the 'what' or the content of words, paralanguage involves the 'how' of a speaker's voice or the way in which the speaker speaks. On careful observation and analysis we find that a speaker intentionally as well as unintentionally uses a vast range of hints and signals.

If someone asks his friend to go to movie or to a particular restaurant for dinner – one may respond, 'Yes, I would love to go' but let his tone of voice betrays his words and convey that he has little or no interest in going. The reaction of his friend to the response will communicate the message is right direction. At times people mean to communicate a particular message through the use of paralanguage. For example, the phrase "I would like to help you" can convey several meanings, depending upon the para language employed. By changing emphasis on each of the words of this sentence, different meaning may be drawn.

Notes

Voice

The first signal we receive or use is our voice. Everybody knows how important voice is. It tells us so much about the speaker's sex, background, education, training and temperament. There are all kinds of voices – clear, musical, raucous, cultivated, pleasant, unpleasant and so on. Unless damaged by some injury to the vocal cords or some neurological problem, the human voice normally does a satisfactory job. In other words it conveys the meaning of the message. In certain jobs it is absolutely necessary for the applicant or employee to have a clear and pleasant voice. For example, jobs involving the use of telephone, announcing, tape-recording etc. require very clear voice.

Word Stress

Word stress is of crucial importance in communication or transmission of the intended meaning. By putting stress or emphasis on a word here or a word there in the same sentence or utterance we can change the whole meaning.

Mixed Signals

Very often problems arise because of 'mixed signals - saying one thing in one way and using words that convey the opposite meaning. It should be our constant effort to make sure that the 'what' and the 'how' of our message are in harmony. As receivers, we should concentrate on how the message is sent and the meaning of the words. All communication takes place within a matrix of role-relationships, particular contexts, at particular times, in a particular language or a dialect of that language, at regional, national or international levels, and so on. All these factors influence the paralinguistic character of the communication. If the signals get mixed up, the intended message will not be conveyed, or will be wrongly or inadequately interpreted.

Any properly educated person is careful about his voice quality, stress, production of vowel and consonant sounds, consonant-clusters, sound in connected speech, suitably spaced pauses and so on. There must be consistency between what is intended and what is conveyed.

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

1. …… is the process through which people attempt to influence the beliefs or actions of others.
2. The Group Discussion is a …… test.
3. Factual accuracy as well as some …… to audience are important elements of the art of persuasion.
4. The conference is a tool of learning, …… and …… .

State whether the following statements are true or false:

5. Presentations have three major elements: speaker, specific content and visual aids.
6. Make audience analysis is one of the steps of presentation.
7. Word stress is not importance in transmission of the intended meaning.
8. Paralanguage is non-verbal.

Notes

3.2 Informal Conversation

E-mail, intranets, faxes, voice mail-they're fine for accelerating the transfer of factual information. But when your communication involves any emotion – such as the expressing of different opinions – a face-to-face meeting is by far the best bet, with a traditional, interactive, phone conversation a distant second choice.

Informal communications is the casual communication between the employees in an organization. It builds relationships among staff members, and the face-to-face interaction is the primary way people communicate informally.

3.2.1 Informal Communication Networks

Informal communication networks are patterns of interaction based on friendship, shared interests and proximity. Some consider informal networks to be the most important means of communication in an organization. Functions of informal networks within organizations may include:

1. Confirming a formal communication.
2. Expanding on information conveyed formally.
3. Expediting messages that arrive more slowly via formal channels.
4. Contradicting formal messages.

Example: A friend in accounting may disclose that the deadline for purchases on this year's budget is not as firm as what was conveyed in the comptroller's recent memo.

5. Circumventing official channels.

Example: A tennis partner who works in duplicating might give priority to a rush job instead of putting it at the bottom of the pile.

6. Supplementing formal communications.

Informal networks are faster and sometimes more dependable than formal channels. In fact, networking – the process of strategically meeting people and maintaining contacts to get career information, advice and leads – has been recognized as a key skill in the development of managers. Those who informally network tend to be successful and progress more in their careers compared with those who do not.

3.2.2 Importance

Why is face-to-face communication so important? As we get more efficient at communicating facts electronically, we tend to forget how much emotion we convey through body language and voice tone.

Example: As I say with words that I disagree with someone, my tone, my posture, my smile, and my eye contact may at the very same time be saying, "I value and respect your opinion and enjoy working with you … even though I disagree with you on this point."

Notes

Note **The Phantom System**

General Montgomery, Supreme Commander of Eighth Army in North Africa during WW II (and later in Europe), received – like every Commander – the routine situation reports on a daily basis, which his staff prepared, next to those from the different units of his vast army. But he did not want to only rely on these routine channels of information. Montgomery took the revolutionary step of establishing his "Phantom" system of liaison officers. These were carefully selected young soldiers chosen for their bravery, their initiative, their manners and their independence. This corps d'élite had unusual powers. They had carte blanche to travel anywhere and observe anything, but had no power of command. They were the eyes and the ears of the commander. Each morning they drove out to the farthermost parts of the front, using motorcycles, jeeps, or aircraft (Piper Cubs) and then returned to report directly to Montgomery late in the afternoon. They just told him what they saw. In this way Montgomery, in addition to the routine daily reports from the different units, also received the latest first-hand eye witness view from the entire front.

Despite the special position of these young men there was never any friction between them and the units they visited, because of the manner in which Montgomery handled this group of liaison officers and the information they gathered.

3.2.3 Characteristics of Good Conversation

People spend more than half of their entire day at their work places, so they are bound to be involved in informal conversation. Sometimes out of choice, sometimes due to obligations. But even an informal conversation at work place has some protocols. Actually, not essentially protocol, they may be called as characteristics of a healthy informal conversation.

1. ***Talk in their Terms:*** Studies have proven that the relationship is better and more productive if you talk with prospective customers at the same rate of speech that they talk with you, because people usually like to listen at the same speed that they talk.

   Similarly, different people have different preferred methods of communication and they often send messages in the manner they like to receive messages. Some people prefer to communicate in person; others leave a lot of voice-mail messages; others use e-mail; others use memos; others, maybe the company intranet.

   When we hire people from much larger corporations, we find that they often alienate people by relying too heavily on memos. In any company or department, communication will be stronger and people will work together better if you can standardize communication methods.

2. ***Have a Positive Body Language:*** Body language accounts for more than half of what other people respond to and make assumptions about when they are connecting with you. And more often than not, you're not consciously thinking about it. By becoming conscious, you're 50 ahead of the game.

   You can't multi-task speaking and listening. If you're talking, you're not listening. This rule also applies to the talking inside your head. If you're thinking intently about what you want to say, you're not listening to what is being said.

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3. ***Be Proactive***: Create a physical space. Focus on reacting and responding to the speaker. Create, a space in your mind too for what the speaker has to say. Create a space between your thoughts. Think of listening as a form of meditation. Quiet your mind and focus your attention on listening.

4. ***Don't be Judgmental:*** How often we have passionately expressed a gut reaction only to become turned around and regret what we said after hearing more of the facts? Allow for a thoughtful pause between reacting, a space in which to ask yourself, "Do I have the whole story?"

   Also, people are unique. We tend to create labels like Liberal, Dead Head, Wise Guy, and think we know what's inside. Suddenly, we believe we know everything about someone, but they are not really all alike.

5. ***Have an Open Mind:*** While we may not consciously feel the need to be right, we tend to have certain ideas about reality and feel groundless when they're threatened. Groundless now and then isn't a bad thing. Without it we can't break new ground or find common ground; it's okay to be unsure.

6. ***Have Focus:*** When someone is speaking, you must maintain a proper focus. If you're paying attention, you'll be showing signs of focus – such as making eye contact – without thinking about it at all. Below are some of the ways through which we show we're listening.

   Maintain eye contact. There's an old myth if you won't look at me I can't trust you. It might be true, might be not. But if the people worldwide believe it, it's true! Eyes are one of the most important nonverbal channels you have for communication and connecting with other people.

   Caution Both, under-usage or over-usage of eyes while conversing should be taken well care of. In the US, not making an eye contact has the connotation of someone untrustworthy. Similarly, many cultures specially, eastern consider steady eye contact as impolite or aggressive.

   Did u know? (a) Most people in Arab cultures share a great deal of eye contact and may regard too little as disrespectful.

   (b) In English culture, a certain amount of eye contact is required, but too much makes many people uncomfortable. Most English people make eye contact at the beginning and then let their gaze drift to the side periodically to avoid 'staring the other person out'.

   (c) In South Asian and many other cultures direct eye contact is generally regarded as aggressive and rude.

Give non-verbal clues: Nod, lean toward the speaker, take on the general demeanor of someone who is interested.

Encourage the speaker to go on: We all agree to the fact that getting no response feels like no one is listening.

Don't be a verbal trespasser: A verbal trespasser is one who interrupts or finishes the speaker's sentences.

Ask open questions: Open questions encourage the speaker. They elicit a more detailed response than closed questions. "What" and "Why" are usually helpful starts to open questions.

Summarize: Summarizing is often helpful, especially if you have had a misunderstanding, are unsure of expectations, or have just reached an agreement. Ensure that everyone is coming away with the same idea.

Notes

7. ***Visualise:*** Visualisation is a technique that can enhance listening: a picture is worth a thousand words. One way to use visualisation is to visualise what you are being told. Some people are more visual than others. If visualisation is more a chore than a help, you may not be a visual person. But anything new takes some adjustment and might take a few tries before feeling natural.

8. ***Remember Names:*** The first step in remembering names is deciding that they are important to remember. Listen when you're told about someone prior to introductions. Repeat the names when you are introduced. Make associations to remember names.

9. ***Question:*** Going into a listening situation with questions in your mind will help you remember and, often, put information into the framework of your existing knowledge. Listen to body language and be quick to clarify assumptions if you are unsure or are getting a negative message. Observe. Listen. Ask.

10. ***Be Aware:*** We must be aware of the speaker, aware of verbal and non-verbal cues, and aware of our own listening strengths and challenges.

11. ***Have a Positive Attitude:*** Attitudes drive behavior. Your body language is a result of your mental attitude. By choosing your attitude you get in that mood and send out a message that everyone understands, consciously or unconsciously.

    "Almost always, you have a choice as to what attitude to adopt. There is nothing in any normal work situation that dictates you must react one way or another. If you feel angry about something that happens, for instance, that's how you choose to feel. Nothing in the event itself makes it absolutely necessary for you to feel that way. It is your choice. And since you do have a choice, most of the time you'll be better off if you choose to react in a positive rather than a negative way."

    It is not what happens to you that counts. It is how you react to what happens to you, especially when you have unexpected problems of any kind.

12. ***Try to be a Leader:*** A leader creates the environment that determines people's moods at the office and their mood, in turn, affects their productivity and level of engagement.

    When we move the curtain a bit, we can see clearly that a leader's bad mood is a source of Infection – an emotional contagion that eventually spreads across people to entire units. We can learn a thing or two from leadership in the military. Imagine the effect on troop morale and energy that an "overwhelmed," "anxious," "worried" or "irate" leader would have.

    Take a hard look at your behavior in meetings, which are often "cauldrons of emotion." Do you model the way by setting a positive tone right from the start? Or do you impose your own "pace" based on how you feel at the moment? Aim for a calm, relaxed mood and a consistent, positive approach.

    One of the central objectives of a leader is to make others aware of the greatness that lies in them. Be known in your organization as someone who is always on the lookout for what is right with people. It engenders good will and is good for business.

    Do you have a good reading of the climate of your unit or organization? Can you accurately sense what the emotional atmosphere is? Is it upbeat? Is it energized? Is it down or dejected? Do people seem slightly apprehensive and somewhat cautious in your presence? Can you ask a trusted acolyte if the atmosphere changes when you are away?

    If you are an emergent leader, and working on having a pleasant personality is not a priority for you, consider putting some effort into cultivating this prized quality. It is almost impossible to have executive presence without it. Be cooperative, for example, sharing ideas and shortcuts. This is another example of how mood affects productivity.

Notes

Be particularly mindful of how you manage emotions if your organization is undergoing change – how you handle emotions during these crucial times can help or hinder the change process. It's a known fact that if the resistance to change is emotional, it is the hardest form of resistance to overcome. As the leader handling a change initiative, don't avoid the emotions that accompany the change process. Set the mood and manage the emotions – or they will manage you.

Task Notice the difference between the way you converse with your teachers or bosses and your friends.

3.2.4 Aims

The informal conversation has certain aims that can be highlighted as under:

1. ***Communication:*** While communicating one must:
   (a) Listen
   (b) Ask questions and
   (c) Speak
2. ***Build relationships:*** If the aim of a conversation is to build relationship, one must be able to:
   (a) Connect
   (b) Build trust
   (c) Establish rapport
3. ***Influencing:*** If the aim of a conversation is to influence, one must be able to:
   (a) Support
   (b) Persuade
   (c) Coach
4. ***Leading:*** If the aim of a conversation is to develop a following for oneself, one must be able to:
   (a) Inspire
   (b) Energise
   (c) Empower

Self Assessment

Multiple Choice Questions:

(Choose the right option to be filled in the blanks in the excerpts of the informal discussions given below)

9. I'm sorry but I can't take it anymore. I'm afraid I've reached …… point.
   (i) screaming
   (ii) crying

Notes

(iii) howling

(iv) shouting

10. How many more times do I have to …… it to you, stupid?

(i) restrain

(ii) render

(iii) repeat

(iv) resign

11. I'm warning you. I can take just that much and …… more.

(i) any

(ii) no

(iii) some

(iv) enough

12. Right. I'm leaving. You can do whatever you like. I couldn't care …… .

(i) more

(ii) lesser

(iii) least

(iv) less

Change the given sentence from formal to informal:

13. To which nation does she belong?

14. The woman who you are talking about is my boss.

15. The movie which I saw yesterday was really nice.

16. In short time, I have made few friends here.

3.3 Summary

- Persuasive communication may be defined as the process through which people attempt to influence the beliefs or actions of others.
- Group discussion primarily evaluates one's ability to interact in a group on a given topic.
- One's group behaviour means so much for one's success as a manager or an executive, responsible for co-ordination and organization of activities of groups of individuals.
- Debate is a formal method of interactive argument. In a formal framework, there are rules for people to discuss an issue.
- A conference is a meeting of a large group of persons assembled for the purpose of discussing common problems or activities.
- A presentation is more complex and is delivered to a small, knowledgeable audience at a conference, seminar or business meeting. Its purpose is more concretely and precisely defined. Its purpose is usually to inform, explain, persuade or present a point of view.
- A manager should be able to converse or discuss persuasively, effectively and convincingly. To do so, he must know the skills of oral communication.

Notes

- Closer to actual verbal (oral) communication, and always accompanying body language, is paralanguage. It is non-verbal because it does not involve words.
- In every organization there exists a very important factor of production, without which, there will be no production. This factor of production is known as human resource. But it is nothing as mechanical in human resource as the term. Human beings are all people who have personal and professional lives, both merged together. So they are bound to have informal discussions when they are in their offices.
- Besides the flow of information through the standard channels, in every organization a flow of informal information also exists.
- In an army as well as in business there are many invisible informal information channels which are important for mutual understanding and co-operation.
- Informal contacts between colleagues are a countermeasure against the ubiquitous bureaucracy.
- When there is a positive atmosphere, employees often take the initiative to redress a situation. In this way many mistakes are spontaneously fixed. Frictions and problems are quickly spotted and rectified.
- Management should stimulate these informal communication channels because it is impossible to cover everything by means of procedures.
- Good managers understand this and should try to keep these channels open or even create them.
- Such informal communication channels perform even better when the focus and the strategic goals of the company are understood throughout the entire organization.
- Informal conversation is otherwise also very important for an organization as it develops a feeling of camaraderie among the employees, at the same time is often used for transferring information to a source.
- But it has certain disadvantages also. If the informal conversation becomes too personal, it may breed negative behaviour among people, resulting in the existence of petty politics among the staff members.

3.4 Keywords

Circumvent: To avoid or get around by artful maneuvering

Conference: To describe a gathering of a larger scale, for a specific purpose

Debate: Formal method of interactive argument

Eye Contact: Looking into the eyes of the person to whom one is talking

Paralinguistic : A type of non-verbal communication that includes articulation, pronunciation, rate, pitch, volume, pauses and other vocal qualities

Persuasion: To influence both individuals and groups to accept a particular position or belief

Screaming: Shout loudly

Notes

3.5 Review Questions

1. Describe persuasion and explain its process.
2. Discuss the steps of presentation. How one can enhance his or her presentation skill?
3. Describe paralinguistics. What are its main features?
4. Discuss the points which can be used for developing oral fluency.
5. How might you choose appropriate verbal/non-verbal communication skills to enhance the health of self and others in a variety of settings?
6. How might you choose appropriate personal communication strategies to avoid miscommunication?
7. How might you implement goal-setting strategies to set goals for the marketing strategy of an organisation?
8. Suppose you are Manager, Operations in an organisation. You discover one day that one of the members of a team working on a project due to be closed after two days, is absent. And to make the things worse, he has gone on a date with another member of the same team. What would you do in such a situation to ensure that such situations do not arise again in your company?
9. Are you in favour of or against employing couples in the same organisation? Support your argument with proper reasoning.
10. With the offices being virtually taken to home these days, how can one maintain right balance between formal and informal conversations among the team members working on the same project?
11. Discuss various functions of informal networks within organizations.
12. How can you utilize the situation in which you have to get important information from close friend's husband who happens to be your departmental head?

Answers: Self Assessment

1. Persuasive communication
2. Personality
3. Emotional appeal
4. Training, development
5. False
6. True
7. False
8. True
9. (ii)
10. (iii)
11. (ii)
12. (i)
13. Which nation does she belong to?
14. The woman you are talking about is my boss.
15. The movie I saw yesterday was really nice.
16. In short time, I have made a few friends here.

Notes

3.6 Further Readings

Books

Eric H. Roth, Toni Aberson , *Compelling Conversations*, Book Surge Publishing.

Genderspeak: Men, Women, and the Gentle Art of Verbal Self Defense, Suzette Haden Elgin, Ph.D. , John Wiley & Sons Inc., 605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158 0012. 1993.

Jane Cordell, *Cambridge Business English Activities: Serious Fun for Business English Students*, Cambridge University Press.

Linda Cypres, *Let's Speak Business English: A Guidebook for the Non-Native Speaker of English*, Barron's Educational Series.

On Becoming a Person, Carl Rogers, Houghton Mifflin, 1961.

Speaking Your Mind in 101 Difficult Situations, Don Gabor, Simon & Schuster, New York.

Will the Real Me Please Stand Up?: 25 Guidelines for Good Communication, John Powell, Thomas More Publishing.

Online links

www.americancomm.org

www.smartBiz.com

www.ukans.edu

Unit 4: Dialogue Writing

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Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the concept of dialogue writing
- Discuss the guidelines to write effective dialogues
- Write dialogues based on formal situations
- Write dialogues based on informal and regularly occurring situations

Introduction

Next time you are on a train or sitting on a bench in a park, just listen to two people talking. They will cut each other all the time, they'll say "um" and "er" a lot, they'll jump from one topic to another and back again with no warning. The conversation between them can be termed as a dialogue.

Writing dialogue takes skill, but it's not so difficult to improve poor dialogue and use good dialogue to accelerate the pace of a story, create tension, deepen characterization, and move the plot forward. If dialogue does not accomplish all this, it has no place in the story. Strong verbal exchanges between characters heighten reader interest. When characters talk, readers listen, and the characters take on qualities of real people. The writer's challenge is to sustain this illusion of reality. Anything that reminds readers of words on a page must be edited out so readers will think about the characters, not the writing.

Writing dialogue isn't about replicating a real speech. It's about giving an impression of it and also of improving upon it. In this unit you will learn about dialogue writing based on formal situations, informal setting and day-to-day situations.

Notes

4.1 Concept of Dialogue Writing

4.1.1 Meaning of Dialogue

In English, dialogue can have more than one meaning. It can refer to a conversation between two or more people or a conversation between characters in a drama or narrative. It can also refer to the lines or passages in a script that are intended to be spoken. A literary work written in the form of a conversation is also called a dialogue.

Example: The dialogues of Plato

A writer uses dialogue to reveal the personality of a character, create conflict, and move the narrative forward. In her book "The Art and Craft of Storytelling", writer Nancy Lamb mentions that the "*goal of writing dialogue is to not mimic how people speak; the goal of the writer's dialogue is to create the illusion of authenticity*."

When writing dialogues, you need to keep in mind the main purpose of the dialogue. The dialogue should not be used just as a "filler" or "gossip" or "small talk". It must have some relevance, purpose, or function in the story or article that you are writing. You should use dialogue for the following reasons:

To develop the premise of the story or article: For example, the antagonist might say something that angers the protagonist. This anger causes the protagonist to take some sort of action, moving the premise closer to its conclusion.

To disclose a conflict between characters: For example, the dialogue between two characters might be aggressive or full of criticism, which discloses the conflict between two the two characters.

To develop the personality of the character: Both the tone and content of the dialogue tell the reader about the nature of the character. For example, if the character speaks well and uses well-expressed words, the reader draws the conclusion that the character is educated and intelligent.

To reveal background information about a character: You can use dialogue to reveal something that happened in the past.

4.1.2 Ways and Process of Writing Dialogue

A writer can build two types of dialogue: Inner dialogue and outer dialogue.

The words spoken by a character to himself or herself is referred to as the inner dialogue. To create an inner dialogue, the writer uses the literary device of "dramatic monologue" or "stream of consciousness".

On the other hand, the conversation between characters is referred to as the outer dialogue. Both types of dialogue require a writer to follow the rules and principles for writing dialogue.

Stream of Consciousness

It refers to the inner thoughts of the character. Stream of consciousness is also called an internal monologue. Writers like William Faulkner, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf used this literary technique to reveal what the character is thinking to himself or herself. Usually, the writer recognises the internal monologue:

- By using the word "thought." The man thought about how difficult the test was…
- By using the phrase "I thought to myself". I thought to myself, "How amazing the day was".

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- By italicizing the text. *She thought about her husband, her to-be-born child, and how happy her husband would be when their child is born.*

Dialogue as Character

One of the main tasks of a writer is to create or use interesting characters, ones that make an instant connection with the readers. Writing effective dialogue is one way for the writer to create interesting characters. An effective dialogue reveals something about the character, creates conflict, or advances the story. An effective dialogue also requires that each character's speech is identifiable. The dialogue should allow the reader to make a distinction between each character in the story. To develop interesting dialogue for each character, the writer can use:

- Different diction or word choice for each character
- Different syntax to represent speaking pattern
- Profanity or slang
- Colloquial expressions in the dialogue
- Idiomatic phrases in the dialogue
- Dialect (however, only expert writers should use this.)

The writer can also identify each character or speaker by using:

- Dialogue tags, such as "she said" or "he said."
- Quotations marks for each speaker ("").
- Separate line or paragraph for a new or different speaker.

Example: Argument between the two friends:

"I want to end our friendship," Ram said, from the stairway.

"Why?" Shyam said, banging the hall door.

"Because I can't trust you anymore," Ram shouted.

"Why? What have I done," Shyam screamed.

4.1.3 Process of Writing Dialogues

Effective dialogue is not an exact reproduction of real-life speech but rather a reduced form that cuts out unnecessary words while retaining the flavor of authentic and natural speech. Good dialogue emulates the natural pace of everyday speech, it contains nuances, overtones and original turns of phrase that brings out the individual personalities of characters.

A simple, though not rigid, process can be followed while writing dialogues:

1. Build the story/plot
2. Build the characters/ introduce the characters in the story
3. Reveal character or motives
4. Individualise speakers
5. Communicate important information
6. Highlight crucial moments or build suspense
7. Move the action forward

Notes

Example: Read this story and realize the way in which the writer has build up the story and used his dialogue writing skills to generate interest among the readers:

A Deal in Ostriches: by HG Wells

A ship was sailing from India to the West Indies and had many important ports on her way.

"Talking of the prices of birds, I've seen an ostrich that cost three hundred pounds," said the Taxidermist, recalling his youth of travel. "Three hundred pounds!"

He looked at me over his spectacles. "I've seen another that was refused at four."

"No," he said, "it wasn't any fancy points. They were just plain ostriches. A little off colour, too–owing to dietary. And there wasn't any particular restriction of the demand either. You'd have thought five ostriches would have ruled cheap on an East Indiaman. But the point was, one of 'em had swallowed a diamond.

"The chap it got it off was Sir Mohini Padishah, a tremendous swell, a Piccadilly swell you might say up to the neck of him, and then an ugly black head and a whopping turban, with this diamond in it. The blessed bird pecked suddenly and had it, and when the chap made a fuss it realised it had done wrong, I suppose, and went and mixed itself with the others to preserve its incog. It all happened in a minute. I was among the first to arrive, and there was this heathen going over his gods, and two sailors and the man who had charge of the birds laughing fit to split. It was a rummy way of losing a jewel, come to think of it. The man in charge hadn't been about just at the moment, so that he didn't know which bird it was. Clean lost, you see. I didn't feel half sorry, to tell you the truth. The beggar had been swaggering over his blessed diamond ever since he came aboard.

"A thing like that goes from stem to stern of a ship in no time. Everyone was talking about it. Padishah went below to hide his feelings. At dinner, he pigged at a table by himself, him and two other Hindus, the captain kind of jeered at him about it, and he got very excited. He turned round and talked into my ear. He would not buy the birds; he would have his diamond. He demanded his rights as a British subject. His diamond must be found. He was firm upon that. He would appeal to the House of Lords. The man in charge of the birds was one of those wooden-headed chaps you can't get a new idea into anyhow. He refused any proposal to interfere with the birds by way of medicine. His instructions were to feed them so-and-so and treat them so-and-so, and it was as much as his place was worth not to feed them so-and-so and treat them so-and-so. Padishah had wanted a stomach-pump – though you can't do that to a bird, you know. This Padishah was full of bad law, like most of these blessed Bengalis, and talked of having a lien on the birds, and so forth. But an old boy, who said his son was a London barrister, argued that what a bird swallowed became ipso facto part of the bird, and that Padishah's only remedy lay in an action for damages, and even then it might be possible to show contributory negligence. He hadn't any right of way about an ostrich that didn't belong to him. That upset Padishah extremely, the more so as most of us expressed an opinion that was the reasonable view. There wasn't any lawyer aboard to settle the matter, so we all talked pretty free. At last, after Aden, it appears that he came round to the general opinion, and went privately to the man in charge and made an offer for all five ostriches.

"The next morning there was a fine shindy at breakfast. The man hadn't any authority to deal with the birds, and nothing on earth would induce him to sell; but it seems he told Padishah that a Eurasian named Potter had already made him an offer, and on that Padishah denounced Potter before us all. But I think the most of us thought it rather smart of Potter, and I know that when Potter said that he'd wired at Aden to London to buy the birds, and would have an answer at Suez, I cursed pretty richly at a lost opportunity.

"At Suez, Padishah gave way to tears – actual wet tears – when Potter became the owner of the birds, and offered him two hundred and fifty right off for the five, being more than two hundred per cent on what Potter had given. Potter said he'd be hanged if he parted with a feather of them – that he meant to kill them off one by one and find the diamond; but afterwards, thinking it over, he relented a little. He was a gambling hound, was this Potter, a little queer at cards, and this kind of prize-packet business must have suited him down to the ground. Anyhow, he offered, for a lark, to sell the birds separately to separate people by auction at a starting price of £80 for a bird. But one of them, he said, he meant to keep for luck.

Notes

"You must understand this diamond was a valuable one – a little Jew chap, a diamond merchant, who was with us, had put it at three or four thousand when Padishah had shown it to him – and this idea of an ostrich gamble caught on. Now it happened that I'd been having a few talks on general subjects with the man who looked after these ostriches, and quite incidentally he'd said one of the birds was ailing, and he fancied it had indigestion. It had one feather in its tail almost all white, by which I knew it, and so when, next day, the auction started with it, I capped Padishah's eighty-five by ninety. I fancy I was a bit too sure and eager with my bid, and some of the others spotted the fact that I was in the know. And Padishah went for that particular bird like an irresponsible lunatic. At last the Jew diamond merchant got it for £175, and Padishah said £180 just after the hammer came down – so Potter declared. At any rate the Jew merchant secured it, and there and then he got a gun and shot it. Potter made a Hades of a fuss because he said it would injure the sale of the other three, and Padishah, of course, behaved like an idiot; but all of us were very much excited. I can tell you I was precious glad when that dissection was over, and no diamond had turned up precious glad. I'd gone to one-forty on that particular bird myself.

"The little Jew was like most Jews; he didn't make any great fuss over bad luck; but Potter declined to go on with the auction until it was understood that the goods could not be delivered until the sale was over. The little Jew wanted to argue that the case was exceptional, and as the discussion ran pretty even, the thing was postponed until the next morning. We had a lively dinner-table that evening, I can tell you, but in the end Potter got his way, since it would stand to reason he would be safer if he stuck to all the birds, and that we owed him some consideration for his sportsmanlike behaviour. And the old gentleman whose son was a lawyer said he'd been thinking the thing over and that it was very doubtful if, when a bird had been opened and the diamond recovered, it ought not to be handed back to the proper owner. I remember I suggested it came under the laws of treasure-trove, which was really the truth of the matter. There was a hot argument, and we settled it was certainly foolish to kill the bird on board the ship. Then the old gentleman, going at large through his legal talk, tried to make out the sale was a lottery and illegal, and appealed to the captain; but Potter said he sold the birds as ostriches. He didn't want to sell any diamonds, he said, and didn't offer that as an inducement. The three birds he put up, to the best of his knowledge and belief, did not contain a diamond. It was in the one he kept – so he hoped.

"Prices ruled high next day all the same. The fact that now there were four chances instead of five of course caused a rise. The blessed birds averaged 227, and, oddly enough, this Padishah didn't secure one of 'em--not one. He made too much shindy, and when he ought to have been bidding he was talking about liens, and, besides, Potter was a bit down on him. One fell to a quiet little officer chap, another to the little Jew, and the third was syndicated by the engineers. And then Potter seemed suddenly sorry for having sold them, and said he'd flung away a clear thousand pounds, and that very likely he'd draw a blank and that he always had been a fool, but when I went and had a bit of a talk to him, with the idea of getting him to hedge on his last chance, I found he'd already sold the bird he'd reserved to a political chap that was on board, a chap who'd been studying Indian morals and social questions in his vacation. That last was the three hundred pounds bird. Well, they landed three of the blessed creatures at Brindisi, though the old gentleman said it was a breach of the Customs regulations and Potter and Padishah landed too. The Hindu seemed half mad as he saw his blessed diamond going this way and that, so to speak. He kept on saying he'd get an injunction – he had injunction on the brain – and giving his name and address to the chaps who'd bought the birds, so that they'd know where to send the diamond. None of them wanted his name and address, and none of them would give their own. It was a fine row I can tell you on the platform. They all went off by different trains. I came on to Southampton, and there I saw the last of the birds, as I came ashore; it was the one the engineers bought, and it was standing up near the bridge, in a kind of crate, and looking as leggy and silly a setting for a valuable diamond as ever you saw – if it was a setting for a valuable diamond.

"How did it end? Oh! like that. Well perhaps. Yes, there's one more thing that may throw light on it. A week or so after landing I was down Regent-street doing a bit of shopping, and who should I see arm-in-arm and having a purple time of it but Padishah and Potter. If you come to think of it–

"Yes. I've thought that. Only, you see, there's no doubt the diamond was real. And Padishah was an eminent Hindu. I've seen his name in the papers often. But whether the bird swallowed the diamond certainly is another matter, as you say."

Notes

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

1. A literary work written in form of a …… can be referred to as a dialogue.
2. A writer can create two types of dialogues: …… dialogue and …… dialogue.
3. Stream of consciousness is also called an internal …… .

4.2 Dialogue Writing in Formal Situations

Human behavior tends to be modified by the group you are acting in at the time of behavior, thus your behavior and conversation in the office would likely be different from your behavior at home or in an athletic event, etc. This applies mainly to conversation that is situational. Basic character traits are less likely to change according to the context, although it's not always predictable. Some character traits may be more or less likely to emerge under different situations. The explicit and implicit values of each group are a very strong determining factor. To the extent that these values are different, different behaviors are likely to emerge; to the extent that they are similar, similar behaviors are likely to emerge. While writing dialogues based on formal situations, we must keep this in mind.

Guidelines to Write Effective Dialogues

- ***Avoid filler words:*** People often use filler words such as *um, uh, like*, or *uh huh*, but while writing a dialogue based on formal situations, we should avoid using these words.
- ***Use modern language***: Use current language that is understood by 21st centurions. Even when a character would speak in an old-fashioned manner, be careful. The occasional ancient word can help in characterisation, but too many cause readers to think about the words, not the story.
- ***Avoid writing dialogue that overuses names:*** Overuse of name hints of insincerity, and the overuse becomes especially obvious and unnatural in fictional dialogue.

Example: In the 2008 US presidential campaign, vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palin made news in her interview with Charlie Gibson for overusing his name. During the interview, Palin called Gibson "Charlie" so often that she became a target of parody.

Instead of this, it is fine to write, "Thank you, Charlie. I appreciate that," you would do yourself no favour to write, "Thank you, Charlie. I appreciate that. By the way, Charlie, now that I have you here, what do you think of the Bush Doctrine."

- ***Don't weigh down your dialogue by exposition:*** When the dialogue is carrying exposition and trying to tell the reader too much, characters end up saying a lot of very unnatural and unwieldy things. You'll see things like:

  "Remember that time we made a sale and the customer was delighted, that's how our company became popular?"

  "Yeah, totally! And now we're in the 7th year and have to live up to our reputation. We have to live up to it at any cost."

  So much of this dialogue would already be already obvious to the characters. They'd know how started without having to talk about it. It's very clear to the reader that they're not talking to each other: they're really talking to the reader.

Notes

Exposition and dialogue only really engage when one character genuinely doesn't know what the other character is telling them and it's natural for them to explain at the moment they're explaining it.

- ***Use the Rule of Twelve:*** Look at any good dialogue and count the words between punctuation marks. You'll rarely find more than twelve. In official situations also we speak in short burst of words, and your characters should do the same. If you find longer phrases and clauses in your dialogue, shorten them. Use twelve as a maximum, and aim for exchanges of half that many words to keep dialogue brief and crisp.
- ***Write Dialogue that uses distinct voices:*** Readers should have no problems in distinguishing one character from another. We should be able to recognize the characters by what each character says and how he or she says it, just as we can recognize our friends by their attitudes and speech mannerisms.
- ***Write dialogue that "shows" rather than "tells":*** Often you must have you seen speaker attributions or dialogue tags that end in adverbs.

Example: "*I want the report by today evening,"* the boss said angrily.

"*I'm not ready with the speech,*" she said crankily.

Writers often use this sort of speaker attribution to tell a reader what a character feels because telling is always easier than showing. But in reality, showing is a mark of good writing, telling is not.

You must eliminate adverbs and show emotions instead. "I want the report by today evening," the boss said angrily, can be better written as:

He slapped his mammoth palm on the table with a force that rattled the papers and said, "I want the report by today evening."

The last version has a warning tone, and readers will recognize anger in the character's actions, so you don't have to tell that the boss is angry.

- ***Writing Dialogue that employs variety:*** Very often you must have noticed in a dialogue: he "said" or xyz "said". "Said" is often the best choice for dialogue tags because used in moderation, readers glide by "said" without noticing it. However, using too many of them in succession makes the dialogue monotonous. Repeated, told, explained, advised, and remarked, are all verbs that won't attract attention. Nevertheless, replacing "said" with an assortment of verbs is unnecessary if you write in such a way that readers understand which character speaks.

Notes **Steps to Provide Feedback in a Difficult Conversation**

- Seek permission to provide the feedback. Even if you are the employee's boss, start by stating you have some feedback you'd like to share. Ask if it's a good time or if the employee would prefer to select another time and place. (Within reason, of course.)
- Use a soft entry. Don't dive right into the feedback - give the person a chance to brace for potentially embarrassing feedback. Tell the employee that you need to provide feedback that is difficult to share. If you're uncomfortable with your role in the conversation, you might say that, too. Most people are as uncomfortable providing feedback about an individual's personal dress or habits, as the person receiving the feedback.

Contd...

Notes

- Often, you are in the feedback role because other employees have complained to you about the habit, behavior, or dress. Do not give in to the temptation to amplify the feedback, or excuse your responsibility for the feedback, by stating that a number of coworkers have complained. This heightens the embarrassment and harms the recovery of the person receiving feedback.
- The best feedback is straightforward and simple. Don't beat around the bush. I am talking with you because this is an issue that you need to address for success in this organization.
- Tell the person the impact that changing his or her behavior will have from a positive perspective. Tell the employee how choosing to do nothing will affect their career and job.
- Reach agreement about what the individual will do to change their behavior. Set a due date - tomorrow, in some cases. Set a time frame to review progress in others.
- Follow-up. The fact that the problem exists means that backsliding is possible; further clarification may also be necessary. Then, more feedback and possibly, disciplinary action are possible next steps.

You can become effective at holding difficult conversations. Practice and these steps will help build your comfort level to hold difficult conversations. After all, a difficult conversation can make the difference between success and failure for a valued employee. Care enough to hold the difficult conversation.

Source: http://humanresources.about.com/od/interpersonalcommunicatio1/qt/feedback_com6.htm

Task (This is a dialogue between a Superintendent of Police and an Inspector.)

Inspector: Good morning, Sir.

Superintendent: Good morning, Inspector. I'm sorry to spoil your Sunday, but something urgent has turned up…. ….

Complete this dialogue. (not more than 10 lines)

Example: Given below is a dialogue between a student who is selected to represent Tamil Nadu at the National Level Hockey Tournament at Bhubaneshwar and her school **Physical Education Teacher**.

Vaishnavi: Excuse me, Ma'am. May I come in? Good Morning Ma'am.

Physical Education Teacher (PET): Yes? Good morning Vaishnavi. How are you? How is your practice?

Vaishnavi: There is a slight let up, Ma'am.

PET: What's the matter, my girl? Why do you look so dull?

Vaishnavi: Ma'am I'm afraid my mother is not very happy about my missing classes for one week. She feels my studies will suffer. I'm confused, Ma'am. What would you advise me to do?

PET: Well… What do you propose to do?

Vaishnavi: Ma'am you know how eager I'm to play in such an important tournament.

Notes

PET: In that case, I think you should talk to your subject teachers. Request them to teach in advance what they are going to teach the class during your absence. Ask them if they can teach you, when both of you are free. Then talk it out with your mother. I don't think your mother will have any objection then.

Vaishnavi: Oh! Thank you Ma'am. I feel greatly relieved. I'm sure the teachers will not say 'no' to my request.

Source: http://www.improvespokenenglish.org/2010/07/teacher-and-student-conversation.html

Alice has taken up a summer job at Curious Market Research Bureau. She meets the manager of 'Wonder looks', a firm manufacturing mirrors:

Alice: I'm Alice Caroll. I'm on a summer job at Curious Market Research Bureau.

Manager: Please be seated.

Alice: Dormouse is planning to introduce a unique printer. Before launching their product, they'd like to have a feel of the field. Can I ask you a few questions in this connection, please?

Manager: Yes, please proceed.

Alice: How many printers do you have in your office?

Manager: We have seven.

Alice: How many inkjet and how many laser?

Manager: Three laser and four inkjet.

Alice: What make do you have right now?

Manager: Three HP and four Canon.

Alice: Do you have a printer cum copier cum scanner?

Manager: Yes, we do have.

Alice: What about a 4-in-one – printer, scanner, copier and fax?

Manager: Yes, we do have one of that too.

Alice: Now this product that Dormouse is launching, is a 6-in-one.

Manager: What is that?

Alice: It can print, copy, fax, scan, skim and skip.

Manager: Skim and skip?

Alice: Yes. You see, you have a Board meeting in 10 minutes. There's a 40 page report in your system, which has just been mailed to you. You ought to go through it before the meeting. The skim facility, skims the entire matter, skips all unnecessary/additional details, puts together the overview alone in bullet format and gives you the hard copy – maybe a couple of pages – all in twenty seconds flat. This saves a lot of time, ink and paper. Doesn't that sound interesting?

Manager: Yes, it does.

Alice: Would you like to buy one, when it is launched?

Manager: Yes, we would. But, what would be the cost?

Alice: You could skip that question. It would cost the same as your 4-in-one.

Manager: How sleek would it look?

Alice: Skip that too. It's as sleek as your 'Wonder looks'.

Source: http://www.improvespokenenglish.org/2011/03/conversation-between-manager-and.html

Notes

Situation: Section Head (A) calls in one of the staff (B) to talk over a punctuality problem:

B has been late to work several times this month.

A: Now we've known each other for some time now, haven't we?

B: We certainly have – I seem to think I was the first person you appointed when you became Section Head back in …

A: Yes, well we won't start on a sentimental journey if you don't mind.

B: OK. Only, you brought the subject up.

A: True. Well, I expect you've got a pretty good idea why I wanted to have a word with you.

B: I'm glad you said a word and not words because I'd hate to fall out with you ..

A: Look, don't make it any more difficult for me than you have to because ..

B: That's what you get paid for.

A: Right I was just trying to break the ice but if you're just going to mess around and be flippant I'll come straight to the point.

B: Good. I'm all ears!

A: It's been brought to my notice that your punctuality record has been pretty bad recently.

B: You mean I've been late getting to work?

A: Yes, in a nutshell. Have you got anything to say about it?

B: Not really. Whoever reported me is absolutely right.

A: That's not really what I wanted you to say.

B: Well what do you want me to say then?

A: You're not helping with this at all. As usual, you're treating the whole business in your usual light-hearted way.

B: Sure but then I can't change my personality.

A: I'm trying to help you. Why have you been late so often these last few weeks?

B: The fact is I just can't be bothered.

A: Bothered about what?

B: Coming to work. It's as simple as that.

A: You mean you're not motivated any longer?

B: You can put it like that. I just can't summon up the energy any longer.

A: Look, I think we need to have a closer look at the job you're doing and see if we can work something out.

B: Fine I'd appreciate that.

A: I'll check in my diary and get back to you. All right?

B: Excellent.

Source: http://www.english-test.net/forum/ftopic5811.html

Self Assessment

State whether the following statements are true or false:

4. It is very difficult to improve poor dialogue and use good dialogue to accelerate the pace of a story.

Notes

5. In a dialogue, when characters talk, readers listen, and the characters take on qualities of real people.
6. In a dialogue based on formal situations, we should use more filler words to make it real.
7. In a good dialogue, a sentence contains not more than 12 words.
8. You should write dialogues in such a way that the readers have no problems in distinguishing one character from another.
9. Writers often use this sort of speaker attribution to tell a reader what a character feels because telling is always easier than showing.
10. It is better to end each dialogue with an adverb to show exactly how the characters are feeling.

4.3 Dialogue Writing Based on Informal and Regularly Occurring Situations

A dialogue is a conversation or a talk between two or more people. It can also refer to the exchange of view. A dialogue is very close to a personal and informal chat. It is through dialogue that one learns to use words, phrases and expressions that are suitable to important situations. Dialogues and the way they ought to be delivered govern communicative functions. A dialogue focuses on 'what to say' and 'how to say'. "What to say" relates to the content and "how to say" means the form of communication. It also enables us to use speech devices such as intonation and stress to show meaning and attitude. Dialogue should be spontaneous. In informal dialogue writing, the principles of formal writing stay but the words chosen can be informal and friendly.

Example: If the conversation is between two friends, we can use words like 'Buddy', 'Yeah', "Na', etc. to make it more real and imaginative.

Task Write a brief dialogue between two friends who are discussing about the test that is going to take place tomorrow in their class.

How to write a dialogue?

Following steps are to be followed in writing/developing a dialogue:

- At first, you should select the situation for the dialogue from the real world.

Example: A discussion between two friends or a dialogue between an individual and a shopkeeper.

- Then you should start collecting ideas related to the theme of the dialogue.
- You should keep in mind the addressor, the addressor and their relationship (Formal/ informal).
- Then you should select apt words and structure in accordance with the register.
- You should make the tone consistent and avoid self-contradiction.
- You should make it coherent by arranging the thoughts logically and systematically.
- You should keep the language of a dialogue should be simple, direct, and concrete.
- You should keep your dialogue free from artificiality of formal English.

Notes

- You should not use too much jargons or slangs that may mar the intended meaning of a dialogue.

Example:

Person A | Person B

A: "Are you new here?"

B: "Yeah. I just started yesterday."

A: "Welcome aboard. I'm Jack."

B: "I'm Mark. Nice to meet you."

A: "What are you going to be working on?"

B: "I'm going to work on the planning team. But I haven't started yet. I'm still in training."

A: "The planning team is great. Our marketing team works with them closely. We'll end up working together sometimes."

B: "That's great. Oh, can I ask you some questions?"

A: "Sure."

B: "Does this company have a casual Friday?"

A: "Not really. You can get away with wearing slacks, but I've never seen anyone wear jeans."

B: "That's alright. Do you know any good places to eat around here?"

A: "Yeah there's a deli right across the street. They have fresh sandwiches and sometimes hot dishes like teriyaki. It's pretty good."

B: "That sounds good. Thanks for the info."

A: "No problem. If you need anything, I sit right around the corner here."

Conversation between shop assistant and customer – daily life dialogue

Shop Assistant: Good morning, Madam. It's a nice day today, isn't it?

Customer: Yes, it is. I am a bit early to get my bill, aren't I?

Shop Assistant: I just opened the shop.

Customer: You have got my bill read y, haven't you?

Shop Assistant: Yes, it's ready.

Customer: Then I can pay the bill now, can't I?

Shop Assistant: Certainly Madam ...mm...mm....You're Mrs. Chandini Sekar, aren't you?

Customer: Yes, that's right. I owe you for three weeks, don't I?

Shop Assistant: Oh yes, here you are Mrs. Chandini, five hundred and twenty four rupees.

Customer: This bill exceeds five hundred. Oh! My goodness!

Shop Assistant: Do you still say the day is nice?

Customer: Come on, don't tease me. You don't mind a cheque, do you?

Shop Assistant: No madam, which will be alright. Thank you.

Customer: Welcome.

Notes

Conversation in Bus

(Surya, Varun and Aakash have come down to Chennai from their village for a holiday. Their Uncle Chandran takes them to B.M. Birla Planetarium. They board a bus.)

Uncle Chandran: Will you please give me four tickets to Birla Planetarium? (Gives a hundred rupee note)

Conductor: Could you please give me the exact change - ₹ 12?

Uncle Chandran: Yes, sure. Here it is.

Conductor: Would you mind not crowding near the entrance?

Passenger: One moment, pls. We'll move to the front.

Passenger 1: Could you please move over to the next seat?

Passenger 2: Yes, sure.

Passenger 3: Could you please open the window? Let's have some fresh air.

Passenger 4: Sure, I'll.

Passenger 3: Thank you.

Driver: (To a vegetable vendor) would you mind pushing your baskets to the corner?

Vegetable Vendor: Yes, Sir. I'll. (To a young man) Could you please help me? It's rather heavy.

Young man: Sure.

Listen to Nagesh introducing his cousin Suresh to Benjamin:

Nagesh: Hi! Suresh, how are you?

Suresh: Fine, Thank you. How are you?

Nagesh: I am fine too. Benjamin, meet Suresh, my cousin. Suresh, meet my friend, Benjamin.

Suresh: How do you do? (Responding to first introduction)

Benjamin: How do you do?

Nagesh: Benjamin, yesterday I saw your brother going to St. Martha's hospital. What's the matter?

Benjamin: My father has been admitted there. He had a mild heart attack.

Nagesh: How sad! It's very unfortunate. (Expressing sympathy)

Suresh: Oh! How is he now?

Benjamin: He's still in the ICU. But the doctor says that there is nothing to worry.

Suresh: Thank God! (Expressing relief)

Nagesh: I wish him a speedy recovery. Hope he'll get well soon.

Benjamin: I hope so too. See you later.

Suresh: See you. Bye!

Nagesh: See you again. Bye! (Taking leave)

Source: http://www.improvespokenenglish.org/2010/08/english-basic-conversation-between.html

Notes

Self Assessment

Complete the incomplete dialogues:

Dialogue 1

11. A: Who are you sending that fax …… ?

    B: Our main office.

12. A: Who are you sending that fax …… ?

    B: The boss. She said to get it out right away.

Dialogue 2

13. A: You don't look so good. …… ?

    B: I feel really dizzy and nauseous. I feel like I'm going to pass out.

14. A: …… .

    B: No, don't do that. I guess, you will be okay soon.

15. A: …… ?

    B: Well, if I don't feel better soon, maybe you should take me there.

16. A: Okay, just let me know …… .

    B: I will. And thanks.

Dialogue 3

Employee at the boss' cabin's door

17. Employee: …… ?

    Boss: Yes, come in.

    (The employee comes in)

    Employee: Good evening Sir!

    Boss: Good evening! Take a seat.

18. Employee: ……

4.4 Summary

- Writing dialogue — realistic dialogue, anyway — does not come easily to everyone. Done well, dialogue advances the story and fleshes out the characters while providing a break from straight exposition.
- However, just as realistic dialogue is one of the most powerful tools at a writer's disposal, nothing pulls the reader out of a story faster than bad dialogue.
- It takes time to develop a good ear, but noting these simple rules and obvious pitfalls can make a huge difference.
- You should start to pay attention to the expressions that people use and the music of everyday conversation.

Notes

- This exercise asks you to do this more formally, but generally speaking it's helpful to develop your ear by paying attention to the way people talk.
- You should remind your reader that your characters are physical human beings by grounding their dialogue in the physical world.
- The rules for punctuating dialogue can be confusing: many writers need help getting them right in the beginning. Take some time to learn the basics. A reader should get appreciate your prose — not feel lost trying to follow your dialogue.

4.5 Keywords

Dialogue: Conversation between two or more people.

Exposition: The part of a dialogue that provides the background information needed to understand the characters and the action.

Filler Words: Words used when you're speaking and you need time between your brain and your mouth, so you fill that empty space with something that means nothing.

Intonation: A manner of producing or uttering tones, especially with regard to accuracy of pitch.

Phrase: A sequence of words intended to have meaning.

4.6 Review Questions

1. Describe a 'dialogue'. Explain the concept of dialogue writing in your own words.
2. State the principles of effective dialogue writing based on formal situations.
3. How is dialogue writing based on formal situations different from that based on informal situations? Give short examples to explain your answer.
4. Suppose you want to join the educational tour arranged by your school. You have to seek permission from your father to join the tour. What would be the dialogue between you and your father?
5. You visit a stationery shop to buy pens. Write the dialogue between you and the stationery shop owner.
6. You have visited a doctor for a routine medical check-up. Write the dialogue between you and the doctor.
7. Anand is a student of Physics studying at Science College in Delhi. He is interviewed by an officer from a charitable organisation for a scholarship. Write the dialogues for the interview.
8. You feel that you have the ability to handle more responsibilities in the organisation so you meet your immediate senior to discuss the issue. Write the dialogue between you and your immediate senior.
9. You have got a job and you called up your friend to give him the good news. Write a dialogue between you and your friend.
10. Your handbag has gone missing since morning and you went to police station to lodge a complaint. Write a dialogue between you and the police officer.

Notes

Answers: Self Assessment

1. Conversation
2. Inner, outer
3. Monologue
4. False
5. True
6. False
7. True
8. True
9. True
10. False
11. To
12. For
13. What's the matter? / What's wrong? / Are you okay? / Are you all right?
14. I'm going to call an ambulance / maybe I should call an ambulance
15. Would you like me/do you want me to drive/take you to the hospital?
16. If you want/you'd like to go / if you want me to take you (there)
17. May I come in Sir!
18. Thank You Sir!

4.7 Further Readings

Books

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Unit 5: Telephone Skills

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Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Know how to handle telephone calls
- Realise basic telephone etiquettes
- Know the basic things to keep in mind while making calls
- Know the basic things to keep in mind while taking incoming calls

Introduction

Telephone manners are very important in the present-day globalize words to create goal relations with others and also to raise company's goodwill. It may be noted that conversation over the telephone requires the use of verbal and non-verbal skills. Pleasant tone, sweet voice, clear articulation of words and proper intonation are examples of non-verbal skills. You should be able to convey your message not by words alone but through your speaking style too. Communication over telephone is invisible interpersonal communication. Therefore, the way you speak, hear, respond and hang up is as important as what you communicate. Bad telephone habits and lack of etiquette can spoil relations with other firms.

5.1 How to Handle Telephone Calls

A telephone conversation continues through three stages. For an effective telephone communication, these stages need due attention and specific skills as discussed below:

1. ***Preparation for the call:*** In business communication on telephone for receiving and making calls, our role as the receiver or as the caller requires an appropriate knowledge of the organization we represent, up-to-date knowledge of its activities, the knowledge of our section or the department, our products and services and the information regarding our customers. We should have a special pad and pen ready to jot down the important points emerging out of our conversation. As a preparation, an up-to-date telephone directory and a complete list of queries should also be kept ready.

Notes

2. ***Controlling the call:*** The control over the call starts with lifting the receiver. We should promptly lift the receiver when we receive a call. We should lift it hearing three to four rings. A frustrating voice is not liked by anyone. We start making a call by greeting the receiver giving our own identity, may not be the name but indeed by giving the designation and the department we belong to. A friendly and cheerful tone shows our interest. It makes the caller respond immediately by revealing his or her identity. Using the caller's name in our conversation makes us sound friendly and helpful.

   For a sound control, we should have our questions for the caller ready to extract all relevant information from the caller. We should try to avoid the caller waiting, holding or hanging on to the receiver. This hints at our positive treatment. Nor should we hold two conversations simultaneously. Even if these occurs, any interruption we should ignore that and continue paying attention to the caller or the receiver.

   During a telephonic conversation, we should be particular about jotting down or informing names, phone numbers, addresses or other important details. We should also know how to conclude the conversation with an appropriate summary at the end. For transferring calls we should know our telephone system, the buttons to press for transferring calls. When transferring the call, we should inform him or her identity and purpose of the caller.

3. ***Follow-up:*** The final stage of telephonic communication deals with the essential follow-up with regard to the promises made. If we say that we would call the person back soon with the necessary information, we should do it. If any message has been jotted down from the caller, it should reach the person concerned. If the person concerned has to reply to the caller we should also find out whether that person has called back or not. We should reassure the waiting caller for some information that it will pass on to him or her soon.

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

1. The control over the call starts with …… .
2. A friendly and cheerful tone shows our …… .

5.2 Telephone Etiquettes

While making or receiving calls, you should keep the following things in mind:

- ***Keep a pen and pad near your phone:*** A call can come any time. Quite often, people do not have a pen and paper when answering a call. It is discourtesy to ask the caller to hold the line till you find pen and paper. Therefore, always keep a pen and pad handy right next to your phone.
- ***Greet and identify:*** Greet the caller and identify yourself as well as your organisation. Greeting and identifying are essential in telephone conversation. In case you are busy in a meeting, tell the caller and return the call as soon as you are free. If someone else can better handle the call, transfer the call to the concerned person.
- ***Concentrate on the call:*** While on telephone, concentrate on the conversation and all keep distractions out. Closing eyes while speaking on the phone, standing up and gesturing just as in face-to-face conversation are some techniques used to keep out distractions.
- ***Listen carefully:*** Patient and empathetic listening is essential for effective telephone conversation. Wherever necessary, seek clarifications from the caller. In case of unavoidable interruptions, apologies, request the caller to hold on and get back as soon as possible.

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- ***Take notes:*** If the caller makes several points, it is not safe to depend solely on memory. Take notes on any follow-up action which you have promised to the caller. It is also necessary to write down the message you are taking for someone else. The details should indicate the caller, the time of the call, caller's contact number, your name and the message received.
- ***Cultivate a friendly tone:*** A telephone conversation is a unique form of oral communication because only sound is involved. It is, therefore, very important to use a cheerful and friendly voice. The tone of voice should be lively and should reflect interest in the person you are speaking to. One way to improve telephone voice is to smile as you talk because it helps in creating a warm tone. Speak slowly and clearly. Do not eat, drink, smoke or read while talking on the phone.
- ***Avoid rambling:*** You should be considerate to your listener by coming to the point quickly.
- Use the caller's name during the conversation.
- In case of any problem, project a tone that is concerned, emphatic and apologetic.

Caselet

Change Ears in Order to Interpret Correctly

If a phone conversation requires from you analysis of complex facts and figures as well as logical and objective evaluation of information, try to hold the phone at the right ear. Sounds coming to this ear, are passed in the left hemisphere of the brain slightly faster than those received by the right hemisphere. This happens because the pulse velocity of the audible channels leading in the opposite hemisphere is a bit higher. Or, speaking the scientific language the contralateral nerve fibers slowdown is weaker than ipsilateral. Because for the majority of people left hemisphere of the brain is responsible for analysis and logical processing of information, it is often better suited to assess the truth of complex information while communicating on the telephone. Right-handers can easily do it, if not simultaneously putting down some information.

If the message is to be better assessed at the intuitive level, for example, trying to determine the emotional state of someone, hold the phone at the left ear. This means that the sounds will reach the right brain hemisphere a little earlier than the left. Since for most people the right hemisphere is responsible for the imagination and intuition, it may increase your sensitivity to signals not expressed by the words.

There are such telephone conversations, which we fear most of all - when we are called and when we have to call someone. Here is a special technique for you that allows to cope with the most unpleasant telephone conversation that you ever had to deal with.

But first we'll give **the five basic rules,** which can be guided for all types of unpleasant phone calls. They can't be done nice anyhow, but these practical tips can slightly ease your life.

1. If possible, take the initiative yourself and call first. So you can prepare for a conversation, and you won't be overtaken.
2. Go straight to the point. Never try to alleviate the problem, bypassing acute angles. Start the conversation like this: "The reason for my call is...", then proceed to the heart of the matter.
3. If you are caught napping, never respond immediately, better apology and call back after you'll think over your response.

Contd...

Notes

4. Check your understanding of the results of the conversation. Before ending the conversation repeat what action you expect to be done.

   This is important because in the process of communicating by phone, we are likely to hear – especially when we are slightly stressed – what we expect, rather than what was actually said. In addition, when appropriate repeat the key points of your position. Such repetition can by no means be considered as a waste of time - instead, it save you from even more useless waste of forces.

5. When talking on the phone always remember the rule of threefold repetition:

   (a) First tell your interlocutor what you are actually going to tell him/her.

   (b) Then tell him/her what you want to tell.

   (c) Then repeat him what you've already said to him. And only them you might probably be heard.

Here are several types of calls that are usually rather unpleasant to do.

Source: www.cellaz.com

Self Assessment

State whether the following statements are true or false.

3. You should not ask the caller to hold on for long while you look for pen and paper.
4. When you get a call from an unknown person, it is advisable not to identify yourself.
5. It is advisable to take notes if the conversation involves discussion about important events and course of action.
6. You should not use caller's name so often while attending to calls.

5.3 Making Phone Calls

Following things should be kept in mind while making phone calls:

- Have a personal telephone directory listing the telephone numbers which you have often to use.
- If you are making a call for somebody else, follow his instructions.
- Have all the material ready before you dial the number. It is bad manners to keep somebody on the line while you rummage through your files.
- If you have to say a number of things, alert the listener by saying something like this: 'I want your opinion on two points. One, two.
- If you wish to leave a message, say so and give a few seconds to the receiver to get ready. Let your message be clear and accurate. If it is important, you may repeat it.

Task This is pretty obvious, but really not used that often. Give your friend a call and practice various conversations (role plays).

However, amiable you may be, there are likely to be persons in your organization with whom you may not like to have any face-to-face interaction. Unless circumstances force you, you can use the telephone as a tool of contact. Similarly, if you find that an officer is busy interacting

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with others very often or for long periods and you has an urgent business to transact with him, telephone is the answer. Of course, you would have to decide in individual cases and situations when to use the telephone and when not to use it.

Some important guidelines for telephone conversation are as follows:

- Cultivate a cheerful and friendly tone.
- Modulate your voice.
- Never sound hurried, flustered or impatient.
- Enunciate your words clearly.
- Do not use slang.
- Speak distinctly. If you use a word which is likely to be misunderstood, spell it out.
- Listen attentively to the caller. If the message is long, keep reassuring that you are listening by speaking words such as 'Yes', 'OK', etc.
- Be courteous in all circumstances.
- Do not engage your telephone longer than necessary.

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

7. You should use …… to list all the number that you often use to dial.
8. It is advisable to …… your voice while talking on phone.

5.4 Taking Incoming Calls

While receiving calls, you should keep the following things in mind:

- Lift the receiver promptly.
- Reveal your identity.
- Hold the mouthpiece properly.
- If you do not know who the caller is, obtain his name and designation.
- Even if the caller is annoyed, keep yourself cool.
- Give the required information accurately. If it is not readily available promise to ring back and, of course, keep your promise.
- If a wrong number call comes to you, do not abuse the caller or slam down the receiver.
- Keep a jot pad and a pencil handy to note messages, if any.
- Keep your telephone on your left hand side so that the right hand is free to write.
- Take the message fully and correctly.

Example: **Business Telephone Conversation – Role Play**

Ms Anderson (sales representative Jewels and Things): Ring ring ... ring ring ... ring ring ...

Secretary (Henry Smith): Hello, Diamonds Galore, this is Peter speaking. How may I be of help to you today?

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Ms Anderson: Yes, this is Ms Janice Roberts calling. May I speak to Mr. Franks, please?

Henry Smith: I'm afraid Mr. Franks is out of the office at the moment. Would you like me to take a message?

Ms Anderson: Uhm... actually, this call is rather urgent. We spoke yesterday about a delivery problem that Mr. Franks mentioned. Did he leave any information with you?

Henry Smith: As a matter of fact, he did. He said that a representative from your company might be calling. He also asked me to ask you a few questions.

Ms Anderson: Great, I'd love to see this problem resolved as quickly as possible.

Henry Smith: Well, we still haven't received the shipment of earrings that was supposed to arrive last Tuesday.

Ms Anderson: Yes, I'm terribly sorry about that. In the meantime, I've spoken with our delivery department and they assured me that the earrings will be delivered by tomorrow morning.

Henry Smith: Excellent, I'm sure Mr. Franks will be pleased to hear that.

Ms Anderson: Yes, the shipment was delayed from France. We weren't able to send along your shipment until this morning.

Henry Smith: I see. Mr. Franks also wanted to schedule a meeting with you later this week.

Ms Anderson: Certainly, what is he doing on Thursday afternoon?

Henry Smith: I'm afraid he's meeting with some clients out of town. How about Thursday morning?

Ms Anderson: Unfortunately, I'm seeing someone else on Thursday morning. Is he doing anything on Friday morning?

Henry Smith: No, it looks like he's free then.

Ms Anderson: Great, should I come by at 9?

Henry Smith: Well, he usually holds a staff meeting at nine. It only lasts a half an hour or so. How about 10?

Ms Anderson: Yes, 10 would be great.

Henry Smith: OK, I'll schedule that. Ms Anderson at 10, Friday Morning... Is there anything else I can help you with?

Ms Anderson: No, I think that's everything. Thank you for your help... Goodbye.

Henry Smith: Goodbye.

Source: www.esl.about.com

Self Assessment

Fill in words to finish the conversation:

9. *Secretary:* Good morning, ABC Company, how …… I help you?

   Mr. Kapoor: Hello, this is Varun Kapoor. May I speak with Ms. Reeta, please.

10. *Secretary:* I'm sorry, she is …… of the office right now. May I take a message?

    Mr. Kapoor: Yes please. This is Varun Kapoor.

11. *Secretary:* And how can she …… you, Mr. Kapoor?

    Mr. Kapoor: At 438-3498.

Notes

12. *Secretary:* Was that …… ?

    Mr. Kapoor: Yes, that's right.

13. *Secretary:* And may I tell him what this in …… to?

14. *Mr. Kapoor:* Well, it is a rather …… matter.

15. *Secretary:* Okay. I will give him the message as soon as she ……

5.5 Summary

- Today's sophisticated business phone systems can do more harm than good if proper business phone etiquette is not employed.
- Simply put: Treat your callers in a way that you would want to be treated on a business telephone call.
- During a telephonic conversation, we should be particular about jotting down or informing names, phone numbers, addresses or other important details.
- While on telephone, concentrate on the conversation and all keep distractions out.
- The tone of voice should be lively and should reflect interest in the person you are speaking to. One way to improve telephone voice is to smile as you talk because it helps in creating a warm tone.
- You must have all the material ready before you dial the number. It is bad manners to keep somebody on the line while you rummage through your files.
- When you are receiving calls, lift the receiver promptly, reveal your identity, hold the mouthpiece properly and even if you do not know who the caller is, obtain his name and designation.

5.6 Keywords

Dial Tone: The sound the phone makes when you pick it up

Enunciate: Pronounce, express

Hang up: To put the receiver down and end a call

Rambling: To move about aimlessly

Receiver: The piece on the phone that you speak into and listen from

Telephone Directory: A book containing the names, telephone numbers, and addresses of people and businesses in a particular area

5.7 Review Questions

1. Describe the three stages of a telephonic conversation.
2. As a tele-marketer, what telephone etiquettes you must follow?
3. Explain the relevance of a 'friendly and warm tone' in telephonic conversations.
4. Suppose you are a front office executive and you get a call from a client who wants to talk to your boss. Before transferring the call to your boss, what information would you extract from the caller?
5. Why is it not a good idea to keep the caller waiting/on hold for long?

Notes

6. "Patient and empathetic listening is essential for effective telephone conversation." Explain.
7. "A telephone conversation is a unique form of oral communication." Discuss.
8. What things you must keep in mind before making a call to your high net worth client to seek fresh order?
9. What should you do when you get a call from someone you don't know?
10. Prepare a sample telephonic conversation that is likely to take place while ordering a pizza.

Answers: Self Assessment

1. Lifting the receiver
2. Interest
3. True
4. False
5. True
6. False
7. Telephone directory
8. Modulate
9. May
10. Out
11. Reach
12. 438-3498
13. Regards
14. Personal
15. Returns

5.8 Further Readings

Books

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Unit 6: Reading Skills – To Enhance Independent Reading

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Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Identify the objectives of reading and the factors affecting reading
- Describe the components of reading skills
- Discuss the guidelines for effective reading
- Describe the PSQ5R reading model
- Know how to improve retention power

Notes

Introduction

Each one of us spends a lot of time on reading. We begin our day by reading the newspapers. During the day, we read our e-mails, letters and other books and magazines. We also read banners and advertisements on the boards. The success of any business organization depends upon the ability of its executives to read and understand the material given in office manuals, newspapers, magazines, books, journals, letters, reports, business reports, etc., quickly and adequately.

Independent reading is a term used in educational settings, where students are involved in choosing and reading material (fiction books, non-fiction, magazine, and other media) for their independent consumption and enjoyment. Teachers often lament that students don't read enough, and that as a result their skills are weak, their literary experience thin, their general background knowledge deficient. Usually Independent Reading is conducted alongside the ongoing curriculum in the classroom. Independent Reading can be tied to assessment and evaluation or remain as an activity in itself.

6.1 What is Reading?

Reading is a dynamic process in which the reader interacts with the text to construct meaning. Inherent in constructing meaning is the reader's ability to activate prior knowledge, use reading strategies and adapt to the reading situation.

This definition of reading as a dynamic, interactive process means that, a good reader is no longer defined as one who demonstrates mastery of a series of isolated skills, but rather as a person who can apply reading strategies independently and flexibly. Valid reading assessments therefore evaluate students' ability to apply their knowledge, skills and strategies to reading situations that are representative of those they encounter in their daily lives.

6.1.1 Reading Objectives

Readers think and use text differently depending on the types of text and their purpose for reading. Three purposes for reading can be described as follows:

Reading for Literary Experience

- It involves reading novels, short stories, poems, plays and essays.
- It requires exploration of the human condition and the interplay among events, emotions and possibilities.
- It requires knowing what and how an author might write in a specific genre and forming expectations of how the text will be organized.
- It involves looking for how the author explores or uncovers experiences.
- It requires engaging in vicarious experiences through the text.

Reading for Information

- It involves reading articles in magazines and newspapers, chapters in textbooks, entries of business, encyclopedias and catalogs, entire books on particular topics.
- It requires awareness of the features found in this type of prose such as charts, footnotes, diagrams, subheadings and tables.
- It requires obtaining general information (e.g., scanning a magazine article or obtaining information for a research project).

Reading to Perform a Task

Notes

- It involves reading documents such as bus or train schedules, directions for games, classroom and laboratory procedures, tax or insurance forms, recipes, voter registration materials, maps, referenda, consumer warranties and office memos.
- It requires understanding of the purposes and structure of documents, which guide the selection, understanding and application of information.
- It requires applying, not simply understanding the information.

6.1.2 Factors Affecting Reading Skills

There are various factors which affect reading speed; comprehension ability and overall reading efficiency of a person vary from person to person. Though the list of these factors may be very exhaustive, some of the factors are listed below:

- ***Educational background:*** A well-educated person may have a higher reading efficiency than one who is a literate.
- ***Physical capability:*** Sometimes, some physical defect in some persons may hinder their efficiency to read and comprehend.
- ***Mental capability:*** People have different mental capabilities. While some are born intellectuals, others acquire intelligence through their efforts. A higher mental capability will definitely lead to a better reading efficiency and retention.
- ***Interest:*** If the reader finds reading material interesting, he will definitely read it faster, understand it and retain it for a longer time. On the other hand, if the reading material is boring or not of interest to the reader, his efficiency will be hindered accordingly.
- ***Practice:*** Reading speed is a by-product of practice and time spent on reading. Avid readers enhance their reading skills by stepping up their reading. It is rightly said, "Practice makes a man perfect."

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

1. Reading is a …… process.
2. A higher …… capability will definitely lead to a better reading efficiency and retention.

6.2 Components of Reading Skills

The key components of reading skills are reading speed, comprehension, efficiency and retention. Each of these components needs to be understood and mastered to enhance the reading skills.

6.2.1 Reading Speed

It is the speed at which one can read words. It is calculated at the rate of words per minute. Reading speed is calculated by using the following simple formula:

Caution Word a Minute (W.A.M.) = Total number of words read × 60/Number of seconds actually taken to read such material.

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Example: A paragraph contains 120 words and was read carefully in 90 seconds, the reading speed will be 80 words per minute (120 × 60/90). Another person who reads the same paragraph rapidly and completes the reading in 15 seconds has the reading speed of 480 words per minute (120 × 60/15).

On the basis of reading speed, we may classify various kinds of reading into four categories. They are as follows:

1. ***Careful reading:*** It is the slowest kind of reading. In this kind of reading, the speed varies between 50 to 350 words per minute. This reading is popularly used for analysis, problem solving, proofreading and accuracy checking. The material read is retained in the memory for a longer period.
2. ***Rapid reading:*** It is simple kind of reading where the speed will range from 300 to 600 words per minute. When the conceptual burden of the material read on the reader is light or when the retention of material for a longer period is not required, rapid reading process is followed.
3. ***Skimming:*** In this kind of reading, the eyes of the reader go through all the material but usually by skipping the details. When this kind of reading is practiced by a reader, he can read the material at rates as high as 1,500 words per minute. It is done to grasp main ideas and to review previously read material. Usually, executives skim newspapers, journals and magazines due to busy schedules and shortage of time.
4. ***Scanning:*** It is the fastest kind of reading where the reading speed may reach up to 3,000 words per minute. Scanning the material is being done for a finite and highly specific purpose. In this, the purpose of reading is basically to search for particular information. A person proficient in scanning will see little or nothing other than the information, which he (or she) is seeking.

Table 6.1: Types of Reading on the Basis of Speed

Types of Reading	Nature of Reading	Reading Speed
Careful reading	Complex reading	50 to 350 words a minute
Rapid reading	Simple reading	300 to 600 words a minute
Skimming	Main idea reading	Up to 1500 words a minute
Scanning	Search for specific facts reading	Up to 3000 words a minute

6.2.2 Comprehension

It is the understanding of the read material. There is more or less an inverse relationship between reading speed and understanding of material. If the reading speed is slower, comprehension rate will be higher. However, this may not be true always. A reader may improve his reading speed, without compromising his ability to understand and comprehend. It is also often observed that good and speedy readers have good comprehension ability and poor readers have poor comprehension ability. Comprehension of a person can be tested in two ways, i.e., immediate recall and immediate inference.

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6.2.3 Reading Efficiency

It combines reading speed and reading comprehension. Jacobs suggested the following formula to calculate reading efficiency score (Res):

Caution ***Res = Reading speed × Comprehension***

Example: If the reader with the reading speed of 80 words per minute understands and comprehends 80% of the material read, reading efficiency score will be 64. For another reader, having the reading speed of 480 words per minute, if the comprehension rate is 60 percent, the reading efficiency score will be 288.

6.2.4 Retention

It refers to the ability to recall the read material after a lapse of time. It can also be termed as memory power. It is one of the essential skills, which needs to be improved by a reader. Some people are good readers but their retention power is poor, that is, they are unable to learn and recall the read material.

Self Assessment

Multiple Choice Questions:

3. Which of these is not an important component of reading skills?
   (a) Comprehension
   (b) Listening
   (c) Retention
   (d) Reading speed
4. If you can read can a paragraph that contains 240 words in 360 seconds, your reading speed is ……
   (a) 30 words per minute
   (b) 40 words per minute
   (c) 45 words per minute
   (d) 60 words per minute
5. The type of reading in which a reader goes through the entire document, but usually skips the details:
   (a) Careful
   (b) Rapid
   (c) Skimming
   (d) Scanning

Notes

6.3 Techniques for Improving Reading Skills

Reading efficiency depends upon the reading speed and comprehension level of the individual. In order to increase the reading efficiency, both speed and comprehension need to be improved.

Did u know? Reading is the receiving act and executives spend more than 20% of their time on reading. When we improve our reading speed, our comprehension does not suffer. Tests show that we retain about 70% of the material which we read at the speed of 200 words a minute.

A few techniques for increasing speed, comprehension and reading efficiency are briefly narrated above:

1. ***Active reading:*** Reading should be done as an active process, by involving the mind along with the body. If a person reads passively, his comprehension will be the lowest. This passive effort to read the material will waste the time and energy of the reader, who has to read for a longer time to comprehend the material.

2. ***Selection of appropriate reading type:*** Whether a material needs to be read carefully, normally, skimmed or scanned – this decision should be made before reading the material. If one has to read an office order carefully, the person will have to first scan the material, unless he wants the effort wasted. Similarly, if a reader reads carefully a 200-page journal when skimming would have served the purpose very well, he has ended up losing time in the process.

3. ***Setting realistic time schedules:*** Time is a valuable resource and for reading, time schedules have to be decided well in advance. If a reader sets a conservative time schedule for reading material, he will not be able to achieve his target. On the other hand, if the reader keeps more than the required time, there will be wastage of time, as the reader does not require the allotted time schedule.

4. ***Concentration on content and speed:*** If a reader fully concentrates on contents and speed, his reading efficiency will improve. For concentration, the mind has to ignore all other things and surroundings. Physical environment like seating place, fans, light etc., should be conducive for better concentration.

5. ***Keep your eyes moving:*** Reading is a visual and mental process. A few observations about movement of eyes are as follows:

   (a) Eyes make a point fixation which encompasses a number of words for the duration of about one fourth of a second.

   (b) From left to right reading, the fixation is a focus just to the left of the symbols to be read.

   (c) After each fixation, the reader jumps forward to another fixation.

   (d) The matter is transferred from the eyes to the brain during jumps.

   (e) Reinforcing acts like regression can actually improve reading performance. Regressions are movements in which the eyes move rapidly back from one point to a fixation to the left of it.

   (f) The wider the span of symbols in fixations, the shorter will be the duration of the fixation's jump and return.

   (g) Unnecessary regressions and breaks are to be avoided in eye movement. If a particular word or phrase is not clear, subsequent material will be read for clarification. Even

Notes

then, if the material is not clear, the movement should be broken and a dictionary will be referred to.

(h) If one reads the material at a slower pace, the need for extensive reading and regression will be eliminated. Hence, it is advisable to read slowly for greater reading efficiency.

6. ***Quick and silent reading:*** It is not true that the best comprehension will be at the lowest speed. Hence, quick reading will not reduce the comprehension and reading efficiency. Silent reading will be faster than oral reading speed. In case of oral reading, the throat, muscles, tongue and lips work and movement of the reader consume more time. When the matter is read silently, the reader forgets about pronunciations, movements and the use of vocal sounds.

7. ***Preview and review of material:*** Preview is the act of taking a prior view of the work and review means to take a look after the work is over. Both preview and review help in increasing reading efficiency. If one's reading requires comprehension and retention of relatively difficult material, one should preview it through scanning or skimming before initiating careful reading. This will facilitate the reader for better understanding and reading efficiency. In the same way, review of careful reading material helps the reader to reinforce learning and get back to key points that were hazy earlier.

8. ***Read in logical block or words:*** If a reader gets greater opportunity to read the material which is divided in logical phrases, he can read efficiently. In such materials, the reader gets the advantage of seeing several words in one eye span of fixation. If the reading material contains a series of unrelated words divided by commas, the reading efficiency will be lower. For better reading efficiency, reading material is to be read in logical blocks of words.

9. ***Read just enough to capture thoughts:*** For reading efficiency, the reader should practice skipping letters, syllables and words. A concerted effort is to be made by the reader to read those passages where knowingly some letters, syllables and words have been removed. This will improve his ability to fill in the logical gaps.

10. ***Improvement of capability to understand symbols:*** Reading includes seeing symbols, transferring them to the brain and giving meaning to the received symbols. A few important points in this regard are as follows:

    (a) The meaning of symbol may vary in different contexts.

    (b) For viewing symbols, previous related experiences may be used for understanding the meaning.

    (c) For expanding the ability to understand symbols, more extensive reading is required.

    (d) Other kinds of communication skills, like listening, speaking, writing and observing may also be used to improve the capability to establish meanings.

    (e) Word lists, glossaries of terms and dictionaries are also used as aids to learning.

11. ***Underline and take notes randomly:*** Exercise use of pencils for underlining and taking continuous notes disturbs the momentum of the reading process. The mind should fully be used in comprehending directly from the pages of a book. Skeleton summary notes and underlining should be done simply to minimize regression and post-review of reading. It is also advised that pen or pencil should not be kept in the hand but it should be left on the table while reading. Although it is possible that different persons may have different opinions regarding this.

Notes

Task Underline the important lines/words in the paragraph given below and take notes.

It seems in our sports today, the concept of good sportsmanship has been lost. While winning at all costs and poor sportsmanship may be condoned and even promoted in professional sports, this does not mean it is the proper way for athletes to behave. Whether we like it or not, sportsmanship in sports is a direct reflection of our own ethics in real life. Sportsmanship like ethics concerns both the character and the actions of an athlete. The image you project as an athlete is a product of your character. Good sportsmanship is not just what you do on the field, it is hopefully the way you conduct your life both on and off the field. In the same way, unsportsmanlike behaviour on the field is probably an indication of your off the field conduct. Unsportsmanlike behaviour – acts that are unfair, dishonest, disrespectful or against the rules – are unsportsmanlike because they are unethical. If you are unethical in sports, can you be ethical in the other areas of your life – your business dealings, your treatment of others, your family?

12. ***Control on personal and environmental factors:*** Personal physical conditions like general state of health and conditions of the eye influence the speed, comprehension and reading efficiency. Psychological obstacles like concentration also affect the ability to read. For best reading, the following external conditions are to be maintained:

    (a) Proper lighting

    (b) Good seating (chairs, tables or desks)

    (c) Ventilation

    (d) Temperature

    (e) Lighting

    (f) Reading aids like pencil, pen, paperweight, and dictionary.

Self Assessment

State whether the following statements are true or false:

6. If a person reads actively, his comprehension will be the lowest.
7. Before reading any important document, it is advisable to scan it.
8. If a reader fully concentrates on contents and speed, his reading efficiency will improve.

6.4 Guidelines for Effective Reading

Every executive spends a substantial portion of his time in reading. For effective reading, the executives have to keep the following guidelines in mind:

Define Purpose

The objective of reading should be very specific. The reader should be clear by defining the purpose for which the matter is being read. At the same time, the objectives for which the material is being prepared must also be seen. Careful comprehension of an individual's sense purpose will enhance the quality of his reading.

Notes

Clarity about Environment

Every reader has to understand clearly the environment in which he has to operate in. Careful understanding of internal as well as external environment will facilitate the reader to improve his efficiency.

Identify Reading Channel

The channel carries the message and thus influences the communication interaction. Books, letters, memoranda, reports, forms, newspapers and magazines are different reading channels. The reader has to identify the most effective reading channels, if he has the alternatives. It is pertinent to note that reading channels having permanent records of messages which need to be referred to.

Control Interference

For effective reading, the reader should control all potential and actual interference of people and the environment. This includes the sources of noise, disturbance, physical setting, etc. If a reader cannot control these interferences, he cannot comprehend the material effectively.

Getting the Reading of Words and Non-verbal Symbols

All messages are created by words and non-verbal symbols. Reading and comprehension skills can be enhanced by carefully assigning meanings to words and non-verbal symbols.

Evaluate Critically

A reader should keep a critical eye on the reading material. Without critical evaluation, the reader cannot carry on reading effectively. After evaluation, the reader shall be able to decide whether he needs to skim, scan or carefully read the material.

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

9. The objective of reading should be very …… .
10. Books, letters, memoranda, reports, forms, newspapers and magazines are different reading …… .

6.5 Reading Model – PSQ5R Model

PSQ5R is a model that stands for the basic steps in learning from reading in an efficient manner. The P stands for Purpose, S for Survey, Q for Question, the 5R for Read selectively, Recite, Reduce-record, Reflect, and Review.

6.5.1 Purpose

Why are you reading this article or chapter, and what do you want to get out of it? When you have accomplished your purpose, stop reading.

Notes

Example: Your purpose in seeking a number in the telephone book is specific and clear, and once you find the number, you stop 'reading'.

Such 'reading' is very rapid indeed, perhaps 100,000 words a minute! Perhaps it should be called by its proper name, "scanning", but when it suits your purpose, it is fast and efficient. This principle, of first establishing your purpose, whether to get the focus or theme, or main ideas, or main facts or figures, or evidence, arguments and examples, or relations, or methods, can prompt you to use a reading method that gets what you want in the minimum time.

6.5.2 Survey-Skim

Glance over the main features of the piece, that is, the title, the headings, the lead and summary, paragraphs, to get an overview of the piece, to find out what ideas, problems and questions that are being discussed. In doing this, you should find the focus of the piece, that is, the central theme or subject, what it is all about; and perhaps the perspective, that is, the approach or manner in which the author treats the theme. This survey should be carried out in not more than a minute or two.

6.5.3 Question

Compose questions that you aim to answer:

1. What do I already know about this topic? – in other words, activate prior knowledge.
2. Turn the first heading into a question; to which you will be seeking the answer when you read.

Example: "What were 'the effects of the Hundred Years' War'?" – And you might add "on democracy, or on the economy"? Or "What is 'the impact of unions on wages'?"

6.5.4 '5 Rs'

Read Selectively

Read to find the answers to your question. By reading the first sentence of each paragraph you may well get the answers. Sometimes the text will 'list' the answers by saying "The first point. ... Secondly ...." and so on. And in some cases, you may have to read each paragraph carefully just to understand the next one, and to find the focus or main idea buried in it. In general, look for the ideas, information, evidence, etc., that will meet your purpose.

Recite

Without looking at the book, recite the answers to the question, using your own words as much as possible. If you cannot do it reasonably well, look over that section again.

Reduce-Record

Make a brief outline of the question and your answers. The answers should be in key words or phrases, not long sentences. For example, "Effects of 100 Yrs' War? – consolidate." Or, "Unions on Wages? – Uncertain, maybe 10-15%".

Notes

Reflect

Recent work in cognitive psychology indicates that comprehension and retention are increased when you 'elaborate' new information. This is to reflect on it, to turn it this way and that, to compare and make categories, to relate one part with another, to connect it with your other knowledge and personal experience, and in general to organize and reorganize it. This may be done in your mind's eye, and sometimes on paper. Sometimes you will at this point elaborate the outline of step 6, and perhaps reorganize it into a standard outline, a hierarchy, a table, a flow diagram, a map, or even a 'doodle'. Then you go through the same process, steps 3 to 7, with the next section, and so on.

Review

Survey your 'reduced' notes of the paper or chapter to see them as a whole. This may suggest some kind of overall organization that pulls it all together. Then recite, using the questions or other cues as starters or stimuli for recall. This latter kind of recitation can be carried out in a few minutes, and should be done every week or two with important material.

Self Assessment

Multiple Choice Questions:

11. In PSQ5R Model of reading, P stands for .....
    (a) Projection
    (b) Purpose
    (c) Productivity
    (d) Perfect
12. Which of these is not one of the 5Rs of the PSQ5R Model?
    (a) Recite
    (b) Reflect
    (c) Review
    (d) Reproduce

6.6 Executive Reading

The executives in an organization have to read a variety of things, ranging from letters, applications, proposals, reports, annual budgets, reference books, bills, vouchers, financial statements, project reports and so on. They spend a major time on these activities. So to be efficient in their work, they would need to devise a strategy which will allow them to spend appropriate time on each of these reading materials, depending upon the priority assigned to them.

An approximate framework for executives is given below, though the actual strategy may differ as per the situation and importance of the material.

Notes

Table 6.2: Framework for Executives

Sr. No.	Reading Matter	How to Read	Abbreviations
1.	Routine letter, leave application, normal representations, routine reports, block selections	A	A. Skim and skip judiciously
2.	Reading for speeches	B	B. Read aloud and practice
3.	Reading for report writing to clients	C	C. Read, pick and rearrange around them, then take notes
4.	Catalogues, price-lists, circulars, annual reports, association activities, market conditions, bills and vouchers	D	D. Skip and read related portion carefully
5.	Instructions of consequence	B	E. Read, mark, learn and digest
6.	Relaxation and pleasure	F	F. Fast reading G. Take notes
7.	Calculations and formulae	K	H. Criticize
8.	General knowledge and awareness	FIGO	I. Summarize and discuss
9.	Textbook and treatise	EGI	J. Workout
10.	Report and revisions	HK	K. Look for key points and key ideas
11.	Literature on alternative	L	L. Compare with previous knowledge
12.	Literature on entirely new products, machine, equipment or process	HIKL	M. Prior preparations
13.	Statutory matters	EHK	N. Note highlights
14.	Negotiations	EGHJ	O. Discuss with others after reading

Self Assessment

State whether the following statements are true or false:

13. Executives should skim through speeches and reports.

14. An executive should skim the annual reports and price lists.

6.7 Techniques for Improving Retention

Memory is the store house of our experiences and learning. It is true that all the learning cannot be stored forever, though some experiences and teachings remain forever in our memory. The following steps will improve the practical ability to retain information:

Using Memory Aids

Acronyms and abbreviations can be used as effective devices for improving retention. For example, the four P's of marketing refer to product, price, place and promotion and SWOT in strategic management refers to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The seven C's of good business letter-writing are: clarity, courtesy, completeness, correctness, concreteness and coherence.

Task Read the first 5 lines of this unit in minimum possible time and then close your eyes and try to recite those lines. In case, you are not able to recite all the 5 lines, read again. Follow this procedure until you are able to recite all the 5 lines without looking at them.

Notes

Deciding Priorities of Retention

The human mind has the capability to retain vast amount of information. At the same time, it is difficult to recall information from various layers of access. Hence, the closer to the surface that information lies, the earlier it is to recall the same. For this, the reader should decide his priorities of retention. Instead of retaining irrelevant information in his mind, he should store and concentrate only on priority areas.

Thinking

If the reader wants to retain reading material, he must think about it. If one applies the mind with regard to significance of reading material, its relationship with one's knowledge, utility for future reference etc., will automatically contribute to his retention. Linking the read material with some personal experiences and persons, helps retain the same.

Reinforcing

Reinforcement means to concretize in the mind, what has been read and learnt. This improves retention ability. A few tips for reinforcement are as follows:

- Brief notes should be prepared and periodical reviews of such notes should be done.
- After reading, the speaker should speak to someone and explain in his own words, what he has learnt.
- For improving the quality of repetitive input, the materials read should be supplemented by audio-visuals, lectures, discussions, etc.
- The read information should be related with other material and should not be considered as an end only.

Ensuring Determination

It is rightly said, "Where there is a will there is a way." A final set of procedures for retention involves the commitment to retain knowledge. While reading, an individual may get a lot of information; but he will keep only that piece of information, which he intends to retain. If an individual does not have the will to retain, retention is impossible.

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

15. …… is the store house of our experiences and learning.
16. …… means to concretize in the mind, what has been read and learnt.

6.8 Summary

- Reading is one of the four communication skills; the other three being writing, speaking and listening. The components of reading skills are reading speed, comprehension, efficiency and retention. Reading speed is defined in terms of words read per minute.
- Comprehension is the ability to understand anything after it is read. It is important to have good ability to comprehend along with quick reading.
- Reading efficiency is calculated by multiplying reading speed with comprehension ability.

Notes

- Various factors like educational background, interest, environment, physical and mental capability, etc., affect the reading efficiency of a person.
- Techniques for improving reading efficiency include active reading, improving concentration, preview and review of the read material, selection of style of reading, overcoming obstacles and interferences, etc.
- Retention capability allows you to memorize and recall the read material. This can be improved by relating the material being read with some experience or persons, by narrating the read out things to others, continuous reinforcement and determination.
- For effective reading, one must define the purpose of reading, allot time schedule, choose suitable style of reading and control interference.
- Executives have to spend a lot of time on reading various documents like, letters, applications, reports, budgets and e-mails. They should make a framework as per the priority of the document and choose a proper style of reading, so as to minimize wastage of time.

6.9 Keywords

Comprehension: The action or capability of understanding something

Reading: A dynamic process in which the reader interacts with the text to construct meaning

Reinforcement: It means to concretize in the mind, what has been read and learnt.

Retention: Ability to recall the read material after a lapse of time

Scanning: The fastest kind of reading where the reading speed may reach up to 3,000 words per minute

6.10 Review Questions

1. Describe the concept of reading. Why do we indulge in reading?
2. Explain briefly the concepts of reading rate, comprehension, efficiency and retention.
3. What is reading efficiency? How will you improve reading efficiency?
4. What is retention? How will you improve retention of reading material?
5. Write a brief note on guidelines for effective reading.
6. "When we improve our reading speed, our comprehension does not suffer." Discuss.
7. It has been advised that for reading efficiency, the reader should practice skipping letters, syllables and words. What do you think is the benefit of doing this?
8. Explain the PSQ5R Model of reading.
9. Read the following text and make notes in such a manner that the concept is easier to retain.

   Classical conditioning is learning that takes place when we come to associate two stimuli in the environment. One of these stimuli triggers a reflexive response. The second stimulus is originally neutral with respect to that response, but after it has been paired with the first stimulus, it comes to trigger the response in its own right.

Notes

10. Write shorts notes on the following:
    (a) Executive reading
    (b) Guidelines for effective reading

Answers: Self Assessment

1. Dynamic	2. Mental	3. (b)	4. (b)
5. (c)	6. False	7. True	8. True
9. Specific	10. Channels	11. (b)	12. (d)
13. False	14. True	15. Memory	16. Reinforcement

6.11 Further Readings

Books

Deanne Spears (2009), *Improving Reading Skills*, McGraw Hill.

Raj Kumar, *Basic Business Communication*, Excel Books.

Ron Fry (July 29, 2004), *Improve Your Reading*, 5 edition, Delmar Cengage Learning.

Online links

http://www.studygs.net/reading.htm

http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/reading/stratread.htm

http://www.sil.org/lingualinks/literacy/referencematerials/glossaryofliteracy terms/whatarereadingskills.htm

Notes

Unit 7: Comprehension and Quick Reading of Texts

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Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Realise how comprehension passages help in enhancing reading skills
- Practice quick reading

Introduction

Comprehension, as you know, is the capacity of the mind to perceive and understand; the power, act, or process of grasping with the intellect; perception; understanding; as a comprehension of abstract principles. Comprehension passages are widely used to enhance comprehension skills.

It is very important to learn the technique of reading a comprehension passage. A technique, so chosen, should be able to enhance the understanding and retention of the facts given in the passage. One such technique is to scan the passage first. Identify the sections to which the author devotes the most amount of space. If there are lots of diagrams for a particular concept, then that must also be an important concept. If you're really hard pressed for time, skip the sections to which the least amount of space is devoted. Read the first sentence of every paragraph more carefully than the rest of the paragraph. Take notes on headings and first sentence of each paragraph before reading the chapter itself. Then close your book and ask yourself what you now know about the subject that you didn't know before you started. Focus on nouns and main propositions in each sentence. Look for the noun-verb combinations, and focus your learning on these.

7.1 Reading Comprehension Passages

Having understood some of the basic principles and strategies involved in the act of reading comprehension, it is now time to start implementing those strategies on real texts of the kind that you have been reading so far. The ease or the difference with which you can handle the exercises compared to your previous experiences with reading comprehension exercises will reflect how much you have learnt from these theory lessons.

Notes

The first exercise has been deliberately chosen as a simple one. The idea is not to give you an easy time doing it but to give you ample scope to consciously practice the strategies that you have read so far.

7.1.1 Comprehension Passage I: Boys vs. Girls: How they Play?

Boys tend to play outside, in large groups that are hierarchically structured. Their groups have a leader who tells others what to do and how to do it, and resists doing what other boys propose. It is by giving orders that high status is negotiated. Another way boys achieve status is to take centre stage by telling stories and jokes, and by challenging the stories and jokes of others. Boys' games have winners and losers and elaborate systems of rules that are frequently the subjects of arguments. Finally, boys are frequently heard to boast about their skills, likes and possessions, and argue about who is best at what.

Girls, on the other hand, play in small groups or pairs. The centre of a girl's social life is her best friend. Within the group, intimacy is the key: differentiation is measured by relative closeness. In their most frequent games, such as jump rope and hopscotch, everyone gets a turn. Many of their activities (such as playing with dolls) do not have winners or losers. Although some girls are certainly more skilled than others, girls are expected not to boast about it, or show that they think they are better than the others. Girls don't give orders: they express their preferences as suggestions, and suggestions are likely to be accepted.

Keywords

Hierarchical: Refers to systems that are organized in the shape of a pyramid, with each row of objects linked to objects directly beneath it.

Negotiate: Try to reach an agreement or compromise by discussion with others

Exercises

1. Answer the following questions:
   (a) What do boys frequently argue about?
   (b) Why does everybody get a turn in girls' games?
2. State whether the following statements are true or false:
   (a) Boys often boast about their abilities: …… .
   (b) Girls' activities are highly competitive: …… .
3. Find a word or phrase in the text which, in context, is similar in meaning to:
   (a) Humorous or funny anecdotes: …… .
   (b) Abilities: …… .
4. Multiple Choice Questions:
   (a) Boys gain leadership by
      (i) caring and sharing
      (ii) voting democratically
      (iii) giving orders.

Notes

(b) Boys often argue about

(i) their skill, likes and possessions

(ii) who wins and loses

(iii) playing with dolls

(c) Girls usually play

(i) in big groups

(ii) in twos or not very large groups

(iii) chess because they don't enjoy playing hopscotch or jump rope

(d) Girls

(i) never boast about their skills

(ii) do not often boast about their skills

(iii) are more skilled than boys

7.1.2 Comprehension Passage II: The Importance of English

British or American, the language is basically the same, and its global stature is backed up by massive English-language training programmes, an international business that in textbooks, language courses, tape cassettes, video programmes and computerized instruction is worth hundreds of millions of pounds or dollars to the economies of the US and the UK. The English language is now one of Britain's most reliable exports. In the ironic words of the novelist Malcolm Bradbury, it is an ideal British product, 'needing no workers and no work, no assembly lines and no assembly, no spare parts and very little servicing, it is used for the most intimate and the most public services everywhere. We call it the English language ...' Dr Robert Burchfield, former Chief Editor of the Oxford English Dictionary, has remarked that 'any literate, educated person on the face of the globe is deprived if he does not know English'.

The first level of the global sway of English is to be found in those countries, formerly British colonies, in which English as a second language has become accepted as a fact of cultural life that cannot be wished away. In Nigeria, it is an official language; in Zambia, it is recognized as one of the state languages; in Singapore, it is the major language of government, the legal system and education.

Keywords

Assembly Line: A manufacturing technique in which a product is carried by some form of mechanized conveyor among stations at which the various operations necessary to its assembly are performed.

British Colony: Nation/area which was or which is being ruled or governed by the British government

Exercises

1. Answer the following questions

(a) Is the teaching of the English language worth a lot of money?

(b) According to Bradbury, what is the difference between the English language and traditional industry?

Notes

2. State whether the following statements are true or false:
   (a) Dr. R. Burchfield is not the Chief Editor of the Oxford English Dictionary currently.
   (b) Malcom Bradbury is a novelist who works at an assembly line.
3. Find a word or phrase in the text which, in context, is similar in meaning to:
   (a) Essentially: …… .
   (b) That can be trusted: …… .
4. Choose a, b or c in each question below. Only one choice is correct.
   (a) The English Language
      (i) is a good source of money for UK and USA.
      (ii) is not a good source of money for UK and USA.
      (iii) is a good source.
   (b) The English Language
      (i) has not been accepted in the British colonies.
      (ii) has been accepted in the British colonies.
      (iii) has become obsolete in the British colonies.
   (c) The English language is an official language
      (i) in Zambia and Singapore.
      (ii) in Nigeria.
      (iii) in Nigeria and Zambia.
   (d) Dr. Robert Burchfield
      (i) is not a novelist.
      (ii) works for the OED.
      (iii) worked for the OED.

7.1.3 Comprehension Passage III: The Murder

In a few minutes they emerged, carrying the stiffened body between them. It was wrapped in a comforter. They eased it up into the wagon-box. Jim walked back towards them.

`Do I have to go in with you now?'

`Where's your wife, Mr. Moore?' the deputy sheriff demanded.

`I don't know,' he said wearily. `She's somewhere around.'

`You're sure you didn't kill her too?'

`No. I didn't touch her. I'll find her and bring her in this afternoon. That is, if you don't want me to go in with you now.'

`We've got your statement,' the coroner said. `And by God, we've got eyes, haven't we, Will? Of course there's a technical charge of murder against you, but it'll be dismissed.

Notes

Always is in this part of the country. Go kind of light on your wife, Mr. Moore.'

`I won't hurt her,' said Jim.

He stood and watched the buckboard jolt away. He kicked his feet reluctantly in the dust. The hot June sun showed its face over the hills and flashed viciously on the bedroom window.

Jim went slowly into the house, and brought out a nine-foot, loaded bull whip. He crossed the yard and walked into the barn. And as he climbed the ladder to the hay-loft, he heard the high, puppy whimpering start.

When Jim came out of the barn again, he carried Jelka over his shoulder. By the water-trough he set her tenderly on the ground. Her hair was littered with bits of hay. The back of her shirtwaist was streaked with blood.

Jim wetted his bandana at the pipe and washed her bitten lips, and washed her face and brushed back her hair. Her dusty black eyes followed every move he made.

`You hurt me,' she said. `You hurt me bad.'

He nodded gravely. `Bad as I could without killing you.'

The sun shone hotly on the ground. A few blowflies buzzed about, looking for the blood.

Keywords

Bandana: A large handkerchief usually figured and brightly colored.

Barn: A large farm building used for storing farm products and sheltering livestock.

Buckboard: A four-wheeled wagon of simple construction meant to be drawn by a horse or other large animal.

Sheriff: In principle a legal official with responsibility for a county.

Shirtwaist: A woman's blouse or bodice styled like a tailored shirt.

Whimpering: To cry or sob with soft intermittent sounds.

Exercises

1. Match the following words to the definitions or synonyms listed below.

   stiffened, coroner, whip, barn, nod

   (a) A large building on a farm in which grains are kept.

   (b) A piece of leather or rope which is fastened to a stick, used for hitting animals or people.

   (c) Something that cannot be easily bent or moved.

   (d) An official who examines the reasons for a person's death, especially if it was violent or unexpected.

   (e) To show agreement, approval or greeting.

2. Answer the following questions according to the text above or the story.

   (a) What kind of wife was Jelka?

   (b) Was Jim a faithful and honest husband?

   (c) Do you have any idea whose body was carried by the Sheriff? Give reasons.

3. What is your opinion about Jim's reaction at the end of the story? (Write a short composition of about 120 words.)

Notes

7.1.4 Comprehension Passage IV: An Open Letter

(An open letter from Vladkhleb to the residents of Vladivostok)

When bread prices rose, Valkhleb, a bakery, asked the krai and city for help in holding down prices. Here is a letter it wrote, published in the Vladivostok Times Sept. 9, 1998.

Dear residents of Vladivostok:

The staff and Board of Directors of Vladkhleb can't keep silent in the current wild situation when prices for all existing products are skyrocketing unbelievably. And while we somewhat indifferently watch enormous figures on price tags for delicacy products, every kopeck of extra charge for the staples … causes a real panic. We perfectly realize that, and that's why we have kept bread prices affordable for all this time.

Even after the fall of prices we have tried to keep the past prices for as long as possible. At the moment all our reserves are exhausted. Stocks of bread-baking ingredients such as flour, sugar, butter and the like are running out. To buy what we need at reasonable prices is virtually impossible today.

However, we cannot temporize. We all need bread every day, which means we will be forced to buy everything we need at much higher prices. What this means perhaps doesn't need to be explained.

The cost of bread closely depends on ingredients. Another financial crisis has led to a 50-300-percent increase of prices for butter, vegetable oil, all types of margarine, yeast and other as of September 1. All these prices continue to grow every hour.

Because of this, Vladkhleb came to the critical point where it is necessary to raise prices of its products. Otherwise, we will just destroy a most powerful bread enterprise. Should Vladkhleb shut down, the bread price will get out of hand.

Our economists projected the situation for the near future considering the growing flour cost. With the cost of flour at 2.18 rubles per kilogram at the start of September, the retail bread price was to be 4.36 rubles. With an increase of flour cost to 4 rubles per kilogram, bread price will grow to 6.17 rubles. Further growth will be possible.

So it turns out that bread may rank with delicacy products. Is there another way out? Yes. It is already put into practice by leaders of other cities and regions. For example, Moscow Mayor Yury Luzhkov used the press in the very first days of the crisis to tell the residents that he had decided to subsidize the bread industry so that not to allow prices for this type of food to rise. There were no objections. So did Khabarovsk -- there they pay subsidies for bread-baking ingredients.

Incidentally, the city and krai administrations already have the experience of supporting our plants. Rather than artificially holding back prices, they employed loans and waivers and the like. At this point all the city and krai offices of authority as well as deputies at all levels could consider our propositions such as:

- Granting waivers on taxes to krai and city budgets;
- Establishing lower prices for electric and thermal energy for a program of bread production;
- Facilitating in reception of customs duty and tax waivers from the federal government for imported grain;
- Recovery of Pacific Fleet's debts in the amount of 6 million rubles (calculated as of August 1998) for supplied products;
- Lowering rent for premises and plots.

Any of these possible measures will help Vladkhleb contain the growth of prices for its products. Despite of our SOS signal, no measures have been taken as yet. We have found ourselves in the

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same situation as any of you. We see the situation changing steadily for the worse. We will not cope with that alone.

We see one recourse: Raise the bread price minimally and cancel our free plastic bag service. But what is next? This is the concern of all the 700 employees and the board of Vladkhleb.

Every extra kopeck in the cost of bread upsets you and us very much. Making our sincere apologies for a forced increase of the bread price, we hope for your understanding and support. Today and tomorrow we are with you, as usual.

— The staff and board of Vladkhleb

Keywords

Kopeck: An aluminum bronze coin of Russia, the Soviet Union, and its successor states, the 100th part of a ruble.

Krai: It was a type of an administrative division in the Russian Empire and the Russian SFSR, and is one of the types of the federal subjects of modern Russia.

Waiver: Voluntary relinquishment or surrender of some known right or privilege.

Exercises

1. Vladkhleb is ...
   (a) a farm
   (b) a bakery
   (c) a butchery
   (d) a motor company
2. In this open letter, Vladkhleb explains to the people of Vladivostok that ...
   (a) they can no longer supply bread
   (b) the price of bread will treble
   (c) all reserves of bread-making ingredients have been depleted
   (d) it will have to close down
3. A possible solution to the crisis that Vladkhleb suggests is ...
   (a) to use ingredients of a lower quality
   (b) to cut the workers' wages
   (c) to urge people to eat less bread
   (d) to have the bread price subsidized by the authorities
4. One of the things that Vladkhleb asks the local authorities is ...
   (a) more workers
   (b) lower energy prices
   (c) money to buy fresh ingredients
   (d) the permission to buy flour in the US

5. From the letter it appears that the local authorities of Vladivostok ...

   (a) have a tradition of helping out local industries in difficult times

   (b) have a bad record of giving help when it is needed

   (c) have already responded positively to recent SOS messages from Vladkhleb

   (d) were the first to subsidize the bread industry a few months ago

Notes

7.2 Quick Reading

Quick reading is a collection of reading methods which attempt to increase rates of reading without greatly reducing comprehension or retention.

Each type of reading has a different speed; an exciting novel is read quickly than a text in biology.

Speed of reading textbooks vary in terms of how well they are written; as a consequence some are more difficult to read.

Each semester, time yourself reading a chapter in each of your text books. See how many pages you can read in an hour. Once you have an accurate estimate of your reading rate, you can better plan your reading and studying time.

In order to assess your reading speed and make you conscious of the problems that you may be encountering at the level of speed, you can try this exercise—using your wrist watch, find out how much time it takes you to read this story:

- In a cursory and fast reading
- At a medium pace, without stopping to sort out difficulties
- At a slow pace, when you stop to understand all the difficulties

The Donkey

There was not a breath of air stirring; a heavy mist was lying over the river. It was like a layer of cotton placed on the water. The banks themselves were indistinct, hidden behind strange fogs. But day was breaking and the hill was becoming visible. In the dawning light of day, the plaster houses began to appear like white spots. Cocks were crowing in the barnyard.

On the other side of the river, hidden behind the fogs, just opposite Frette, a slight noise from time to time broke the dead silence of the quiet morning. At times it was an indistinct splashing, like the cautious advance of a boat, then again a sharp noise like the rattle of an oar and then the sound of something dropping in the water. Then silence.

Sometimes whispered words, coming perhaps from a distance, perhaps from quite near, pierced through these opaque mists. They passed by like wild birds which have slept in the rushes and which fly away at the first light of day, crossing the mist and uttering a low and timid sound which wakes their brothers along the shores.

Suddenly along the bank, near the village, a barely perceptible shadow appeared on the water. Then it grew, became more distinct and, coming out of the foggy curtain which hung over the river, a flatboat, manned by two men, pushed up on the grass.

The one who was rowing rose and took a pailful of fish from the bottom of the boat, then he threw the dripping net over his shoulder. His companion, who had not made a motion, exclaimed: "Say, Mailloche, get your gun and see if we can't land some rabbit along the shore."

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The other one answered: "All right. I'll be with you in a minute." Then he disappeared, in order to hide their catch.

(GUY de MAUPASSANT)

If you can complete it in a minute, it's fine. Otherwise you must practise quick reading.

Exercise

Now try reading this news item that you are likely to see in a newspaper.

NEW DELHI: Bihar's would-be Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Wednesday announced that he would be inducting 14 ministers, including a deputy Chief Minister, in the new NDA government in the state.

Meanwhile, the would-be CM is likely to meet the Governor on Wednesday.

"There will be a deputy chief minister. We will be initially inducting a small team of about 12-14 ministers which would be later expanded," Kumar told reporters after attending the BJP Parliamentary Party meeting, where he was felicitated for NDA's sweep in the Bihar assembly elections.

He, however, declined to divulge the name of the person who would be deputy chief minister and said "everything has been discussed."

BJP leaders Sushil Kumar Modi and Shahnawaz Hussain are among the front-runners for the post, closely followed by Ashwani Choubey and Nand Kishore Yadav.

He said the legislature parties of the BJP and JD (U) would be meeting separately at 1600 hours in Patna this evening to be followed by a joint meeting of the two parties at 1800 hours, which would elect the leader of the alliance.

"Thereafter, we would be meeting Governor Buta Singh and staking claim to form the government," he said.

If you can read this in 50 seconds, you are doing fine. Otherwise you need to pick up. Notice that reading this piece is much easier compared to the earlier one because there are no problems of style, emotions or minute details that have to be paid attention to. Readings of this kind, that surfs for ideas and skims for facts and figures, normally take lesser time.

7.3 Summary

- The Reading Comprehension passages have academic content and style and include topics from a variety of fields including arts, sciences, social sciences, etc. These passages are comparable to the texts found in textbooks. You do not need to have specific knowledge of the topic to answer the comprehension questions. It enhances you reading and analysing skills. In this unit, we included a few comprehension passages for your practice.
- Quick reading also tests your reading and understanding skills. It tests how well you can read and understand a piece of information in a short span of time. Short passages help you to practice quick reading.

7.4 Further Readings

Books

Linaker, Kathryn, *Reading Comprehension for Key Stage 1*, Schofield & Sims Ltd.

Vni, *100 Comprehension Passages*, Tata McGraw Hill.

Worsnop, I R, *Reading Comprehension: Key Stage II*, Schofield & Sims Ltd.

Unit 8: Aesthetic Appreciation of Texts: Poems

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8.2 Ozymandias

8.2.1 About the Poet

8.2.2 Summary and Analysis of the Poem

8.2.3 Keywords

8.2.4 Review Questions

Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Realise the theme of the poems – 'Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening' and 'Ozymandias'
- Appreciate the aesthetic beauty of the poems

Introduction

A poem is a piece of writing that partakes of the nature of both speech and song, and that is usually rhythmical and metaphorical. It conveys ideas, experiences and emotions. In this unit we will read two such poems: 'Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening' and 'Ozymandias'.

'Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening' is one of Robert Frost's most well known poems. Like most of Frost's poems, this poem can be read on several levels. This is one of those poems that will make you applaud the surface meaning, which is beautifully suggestive and think about the hidden meaning.

'Ozymandias' is a poem by Percy Bysshe Shelley. In this poem, the poet brings out the uselessness of human pride. He considers it madness. The poet talks about the broken statue of King Ozymandias lying in the desert.

8.1 Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening

Whose woods these are I think I know.

His house is in the village, though;

Notes

He will not see me stopping here

To watch his woods fill up with snow.

Explanation: In this opening stanza, the setting is explained as a winter evening in a rural environment. The speaker desires to watch snow fall quietly in some woods. While these woods belong to someone, that person is not present and so will not protest if the speaker trespasses.

My little horse must think it queer

To stop without a farmhouse near

Between the woods and frozen lake

The darkest evening of the year.

Explanation: Our speaker has a horse (neigh), and this horse is a little one. Our speaker psycho-analyzes his little horse and supposes that said little horse must think it's pretty strange for them to be stopping in the middle of nowhere, with no one in sight, with not even a farmhouse close by, and absolutely no sign of hay. Also, it happens to be the darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake

To ask if there is some mistake.

The only other sound's the sweep

Of easy wind and downy flake.

Explanation: Little horse does not like it. Fortunately, he has some harness bells on his back, and he gives them a little shake in order to get his master's attention. The only other sounds are of a slight wind and of falling snow.

The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,

But I have promises to keep,

And miles to go before I sleep,

And miles to go before I sleep.

Explanation: The speaker admits to having a yearning for the dark woods, but he tells us he's got things to do, people to see and places to go. He's got a long way to go before he can rest his head on his little pillow, so he had better get going.

8.1.1 About the Poet

Robert Frost (1874-1963) is perhaps the most loved American poet. He was born in San Francisco. He was educated at Dartmouth College, New England, and Harvard University. He is highly regarded for his realistic depictions of rural life and his command of American colloquial speech. His work frequently employed settings from rural life in New England in the early twentieth century, using them to examine complex social and philosophical themes. He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for poets on four occasions between 1924 and 1943. In 1962 he received the Congressional Medal.

Among the other honors and rewards Frost received were tributes from the U.S. Senate (1950), the American Academy of Poets (1953), New York University (1956), the Huntington Hartford Foundation (1958), and the Edward MacDowell Medal (1962). In 1930 he was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Amherst College appointed him Saimpson Lecturer for Life (1949), and in 1958 he was made poetry consultant for the Library of Congress.

Notes

At the time of his death on January 29, 1963, Frost was considered a kind of unofficial poet laureate of the US.

8.1.2 Summary and Analysis of the Poem

In terms of text, this poem is remarkably simple: in sixteen lines, there is not a single three-syllable word and only sixteen two-syllable words. In terms of rhythmic scheme and form, however, the poem is surprisingly complex. The poem was inspired by a particularly difficult winter in New Hampshire when Frost was returning home after an unsuccessful trip at the market. Realizing that he did not have enough to buy Christmas presents for his children, Frost was overwhelmed with depression and stopped his horse at a bend in the road in order to cry. After a few minutes, the horse shook the bells on its harness, and Frost was cheered enough to continue home.

The narrator in the poem does not seem to suffer from the same financial and emotional burdens as Frost did, but there is still an overwhelming sense of the narrator's unavoidable responsibilities. He would prefer to watch the snow falling in the woods, even with his horse's impatience, but he has "promises to keep," obligations that he cannot ignore even if he wants to. It is unclear what these specific obligations are, but Frost does suggest that the narrator is particularly attracted to the woods because there is "not a farmhouse near." He is able to enjoy complete isolation.

Frost's decision to repeat the final line could be read in several ways. On one hand, it reiterates the idea that the narrator has responsibilities that he is reluctant to fulfill. The repetition serves as a reminder, even a mantra, to the narrator, as if he would ultimately decide to stay in the woods unless he forces himself to remember his responsibilities. On the other hand, the repeated line could be a signal that the narrator is slowly falling asleep. Within this interpretation, the poem could end with the narrator's death, perhaps as a result of hypothermia from staying in the frozen woods for too long.

8.1.3 Keywords

Downy Flake: Snow coming down (intrinsic properties)

Queer: Surprising

8.1.4 Review Questions

1. What is the theme of the poem?
2. Describe the setting of the poem.
3. Describe the meaning of 'woods' as used in the poem.
4. Explain in your own words: "Of easy wind and downy flakes".
5. Why do you think that the poet has repeated the last line of the poem?

8.2 Ozymandias

I Met a traveller from an antique land

Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone

Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,

Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,

And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,

Notes

Tell that its sculptor well those passions read

Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,

The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed:

Explanation: The poet once met a traveller who was coming from an ancient land. He told the poet that he had seen two very big and trunk less legs of stone standing in the desert. It was the statue of king Ozymandias that was lying in ruins. Though the trunk of the statue was missing, the broken face of the statue lay nearby, half buried in the sand. The face was broken but it had an expression of anger on its brow and its lips were wrinkled.

There was contempt (hatred) and pride in his look. Cold command was clearly visible in his eyes. The stamping of all these sentiments on the face of the statue revealed clearly that the sculptor had understood the king's passion truly. The hands of the sculptor as also the heart of the king, who made this statue possible, are no longer in this world. But the passion engraved on the stone face is still intact. This shows the briefness of human life and permanence of art.

And on the pedestal these words appear:

'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:

Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'

Nothing beside remains, Round the decay

Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,

The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Explanation: The base of the statue was still there in the desert. There were some words written on it. They could be clearly read. They were about king Ozymandias. They declared him to be a great and powerful monarch, and a king of kings. The words called up all the powerful kings to consider the great achievements of Ozymandias and feel disappointed because they could not equal him.

The powerful and vast empire of Ozymandias had come to an end. All his glory had disappeared with the passage of time. Nothing is left of him now. His huge statue lies in ruins. There is only desert sand that is visible for miles around and as far as our eyes can see. These lines bring out the futility of human pride.

8.2.1 About the Poet

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822) was born on 4th Aug. 1792 in Sussex, in an aristocratic family. He got his education in Eton and later on in Oxford. He was a revolutionary by nature. He revolted against religion and society. He preached the philosophy of atheism (non-belief). He was influenced by the ideas of William Godwin, a political philosopher and married his daughter later on. He was most radical and unconventional of the romantic poets. He is famous for lyrical poetry. His famous poems include 'Adonis', 'Prometheus Unbound', 'Ode to the West Wind' etc. He died at the age of thirty.

8.2.2 Summary and Analysis of the Poem

Ozymandias is the Greek form of an Egyptian name. The person referred to here is Rameses II, who was a powerful king of ancient Egypt. The poem is about the ruins of his statue, said to have been found in the Sahara desert.

Notes

Once, the poet met a traveller who had come from the ancient land. The traveller told the poet about the ruins of some statue lying there in the desert. He told him that he had seen the broken statue of king Ozymandias. The statue was shattered and spread in pieces in the desert. The face was half buried in the sand. There was an expression of pride and hatred on it. The expression stamped on the face spoke of the ability of the sculptor to read the passions so well. Both the sculptor who stamped the passions on stone so well and the king whose heart fed those cruel passions had died. But the passions on the stone survived. The poet brings out the importance of art here. Man is mortal but art is permanent. Man's actions, similarly, outlive him.

Some words were written on the base of the statue. They could be read easily. The words written declared Ozymandias a powerful king, in fact, king of kings. They further called upon all the powerful kings of world to consider the achievements of Ozymandias and get disappointed at their failure for not being equal to him. The traveller told the poet that nothing was left of him (the proud king) now. There was sand everywhere. It stretched for miles. In the midst of sand huge statue lay all in ruins and shattered. Nobody bothered about him. His vanity and pride all had disappeared. Boasts of glories are vain. Time is all powerful. It destroys everything.

8.2.3 Keywords

Antique: Belonging to the distant past

Atheism: Rejection of belief in the existence of deities

Colossal: Huge, immense

Pedestal: Base of a statue

8.2.4 Review Questions

1. How does Shelley bring out the vanity of Ozymandias?
2. What is the poet's attitude towards kingly tyranny?
3. What impression do you form of the sculptor's characters?
4. Describe in your own words the theme of the poem.
5. Explain the these lines in your own words:

   'And on the pedestal these words appear:

   My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:

   Look on my works, ye Mighty and despair!'

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Unit 9: Tenses

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9.4 Modal Auxiliary Verbs

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9.5 Summary

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9.8 Further Readings

Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Know the rules related to sentences to be written in present tense and its various forms
- Realise the rules related to sentences to be written in past tense and its various forms
- Describe the rules related to sentences to be written in future tense and its various forms

Introduction

Things can happen now, in the future or in the past. The tenses show the time of a verb's action or being. The verb ending is changed (conjugated) to show roughly what time it is referring to.

Notes

Time can be split into three periods The Present (what you are doing), The Past (what you did) and The Future (what you are going to do).

The tenses we use to show what time we are talking about are split into the Simple, Continuous and Perfect tenses.

9.1 Present Tense

As the name suggests, present tense specifies the activities related to the current time or action.

9.1.1 Simple Present Tense

This is without doubt the most important tense in the English language and we use it in a great number of very different situations in our lives.

It is used for the following cases:

1. Facts and generalization

Example: 1. The earth is round.
2. I go to the market.

2. Habits and routines

Example: 1. I brush my teeth everyday.
2. I wash my clothes with Surf.

3. Permanent situations

Example: My daughter goes to school by bus.

4. State verbs (e.g. be, have, think, know) more

Example: 1. I think I know him.
2. I know I am going to die soon.

5. Fixed/official arrangement that we can't change

Example: I meet the chief minister at 11:00 am today.

Form: These sentences take first form of verb in agreement with the subject of the sentence.

Notes Apart from all the above uses, this tense is also used in:

1. ***Zero Conditional-*** *If it rains, I go to play football.*
2. ***First Conditional -****We won't get our pocket money, if we don't pass this exam.*

In sentences after **"when", "before", "till", "after", "as soon as"** (*"Before you leave, please take the keys"*).

www.englishtensewithcartoon.com

Notes

9.1.2 Present Continuous Tense

Present Continuous tense is used when talking about actions that are:

1. Happening at the moment (present or temporary activity) or

Example: 1. I am going to the market.

2. They are dancing on the floor.

2. Which will be done in the future (future arrangement).

Example: 1. I am meeting you tomorrow.

2. I am going to Singapore next month.

Form: These sentences take auxiliary verb (am/is/are) + first form of verb (+ing)

9.1.3 Present Perfect Tense

1. Actions which took place at an indefinite (unknown) time before now

Example: 1. I have told him to come.

2. You have read the book.

2. Actions in the past which have an effect on the present moment

Example: I have told this to you earlier also.

3. Actions which began in the past and continue in the present

Example: 1. I have lived here for 20 years.

2. I have lived here since 1970.

Form: These sentences are written in the verb form - have/had + past participle

9.1.4 Present Perfect Continuous Tense

This tense is used in the following cases:

1. Actions that started in the past and continue in the present

Example: 1. I have been explaining this to you for last two hours.

2. I have been singing since 11:00 am.

2. Actions that have recently stopped

Example: It has been raining till last hour.

Notes

Note **Since** and **for** are very common time expressions used with the Perfect Continuous.

We use **for** with a period of time.

For example: for 20 years.

When talking about a starting point, we use **since** with a point in time.

For example: since 1960.

Form: Positive Sentences:

Subject	+	**Auxiliary verb**	+	**Auxiliary verb**	+	**Verb + ing**
I/a boy etc.		has/have		been		swimming etc.

Questions (interrogative sentences):

Auxiliary verb	+	**Subject**	+	**Auxiliary verb**	+	**Verb + ing**	+	?
has/have		I/a boy/ a man etc.		been		swimming etc.		

Negative sentences:

Subject	+	Auxiliary verb + not	+	Auxiliary verb	+	Verb + ing
I/a boy/ a woman etc.		hasn't / haven't		been		swimming, going etc.

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb given in the bracket:

1. He …… help right now. (need)
2. Windows …… made of glass. (be)
3. The train …… every morning at 8 AM. (leave)
4. Once a week, Tom …… the car. (clean)

9.2 Past Tense

Past tense stands for the time that has gone. The sentences used in this tense show the actions that happened in past.

9.2.1 Simple Past Tense

Simple past tense is used in:

1. Events in the past that are now finished

Example: I **went** to the market.

Notes

2. Situation in the past

Example: They **lived** a normal life until they won a lottery.

3. A series of actions in the past

It might be referred to **as both**, short actions in the past or long action in the past

Example: 1. He entered a room and smil**ed** at the guests.

2. He **didn't get** any good grades when he **attended** school.

Form: Positive sentences:

Subject	**+**	Verb + ed or an irregular form
I/a boy, etc.		worked/went/saw

Questions (interrogative sentences):

Auxiliary verb	**+**	***Subject***	**+**	***Verb***	**+**	**?**
did		I/a boy etc		go/take		

Negative sentences:

Subject	**+**	**Auxiliary verb**	**+**	**Verb**
I/a boy etc.		didn't		go/take

9.2.2 Past Continuous Tense

1. Actions in progress in past

Example: **Were** you paint**ing** your house yesterday at 4 p.m.?

2. ***Interrupted actions in progress:*** This is also referred to as events that were in progress when another event took place.

Example: What **were** you do**ing** when Rakesh stopped you?

3. Actions in progress at the same time in the past

Example: **While** Rakesh **was** clean**ing** the dining space, Shirley **was** wash**ing** the dishes.

4. Irritation

Example: Were you taking a sun bath when everybody was looking for you?

5. Timid /polite question

Example: 1. I was wondering if I could ask a question.

2. I was thinking you might help me to sort it out.

Form: Positive sentences

Subject	+	**Auxiliary verb**	+	**Verb + ing**
I/a dog etc.		was/were		going/taking

Questions (interrogative sentences) **Notes**

Auxiliary verb	+	**Subject**	+	**Verb + ing**	+	?
was/were		I/a dog etc.		going/taking		

Negative sentences

Subject	+	**Auxiliary verb + not**	+	**Verb + ing**
I/a dog etc.		wasn't/weren't		going/taking

Caution You can also use the **Past Continuous** to show your irritation over something or somebody in the past.

Example: She was always asking me stupid questions.

9.2.3 Past Perfect Tense

It is used in situations like:

1. A completed action before another activity in the past

Example: 1. When we arrived, the concert **had already finished**.

2. It **had got/gotten** worse **before** it got better.

2. Third conditional sentences and reported speech

Example: 1. If I **hadn't taken** my keys from the drawer, I would be unable to get into my house.

2. My mother asked me whether I **had visited** her friend the previous day.

3. Dissatisfaction with the past

Example: I wish I hadn't gone there.

Form: Positive sentences:

Subject	+	**Auxiliary verb**	+	**Past participle**
I/a boy etc.		had		eaten/given/gone

Caution ***Typical Mistakes***

1. As soon as I went inside, My daughter ~~hided~~ **hid** behind the curtain.

   (the past participle of the verb "to hide" is "hid", not "hided")

2. By the time I ~~had~~ reached the venue most of the guests **HAD** left.

   ("By the time" indicates that the guests had left before the speaker reached the venue, not the other way around!)

Questions (interrogative sentences):

Auxiliary verb	+	**Subject**	+	**Past participle**	+	?
had		I/a boy etc.		eaten/given/gone		

Notes

Negative sentences:

Subject	+	Auxiliary verb + not	+	Past participle
I/a boy etc.		hadn't/ had not		eaten/given/gone

9.2.4 Past Perfect Continuous Tense

These sentences are used in situations such as:

1. Duration of a past action up to a certain point in the past

Example: 1. I **had been** running for an hour when it started raining.
2. Era put on weight because she **had been** eating too much sugar.

2. Third conditional sentences and reported speech

Example: 1. He said he wasn't tired because he **hadn't been** preparing his car.
2. Mariam said she **had** never **been dancing** so much in one day.

Form: Positive sentences:

Subject	+	Auxiliary verb	+	Auxiliary verb	+	Verb + ing
I/a boy etc.		had		been		eating/swimming, etc.

Questions (interrogative sentences):

Auxiliary verb	+	Subject	+	Auxiliary verb	+	Verb + ing	+	?
Had		I/a boy etc.		been		eating/swimming, etc.		

Negative sentences:

Subject	+	Auxiliary verb + not	+	Auxiliary verb	+	Verb + ing
I/a boy etc.		hadn't		been		going/swimming, etc.

Self Assessment

Fill in the blank with the right word:

5. By the time the troops arrive, the combat group …… spent several weeks waiting. (will have/would have)
6. Before the budget cuts, the students …… in many extracurricular activities. (had been participating/had participated)
7. The children were soaking wet. I knew they …… in the lake. (had swam/had been swimming)
8. If I …… working on that project, we would have been successful. (were/had been)
9. What …… doing when the war broke out. (had you been/were you)
10. Many people are starving while others …… fighting overweight. (had been/are)

9.3 Future Tense

As the name suggests, future tense is used to present the actions that are going to take place in future.

Notes

9.3.1 Simple Future Tense

1. Promises

Example: 1. You **will** study harder.

2. **Will** you study harder?

2. Unplanned actions (spontaneous decisions)

Example: 1. I **won't** take any heavy equipment with me.

2. I'm sorry I **won't** be able to help you with your English today.

3. Predictions based on experience or intuition

Example: 1. **Will** he be surprised when he looks at?

2. I think he **will** regret his choice.

4. Habits (obstinate, usually habitual)

Example: 1. John **will** keep dropping his towel on the floor after a bath.

2. If you **will** keep your watch half an hour slow it is hardly surprising that you are late for your appointments.

Form: Positive sentences:

Subject	**+**	**Auxiliary verb**	**+**	**Verb**
I/a boy etc.		Will		go/take etc.

Caution Remember, you should never use **will** to say what somebody has already arranged or decided to do in the future:

Example: Ramanand is moving to New Delhi next month. (not "Ramanand will move")

Questions (interrogative sentences):

Auxiliary verb	**+**	**Subject**	**+**	**Verb**	**+**	**?**
will		I/a boy etc.		go/take etc.		

Notes *We often use will with:*

probably, most likely	I'll probably drop in on uncle.
I think	This gift is great. I think we'll love it.
I'm sure	It's not going to be boring there. I'm sure there will be a lot of boys at your age
I wonder (if, what, when, etc.)	It's a bit late. I wonder if he'll come.
I expect	I haven't seen Matthew today. I expect he'll call today.

Notes

Negative sentences:

Subject	+	Auxiliary verb + not	+	Verb
I/a boy etc.		will not/won't		go/take etc.

9.3.2 Future Continuous Tense

This tense is used in situations such as:

1. Future actions in progress

Example: 1. This time next week, I will be throwing a party.

2. I will take your class tomorrow.

2. Guesses about the present or the future

Example: 1. They **will** be gett**ing** home just about now.

2. **Jayesh won't** be sleep**ing** now (= I think John isn't sleeping now)

3. Polite questions about somebody's intentions

Example: **Will** you be us**ing** the screwdriver?

If you want to learn about somebody's intentions, you should never use the Future Simple. Using the Future Simple implies that you want to influence somebody's decision. Questions become much more objective if formed in the Future Continuous.

Example: 1. Will you come home?

(= I want you to come home)

2. Will you be coming home?

Notes In future tense there are some contracted forms which are absolutely correct when it comes to meaning and grammar.

Contracted forms: WILL = 'LL

For example: She'll have been = she will have been

WILL + NOT = WON'T

For example: She won't have been = she will not have been

Form: Positive Sentences:

Subject +	Auxiliary verb +	Auxiliary verb +	Verb + ing
I/you/we etc.	will	be	sleeping/taking

Caution Like any of the **Future Tenses**, Future Continuous cannot be used in sentences beginning with: **while, when, before, by the time, if, etc**.

~~By the time, you will be finishing your lunch.~~

Notes

Questions (interrogative sentences):

Auxiliary verb +	**Subject** +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Verb + ing** + ?
will	I/you/we etc.	be	dancing/taking

Negative sentences:

Subject +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Verb + ing**
I/you/we etc.	won't	be	trying/taking

9.3.3 Future Perfect Tense

We use this tense to express an action that will be finished before some point in the future.

Example: 1. He **will have** retir**ed** by the end of the year.

2. **Will he have** retir**ed** by the end of the year?

3. He **wouldn't** have retir**ed** by the end of the year.

Form: Positive sentences:

Subject +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Past participle**
I/a dog etc.	will	have	gone, seen, etc.

Questions (interrogative sentences):

Auxiliary verb +	**Subject** +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Past participle** + ?
will	I/a boy etc.	have	gone, seen, etc.

Negative sentences:

Subject +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Past participle**
I/a boy etc.	won't	have	gone, seen, etc.

9.3.4 Future Perfect Continuous Tense

We use this tense to express actions that will be happening at a definite moment in the future.

Example: 1. We will have been driving for three hours by the time we get to our office today.

2. She will not have been cooking the lunch for three hours by the end of October.

Form: Positive sentences:

Subject +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Present participle**
I/a boy etc.	will	have	been	going, doing (verb + ing)

Negative sentences:

Subject +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Present participle**
I/a boy etc.	won't	have	been	going, doing (verb + ing)

Questions (interrogative sentences):

Auxiliary verb +	**Subject** +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Auxiliary verb** +	**Present participle** + ?
Will	I/a boy etc.	have	been	going, doing (verb + ing)

Notes

Notes

	PRESENT	PAST	FUTURE
INDEFI-NITE	**Verb + s/ es** • He *goes* to school. • They *go* to school. • He *does* his work well. • They *do* their work well	**Verb + ed or an irregular form** • He/They *went* to school. • He/They *did* his work well. • He ~~spended~~ spent his holidays well.	**Auxiliary verb + first form of verb** • He *will go* to school. • I *shall go* to school. • He *will do* his work well. • They *will do* their work well
CONTIN-UOUS	**Auxiliary verb (is/ am/are) + verb + ing** • He is *going* to school. • They *are going* to school. • I *am going* to school.	**Auxiliary verb (was/were) + verb + ing** • He *was going* to school. • They *were going* to school. • I *was going* to school.	**Auxiliary verb (will be/shall be) + verb + ing** • He *will be going* to school. • They *will be going* to school. • I *shall be going* to school.
PERFECT	**Auxiliary verb (has/have) + past participle** • He *has gone* to school. • They *have gone* to school. • I *have done* my work well	**Auxiliary verb (had) + past participle** • He *had gone* to school. • They *had gone* to school. • I *had done* my work well.	**Auxiliary verb (will have/ shall have) + past participle** • He *will have gone* to school. • They *will have gone* to school. • I *shall have done* my work well.
PERFECT CONTIN-UOUS	**Auxiliary verb (has been / have been) + verb+ ing** • He *has been going* to school since he was three. • They *have been going* to school for past 8 years. • I *have been doing* my work well all along.	**Auxiliary verb (had been) + verb + ing** • He had been going to school since he was three. • They had been going to school for past 8 years. • I had been doing my work well all along.	**Auxiliary verb (will have been / shall have been) + verb+ ing** • He *will have been* going to school for 3 years by the time he will be 6. • I *shall have been* doing my work well all along till next few years.

Self Assessment

Correct the following Sentences:

11. Will you going to meet Jane tonight?
12. I am sending you the information when I get it.
13. Are you make dinner?
14. He will going to spend his vacation in Goa.

Notes

9.4 Modal Auxiliary Verbs

Modal auxiliary verbs are those verbs that qualify the "mood" of the verb they "help."

9.4.1 Could

Could is a modal auxiliary verb and is used to:

1. talk about past possibility or ability
2. make requests

Structure: subject + could + main verb

The main verb is always the bare infinitive (infinitive without "to").

	Subject	Auxiliary Verb	Main verb
Positive	My last dog	**could**	swim.
Negative	My last dog	**could not/couldn't**	walk.
Interrogative	**Could**	your last dog	swim?

Notes **Could** is invariable. There is only one form of **could**.

The main verb **is always** the bare infinitive.

Use of Could

1. ***Past Possibility or Ability:*** We use **could** to talk about what was possible in the past, what we were able or free to do:

   (a) I **could** sing when I was 1 year old.

   (b) My great grandmother **could** speak five languages.

   (c) When we arrived home, we **could not** open the door. (...**couldn't** open the door.)

   (d) **Could** you understand what he was trying to say?

   We use **could** (positive) and **couldn't** (negative) for general ability in the past. But when we talk about one special occasion in the past, we use **be able to** (positive) and **couldn't** (negative). Look at these examples:

	Past General	Specific Occasion
Positive	My grandmother **could** speak Latin.	A boy fell into a well yesterday. The military **were able to** save him.
Negative	My grandmother **couldn't** speak Hindi.	A boy fell into a well river yesterday. The military **couldn't** save him.

2. ***Requests:*** We often use **could** in a question to ask somebody to do something. The use of **could** in this way is fairly polite (formal):

   (a) **Could** you please tell me where the bus stand is?

   (b) **Could** you send me an e-mail, please?

Notes

9.4.2 Would

Would is a very flexible modal verb and has many uses.

In Grammar definitions **would** is briefly mentioned under conditionals and reported speech.

1. ***Conditionals:*** **Would** is used in a number of different forms of the conditional:

   2nd conditional

   Example: If I went to China, I would visit the Great Wall.

   3rd conditional

   Example: If she had studied harder, she would have passed her exams.

   Mixed conditional

   Example: If he hadn't missed the bus, he would be here now.

2. ***Reported (Indirect) Speech:*** In indirect speech 'will' is reported as would:

   Example: 1. I will be there! She said she would be there.
   2. I won't be able to come with you on Saturday. He said he wouldn't be able to come with us on Saturday.
   3. Will you do me a favour? She asked if I would do her a favour.

3. ***Requests and Offers:*** You can use would to ask people to do things:

   Example: 1. Would you do me a favour?
   2. Would you mind opening the window?
   3. To offer or invite you can use Would you like …?
   4. Would you like me to get you something while I'm at the shop?
   5. Would you like to come with me to the cinema?

4. ***Future in the Past:*** This structure is used to "express the idea that in the past you thought something would happen in the future."

   Example: 1. When she was a teenager she knew she would be rich and famous.
   2. It was at that moment that I knew they would win the game.

5. ***Common Expressions:*** Would + like:

   This structure is used to talk about things that we want or don't want to do:

   Example: 1. Yes, I would like to go with you.
   2. I would not like to be outside now.

6. ***Would rather:*** This structure is used to express preferences:

   Example: 1. What would you rather do: go to the cinema or stay at home for the evening?
   2. I'd rather be poor and happy than rich and sad.

Notes

Difference between Could and Would

COULD and WOULD are first cousins to CAN and MAY. CAN is to be used when you are speaking about someone's "ability or capability" to do something. MAY is to be used when you are talking about "permission" to do something.

In most instances COULD and WOULD indicate the mood of the main verb that they "help." In order to decide which word is appropriate to the MOOD, you must determine if you are asking about the person's capability or about his willingness.

Example:

1. COULD you open the door for me when I get there?

   In this instance, you are asking if the person is able – has the ability – to do the door-opening. If, for instance, that person will not be there, then he/she will not be able to perform the simple task. COULD is used to determine one's capability or ability to do something.

2. WOULD you open the door for me when I get there? In this sentence, the speaker knows or assumes that the person will be there, but the speaker is asking "permission" [help] from the possible door opener person. It's not a question of the person's availability, capability, or ability. It is a question of the person's willingness to perform the act of door-opening.

Self Assessment

Fill in the blank with the right word:

15. On Sunday I have to work late. When I get home I …… have eaten dinner. (will/would)
16. The dogs …… have been playing for 3 hours in 10 minutes. (will/would)
17. He …… have completed the task by six o'clock tomorrow. (will/would)
18. She …… ready for the test if she had been preparing diligently. (would have been/had been)

9.5 Summary

- In English, there are three basic tenses: present, past, and future.
- Present tense shows the actions at current time.
- Past tense shows actions related to the time that has passed.
- Future tense shows the actions related to future.
- Each tense has an indefinite form, indicating simple form.
- Each tense has a perfect form, indicating completed action.
- Each has a continuous form, indicating ongoing action.
- Each has a perfect continuous form, indicating ongoing action that will be completed at some definite time.

9.6 Keywords

Continuous: Form of tenses that indicates an ongoing action

Indefinite: The simplest form of any tense

Perfect: Form of tenses that indicates a completed action

Notes

9.7 Review Questions

1. Fill the right form of verb given in the bracket to be filled on the blank that follow:
   (a) Did you hear that Banjara was fired last month? He (work) …… for that import company for more than ten years and he (work) …… in almost every department. Nobody knew the company like he did.
   (b) Vinod (climb) …… the Matterhorn, (sail) …… around the world and (go) …… on safari in Kenya by the time he turned twenty-eight. He (experience) …… more by that age than most people do in their entire lives.
   (c) Jessica (work) …… for the government since she graduated from Singapore University. Until recently, she did (enjoy) …… her work, but now she is talking about retiring.
   (d) When I returned from my trip, I mentioned to a friend that I (have) …… problems with English language for years. He recommended that I (spend) …… a year in an English speaking country. I (decide) …… to go abroad again. I (research) …… exchange programs for a couple of weeks and finally decided on a school in the United States.
2. Correct the following sentences:
   (a) Did you have bought a house in a year?
   (b) The Future Perfect expresses the idea that something would occur before another action in the future.
   (c) You are to have been waiting for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives.
   (d) If I will be elected as the President, I will make sure everyone has access to inexpensive health insurance.
   (e) Who was to be going to make John's birthday cake toady?
   (f) A ship owner's responsibility started as soon as the goods have been delivered to him or to his authorised servants for the purpose of being carried.
   (g) Thinking that he could not walk anymore, I drug him to his motor bike.
   (h) In recent years, Hong Kong is recognised as the leading trading and distribution centre for pearls.

Answers: Self Assessment

1. Needs
2. Are
3. Leaves
4. Cleans
5. Will have
6. Had been participating
7. Had been swimming
8. Had been
9. Were you
10. Are
11. Are you going to meet Jane tonight?
12. I will send you the information when I get it.
13. Will you make dinner?
14. He is going to spend his vacation in Goa.
15. Will
16. Will
17. Will
18. Would have been

Notes

9.8 Further Readings

Books

Douglas Biber, Stig Johansson, Geoffrey Leech, Susan Conrad, Edward Finegan, *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*, Pearson ESL.

P.C. Wren, H. Martin, *High School English Grammar and Composition*, S Chand & Co. Ltd., India.

Online links

http://www.englishtensewithcartoons.com/page/tenses

www.learnenglish.de/grammar

leo.stcloudstate.edu/grammar

http://www.english-at-home.com/grammar/reported_speech.php3

Notes

Unit 10: Parts of Speech and Common Errors in English

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Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Identify the eight parts of speech
- Realise the use and forms of different parts of speech
- Know some common errors in English

Introduction

Traditional grammar classifies words based on eight parts of speech: the verb, the noun, the pronoun, the adjective, the adverb, the preposition, the conjunction, and the interjection. In this unit you will learn about these. Each part of speech explains not what the word is, but how the word is used. In fact, the same word can be a noun in one sentence and a verb or adjective in the next.

1. **'Books** are made of ink, paper, and glue.'

   Diana waits patiently while Mary **books** the tickets.

   In the first sentence, "books" is a noun, the subject of the sentence.

   While in the second one, it is used as a verb.

Notes

2. 'Children should not play with **fire**'

   '**Fire** the gun'

   In the first sentence 'fire' is used as a noun.

   And in the second on, it is used a verb.

   The main aim of studying this unit is to master the use of words which are used differently in many sentences to convey a different meaning every time.

   While speaking and writing English, people make a lot of mistakes. These mistakes can confuse the reader or leave a wrong impression on the reader. In this unit, you will also get to know about some of the common mistakes that people make while reading or writing English and how you can rectify the errors.

10.1 Parts of Speech

10.1.1 Noun

Noun is a word that is used to name or identify a person, place, thing, quality, or action.

Common Noun and Proper Noun

Common Nouns refer to the entire group of entities.

Example: Boys, mouse, magnet, etc.

Proper Nouns are usually capitalized and refer to persons, specific things or specific places.

Example: Michael, Rashmi, New Delhi, etc.

Concrete Noun and Abstract Noun

Nouns can also be **Concrete Nouns**. These refer to nouns that can be touched or held.

Example: Shoe, house, pen, etc.

Abstract Nouns are nouns that cannot be touched or held.

Example: Love, fear, anger, etc.

10.1.2 Countable and Uncountable Nouns

Countable nouns are common nouns that can become a plural. They can combine with exact numbers (even one, as a singular) or indefinite numbers (like "a" or "an").

Example: Lady, window, bat, etc.

Uncountable (or non-count) nouns are different from by the simple fact that they can't become plural or combine with number words.

Example: Indigestion, furniture, etc.

Notes

Collective Nouns

Collective nouns refer to groups consisting of more than one individual or thing. The group represents more than one individual, even though it is a single unit.

Example: Family, organisation, college, etc.

Possessive Nouns

Possessive nouns are nouns that name who or what has something. The possessive form of noun is used with nouns referring to people, groups of people, countries, and animals. It also refers to where someone spends their time.

We can add an apostrophe and s ('s) to form the possessive of most singular nouns.

Example: Rahul's car, dog's tail, Shakespeare's novels, etc.

We can add an apostrophe (') to form the possessive of plural nouns that end with's'.

Example: Students' exams, class' furniture, Indians' pride, etc.

We can add an apostrophe and s ('s) to form the possessive of plural nouns that do not end with s.

Example: Army's dress, children's toys, women's dresses, etc.

10.1.3 Pronouns

A pronoun is s a word which can be used in place of a noun.

Example: Instead of saying-

"Ram is a student. Ram likes to play games. Ram lives in Mumbai.

We can say-

Ram is a student. **He** likes to play games. **He** lives in Mumbai.

The pronoun '**he'** can be used in place of the noun Ram in order to avoid repeating the name again and again. We use pronouns very often, especially so that we do not have to keep on repeating a noun.

Personal Pronouns

Unlike nouns, personal pronouns sometimes have different forms for masculine/male (He), feminine/female (she) and neutral (It). Personal pronouns have different forms depending on if they act as subjects or objects.

Example: He (Subject) and

Him (object)

She (Subject) and

Her (Object)

Notes

A subject is a word which does an action and usually comes before the verb, and an object is a word that receives an action and usually comes after the verb.

Example: Consider the sentence,

'Ravi works for Shyam.'

In this sentence, Ravi is the subject and Shyam is the object, therefore, pronoun '**he'** can be used in place of Ravi and the pronoun **'him'** can be used instead of Shyam. The sentence can also be written as:

The form of a personal pronoun also changes according to what person is referred to. Person is used here as a grammar word and means:

1st person or the self

Example: I, me, we

2nd person or the person spoken to

Example: You

3rd person or the person spoken about

Example: He, she, him, her, they, them

Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns act as *adjectives showing ownership.*

1st Person: My, our

Example: My friend found his dog

2nd Person: Your

Example: Your shirt is dirty.

3rd Person: His/her/its, their

Example: Their baby is adorable.

Caution Do not confuse the pronoun **its** with the contraction **it's**, which means *it is*.

These possessive pronouns stand for an *adjective possessive pronoun plus a noun*:

Example: That backpack is *mine*. ("mine" = "my backpack")

Indefinite Pronoun

Indefinite pronouns are noun substitutes that are not specific (definite) in meaning.

Notes

Indefinite pronouns fall into two categories:

1. Pronouns that refer to a non-specific noun: ***anybody, anyone, anything, everybody, everyone, everything, nobody, none, no one, nothing, somebody, someone and something.***

   Example: Nothing gets accomplished without some effort.

2. Pronouns that refer to a specific noun whose meaning is clear only because of a previous mention or because of words that follow the indefinite pronoun: ***all, another, any, both, each, either, few, many, neither, one, some, several.***

   Example: Several are planning to travel to New Delhi.

   (The identity of the *group that is traveling to New Delhi* would have already been mentioned.)

   Do you want *some* of these books?

   (*Books* makes clear the meaning of *some*.)

> *Note* The indefinite pronouns in point 2 function simply as adjectives when they are directly followed by nouns.

Example: Several students received awards.

My mother baked *some* pies for the picnic.

Relative Pronouns

A relative pronoun connects (relates) an adjective clause or a noun clause to the rest of the sentence.

Relative Pronouns that Introduce Adjective Clauses

When a relative pronoun introduces an adjective clause, the pronoun refers to a noun already mentioned in the main clause of the sentence. (Who whose whom which that)

Example: (Adjective clauses are underlined):

The mystery novel <u>*that* she recently completed</u> will be published next year.

(*That* refers back to *novel* and acts as a direct object in the adjective clause.)

Healing is more rapid for patients <u>*who* have a positive attitude</u>.

(*Who* refers back to *patients* and acts as the subject of the adjective clause.)

Relative Pronouns that Introduce Noun Clauses

who	whom	what	which	whose
whoever	whomever	whatever	whichever	that

Notes

Within a sentence, a noun clause may function as a subject, complement, appositive, or object of a verb or preposition. The relative pronoun acts as a subject or object within the noun clause, though the normal word order may be changed. Note: *Who* and *whoever* are used as subject pronouns, and *whom* and *whomever* are used as object pronouns. (Noun clauses are underlined.)

Example: *Whoever* uses the kitchen should wash the dishes. (The noun clause is the subject of the sentence. *Whoever* is the subject of the noun clause.)

The criminal got *what* he deserved. (The noun clause is the direct object of the verb *got*. Within the noun clause, *what* is the direct object of the verb deserved, even though it comes before the verb.)

Interrogative Pronouns

They introduce questions.

Example: 1. Who is that gentleman?

2. What would you like for your birthday?

Reflexive Pronouns

Reflexive pronouns rename subjects of action verbs. They function as various types of objects. If the reflexive pronoun is omitted, the sentence will not make sense. Note that the following list is the same as the list of intensive pronouns above.

Singular: myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself

Plural: ourselves, yourselves, themselves

Example: The logger cut *himself* with his axe. (Direct object of the verb *cut*)

Kim poured *herself* a cup of coffee. (Indirect object of the verb *cut*)

The old man was talking loudly to *himself.* (Object of the preposition *to*)

10.1.4 Adjectives

Adjective describes the noun or the pronoun.

Example: Yellow, pretty, useful

My uncle is an **adventurous** person.

I am **good** at social sciences.

Kinds of Adjectives and their Functions

Descriptive Adjectives tell us about the kind or quality of the noun or pronoun.

Example: 1. **Pretty** girl

2. **White** rose

Adjectives of number/ quantity come before a noun to show how much or how many of the noun.

Notes

Example: 1. He met **two** ladies yesterday.

2. I need **several** envelopes and **some** paper.

Demonstrative Adjectives point out nouns and are followed by the nouns which they point out.

Example: 1. **This** house

2. **Those** people

Interrogative Adjectives ask questions and come before a noun.

Example: 1. **Which** door _____ ?

2. **Whose** shoes ____ ?

Indefinite Adjectives

An **indefinite adjective** is similar to an indefinite pronoun, except that it modifies a noun, pronoun, or noun phrase, as in the following sentences.

Example: Many people believe that corporations are under-taxed.

The indefinite adjective "many" modifies the noun "people" and the noun phrase "many people" is the subject of the sentence.

I will send you any mail that arrives after you have moved to Shivnagar.

The indefinite adjective "any" modifies the noun "mail" and the noun phrase "any mail" is the direct object of the compound verb "will send."

They found a few goldfish floating belly up in the swan pound.

In this example the indefinite adjective modifies the noun "goldfish" and the noun phrase is the direct object of the verb "found".

Degrees and their Formation

We even have a name for each of these forms of degree: *positive, comparative*, and *superlative*. Let's meet the whole gang.

***Positive degree*:** The base form of the adjective or adverb. It does not show comparison.

***Comparative degree*:** The form an adjective or adverb takes to compare *two* things.

***Superlative degree*:** The form an adjective or adverb takes to compare *three* or more things.

Table 10.1: Comparative Levels of Adjectives and Adverbs

Part of Speech	Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Adjective	low	lower	lowest
Adjective	big	bigger	biggest
Adjective	fat	fatter	fattest
Adverb	highly	more highly	most highly
Adverb	widely	more widely	most widely
Adverb	easily	more easily	most easily

Notes

Now that you know how to form comparisons with adjectives and adverbs, follow these guidelines to make these comparisons correct.

1. Use the comparative degree (*-er* or *more* form) to compare two things.

   Example: 1. Your memory is *better* than mine.

   2. Bill Gates is *more* successful than Donald Duck, Don Ameche, or Don Ho.

2. Use the superlative form (*-est* or *most*) to compare three or more things.

   Example: 1. This is the *largest* room in the house.

   2. This is the *most* awful meeting.

3. Never use *-er* and *more* or *-est* and *most* together. One or the other will do the trick nicely.

   Example: No: This is the *more heavier* brother.

   Yes: This is the heavier brother.

   No: He is the *most heaviest* brother.

   Yes: He is the heaviest brother.

Task List all the adjectives that you can use to describe the following:

1. Education system in India
2. The Taj Mahal
3. Sachin Tendulkar
4. Indian Army

10.1.5 Verbs

A verb is a word or group of words which expresses action, or presents a state in which a thing or person is, or joins the subject with the rest of the sentence.

We cannot write or speak a complete sentence without at least one verb in it. Verbs do the following things:

1. Verb express action.

   Example: 1. I *read* poetry sometimes

   2. She *plays* basketball daily

2. Some verbs (known as linking verbs) show the relation of the subject with the rest of the sentence and complete the sense of the sentence.

   Example: 1. They *feel* happy

   2. The child *is* hungry

Notes

3. Verbs point out time.

Example: 1. You *are* reading this book (present time)

2. He *went* away (past time)

3. I *shall* come tomorrow (future time)

4. Verbs indicate number of the subject

Example: 1. Our English teacher loves her students. (Singular, the doer of action is only one).

2. They always shout in the class (Plural, the doers are many)

5. Verbs show the person of the subject.

Example: 1. I *like* to sing (first person)

2. We *study* together (first person, plural)

3. You *like* to sing (second person)

4. He/she *likes* to sing (third person he, she, they, it)

10.1.6 Adverbs

An adverb is usually defined as a word that gives more information about a verb, an adjective or another adverb. Adverbs describe verbs, adjectives and adverbs in terms of such qualities as time, frequency and manner.

Example: Sunita runs *fast*.

In the sentence Sunita runs fast, fast describes how or the manner in which Sunita runs.

Types of Adverbs

There are seven types of adverbs.

1. Adverbs of manner describe "how".

Example: She shouted loudly.

2. Adverbs of time describe "when".

Example: They need the books now.

3. Adverbs of place describe "where"

Example: She was here just a few minutes ago.

4. Adverbs of degree describe 'how much".

Example: Deepti runs much faster than Abhishek.

5. Adverbs of number describe "how often'.

Example: I once saw a yellow beetle.

6. Adverbs of interrogation are used in questions

Example: Where do you stay?

7. Adverbs of affirmation/negation.

Example: They are not here.

Adjuncts, Disjuncts and Conjuncts

Regardless of its position, an adverb is often neatly integrated into the flow of a sentence. When this is true, as it almost always is, the adverb is called an **adjunct**. (Notice the underlined adjuncts or adjunctive adverbs in the first two sentences of this paragraph.) When the adverb does not fit into the flow of the clause, it is called a **disjunct** or a **conjunct** and is often set off by a comma or set of commas. A disjunct frequently acts as a kind of evaluation of the rest of the sentence. Although it usually modifies the verb, we could say that it modifies the entire clause, too. Notice how "too" is a disjunct in the sentence immediately before this one; that same word can also serve as an adjunct adverbial modifier: It's too hot to play outside. Here are two more disjunctive adverbs:

Example: 1. Frankly, Mary, I don't give a damn.

2. Fortunately, no one was hurt.

Conjuncts, on the other hand, serve a connector function within the flow of the text, signaling a transition between ideas.

Example: 1. If they start smoking those awful cigars, then I'm not staying.

2. We've told the landlord about this ceiling again and again, and yet he's done nothing to fix it.

At the extreme edge of this category, we have the purely conjunctive device known as the **conjunctive adverb** (often called the adverbial conjunction):

Example: John has spent years preparing for this event; nevertheless, he's the most nervous person here.

I love this school; however, I don't think I can afford the tuition.

Relative Adverbs

Adjectival clauses are sometimes introduced by what are called the **relative adverbs**: *where, when,* and *why.* Although the entire clause is adjectival and will modify a noun, the relative word itself fulfills an adverbial function (modifying a verb within its own clause).

The relative adverb *where* will begin a clause that modifies a noun of place:

Example: My entire family now worships in the church where my great grandfather used to be minister.

Notes

The relative pronoun "where" modifies the verb "used to be" (which makes it adverbial), but the entire clause ("where my great grandfather used to be minister") modifies the word "church."

A *when* clause will modify nouns of time:

Example: My favorite month is always February, when we celebrate Valentine's Day and Presidents' Day.

And a *why* clause will modify the noun *reason:*

Example: Do you know the reason why Isabel isn't in class today?

We sometimes leave out the relative adverb in such clauses, and many writers prefer "that" to "why" in a clause referring to "reason":

Do you know the reason why Isabel isn't in class today?

I always look forward to the day when we begin our summer vacation.

I know the reason that men like motorcycle.

10.1.7 Preposition

A preposition indicates relationship or relative position of objects.

Example: In, about, towards

Some commonly used prepositions are:

About, beside, at, before, down, from, per, via, with, without, till, to

Some complex prepositions are:

Because of, on account of, by way of, from under, along side of

Prepositions of Time

1. **at, on, and in**

   You use *at* to designate specific times.

   Example: The train is due at 12:15 p.m.

   We use *on* to designate days and dates.

   Example: My brother is coming on Monday.

   We use *in* for nonspecific times during a day, a month, a season, or a year.

   Example: She likes to jog in the morning.

2. **for and since**

   You use *for* when you measure time (seconds, minutes, hours, days, months, years).

   Example: 1. He held his breath for seven minutes.
   2. She's lived there for seven years.
   3. The British and Irish have been quarreling for seven centuries.

Notes

You should use *since* with a specific date or time.

Example: 1. He's worked here since 1990.

2. She's been sitting in the waiting room since two-thirty.

Prepositions of place: at, on, and in

We use *at* for specific addresses.

Example: Vivek lives at 55 Birhana Road in Kanpur.

We use *on* to designate names of streets, avenues, etc.

Example: His house is on Birhana Road.

And we use *in* for the names of land-areas (towns, counties, states, countries, and continents).

Example: He lives in Dehradun.

Table 10.2: Prepositions of Location: in, at, and on and No Preposition

IN	AT	ON	NO PREPOSITION
(the) bed*	class*	the bed*	downstairs
the bedroom	home	the ceiling	downtown
the car	the library*	the floor	inside
(the) class*	the office	the horse	outside
the library*	school*	the plane	upstairs
school*	work	the train	uptown

* You may sometimes use different prepositions for these locations.

You use *to* in order to express movement toward a place.

Example: 1. They were driving to work together.

2. She's going to the dentist's office this morning.

Toward and *towards* are also helpful prepositions to express movement. These are simply variant spellings of the same word; use whichever sounds better to you.

Example: We're moving toward the light.

This is a big step towards the project's completion.

With the words *home, downtown, uptown, inside, outside, downstairs, upstairs*, no preposition is to be used.

Example: Grandma went upstairs.

They both went outside.

Notes

Prepositions with Nouns, Adjectives and Verbs

Prepositions are sometimes so firmly wedded to other words that they have practically become one word. (In fact, in other languages, such as German, they would have become one word.) This occurs in three categories: nouns, adjectives, and verbs.

Table 10.3: Nouns and Prepositions

approval of	fondness for	need for
awareness of	grasp of	participation in
belief in	hatred of	reason for
concern for	hope for	respect for
confusion about	interest in	success in
desire for	love of	understanding of

Table 10.4: Adjectives and Prepositions

afraid of	fond of	proud of
angry at	happy about	similar to
aware of	interested in	sorry for
capable of	jealous of	sure of
careless about	made of	tired of
familiar with	married to	worried about

Table 10.5: Verbs and Prepositions

apologize for	give up	prepare for
ask about	grow up	study for
ask for	look for	talk about
belong to	look forward to	think about
bring up	look up	trust in
care for	make up	work for
find out	pay for	worry about

A combination of verb and preposition is called a **phrasal verb**. The word that is joined to the verb is then called a **particle**. Please refer to the brief section we have prepared on phrasal verbs for an explanation.

Task Prepare a list of complex prepositions.

10.1.8 Conjunction

A conjunction joins components of a sentence or phrase. A conjunction is a word that links words, phrases, or clauses.

Notes

Coordinating Conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions are conjunctions which connect two equal parts of a sentence. The most common ones are and, or, but, and so which are used in the following ways:

'And' is used to join or add words together.

Example: They sang and danced.

'Or' is used to show choice or possibilities.

Example: Get me a vanilla or a chocolate flavored ice cream.

'But' is used to show opposite or conflicting ideas.

Example: Shyam is old but very energetic.

'So' is used to show result.

Example: I was getting bored so I went for a movie.

Subordinating Conjunctions

Subordinating conjunctions connect two parts of a sentence that are not equal.

Some of the more common subordinating conjunctions are:

after	before	unless
although	if	until
as	since	when
because	than	while

Example: 1. I will play after I finish my homework.

2. India can win an Olympic gold if the players are trained properly.

3. Disha is stronger than Nisha.

Correlative Conjunctions

Correlative conjunctions are pairs of conjunctions that work together.

both . . . and

either . . . or

neither . . . nor

not only . . . but also

Example: Consider the sentence:

Both Rahul and Sachin play cricket.

In the sentence, both . . .and are correlative conjunctions.

Notes

10.1.9 Interjections

An interjection is a word added to a sentence to convey emotion. It is not grammatically related to any other part of the sentence.

Example: The highlighted words in the following sentences are interjections:

Ouch, that hurt!

Oh no, I forgot that the exam was today.

Hey! Put that down!

I heard one guy say to another guy, "He has a new car, **eh**?"

I don't know about you but, **good lord**, I think taxes are too high!

You usually follow an interjection with an exclamation mark. Interjections are uncommon in formal academic prose, except in direct quotations.

Self Assessment

State whether the following sentences are true or false:

1. 'Our **school** has a huge playground'. In this sentence, the word 'school' is a proper noun.
2. A possessive noun is always used with another noun.
3. Anyone, everyone, something, etc. are examples of personal pronouns.
4. Some indefinite pronouns are also used as adjectives.
5. 'Rita is the most slow runner of her class'. The sentence is incorrect.
6. Verb is the most essential part of a sentence, without which no sentence is complete.
7. 'She went **there** on Sunday'. In this sentence, the word 'there' is an adverb.
8. 'I worked in that office since 5 years'. This sentence is correct.
9. 'I am going to upstairs'. This sentence is incorrect.
10. 'Vivek is very intelligent so the quality of his work is not so good'. This sentence is correct.

10.2 Common Errors in English

To write correct, balanced and complete sentences avoid the following pitfalls:

1. ***Dangling Modified:*** WRONG Expecting a large crowd, extra chairs were provided by the management. (Dangling modifier because the modifier does not logically and sensibly refer to the subject of the main clause. It is not the "extra chairs" (subject) which are "expecting a large crowd.")

   WRONG: Expecting a large crowd, the management provided extra chairs.

   RIGHT: Since a large crowd was expected, extra chairs were provided by the management.

2. ***Vague References of "this", "that", "which"***

   WRONG: He wants to begin immediately and to make his first sale before the end of the year. As a result of this, he will probably become a successful salesman.

Notes

RIGHT: He wants to begin immediately and to make his first sale before the end of the year. As a result of this attitude, he will probably become a successful salesman. ("this" must not refer to a cause, sentence or idea; it must refer to one specific word.)

3. ***Lack of Parallel Construction:***

(a) WRONG: The man liked selling and to meet people. ("and" joins one gerund and one infinitive)

RIGHT: The man liked to sell and to meet people. ("and" joins parallel infinitive constructions)

RIGHT: The man liked selling and meeting people. ("and" joins parallel gerund construction which express ideas of equal importance).

Caution Parallel construction applies as well to the enumeration of points, particularly of recommendations.

(b) WRONG:

(i) The company should increase the price of all products.

(ii) Increase the variety of products.

(iii) Provide more services.

(iv) They should review their advertising program.

RIGHT

The company should:

(i) Increase the price of all products

(ii) Increase the variety of products

(iii) Provide more services

(iv) Review their advertising program.

4. ***Needless Shift in Tense of Verb:***

WRONG: He usually makes sensible decisions although he frequently changed his mind. (shift from present tense in main clause to past tense in subordinate clause)

RIGHT: He usually makes sensible decisions although he frequently changes his mind.

Caution Tense should be consistent within the sentence (as in example above) and from sentence to sentence within the paragraph.

5. ***Needless Shift in Mood of Verb:***

WRONG: Do this work carefully; you should also do it slowly. (Verb shifts from imperative to indicative mood)

RIGHT: You should do this carefully; you should also do it slowly.

RIGHT: Do this work carefully; also, do it slowly.

Caution Generally, speaking, the imperative mood should be avoided in report writing. This mood expresses a command or a strong request; a report should suggest or recommend rather than command.

Notes

6. ***Needless Separation of Related Sentence Elements:***

   (a) WRONG: I, hoping very much to find Mrs. Singh at home and to sell her one of our new products, knocked at the door. (needless separation of subject "I" and verb "knocked")

   RIGHT: Hoping very much to find Mrs. Singh at home and to sell her one of our new products, I knocked at the door.

   (b) WRONG: I only telephoned those men. (needless separation, of adverb "only" and "those men" which "only" modifies)

   RIGHT: I telephoned only those men.

7. ***Lack of Subject-Verb Agreement:***

   (a) WRONG: The price of the new products were reasonable.

   RIGHT: The price of the new products was reasonable. (singular verb to agree with singular subject, even though a plural word intervenes.)

   (b) WRONG: The advantage of Product A and Product B are the profits.

   RIGHT: The advantage of Product A and Product B is the profits. (Singular verb to agree with singular subject, even though a plural word follows the verb.

   (c) WRONG: There is a man and a woman waiting to see me.

   RIGHT: There are a man and woman waiting to see me. (plural verb to agree with double subject, especially when "there" begins sentence and subject follows verb).

   (d) WRONG: Everyone on the top three floors work for one company.

   RIGHT: Everyone on the top three floors works for one company (singular verb to agree with singular subject, especially when subject is "everyone" or "each".)

   (e) WRONG: There is only one of the girls who play the sitar.

   RIGHT: There is only one of the girls who plays the sitar. (Singular verb to agree with "one", the singular word to which subject "who" refers. Important when subject of verb is "who", "which", or "that".)

   (f) WRONG: Neither the report nor its appendix were published.

   RIGHT: Neither the report nor its appendix was published. (Singular verb to agree with singular subjects joined by "or" or "nor".)

Caution If one subject is singular and one plural, the verb agrees with the nearest subject.

Example: Neither the report nor the books were published.

8. ***Lack of Pronoun Agreement:***

   (a) WRONG: Everyone brought their lunch to work.

   RIGHT: Everyone brought his lunch to work. (Singular pronoun to agree with "everyone", the singular word to which pronoun refers. Important when pronoun refers to "everyone" or "anyone".)

   (b) WRONG: He does not usually make those kind of errors.

   RIGHT: He does not usually make that kind of error. (singular pronoun to agree with "kind", the singular noun which pronoun modifies. Important when "this", "that", "these", or "those" modifies "kind" or "sort".)

RIGHT: He does not usually make these kinds or errors. (Plural pronoun modifying plural noun).

(c) WRONG: Neither the manager nor his favourite employee could do their work alone.

RIGHT: Neither the manager nor his favourite employee could do his work alone. (Singular pronoun to agree with singular words which are joined by "nor" and to which the pronoun refers. Same when "or" joins singular words.)

Caution If "or" or "nor" joins one singular and one plural word, the pronoun agrees with the one nearest.

Example: Neither the manager nor the workers were aware of their error.

10.2.1 Adjectives and Adverbs (Confused)

The words 'Hard' , 'Hardly', 'Late', 'Lately' 'Most', and 'Mostly' need careful use. As adjectives hard, late and most have two adverb forms which should be clearly understood.

'Hard' as adjective means 'strenuously' or 'diligently'. It is normally placed after the verb. It is an adverb of manner.

Example: 1. I worked hard yesterday. (not hardly)

2. She worked hard to pass the examination. (not hardly)

Sometimes, for emphasis hard can be used at the beginning of the sentence:

'Hard' as she tried she could not get through. But this use is rare.

'Hardly' as adverb means 'not much', 'scarcely', 'any' or 'at all'. It is an adverb of degree. It is used before the verb. In case of a verb used with auxiliary it is placed between the auxiliary and the next part of the verb.

Example: 1. He sang so softly that the audience could hardly hear him.

2. He was so reduced that I hardly recognised him.

Adverbs Ending in -ly

Consider the adverbs formed by adding 'ly' to an adjective:

Example: Gladly, slowly, foolishly, wisely, nicely. These adverbs are usually adverbs of manner.

But if an adjective itself ends with 'ly', we cannot normally change it into an adverb. Such words belong to two classes.

1. Words which act both as adjectives and adverbs without any change:

cowardly, daily, early, fortnightly, hourly, leisurely, nightly, only, weekly, yearly.

Example: 1. She has arrived by an early flight. (adj)

2. She has come early. (adverb)

Notes

3. There is an hourly change of classes. (adj)
4. The classes change hourly. (adverb)
5. The Statesman is a daily newspaper. (adj)
6. The Statesman is published daily. (adverb)

2. Words which are used only as adjectives:

   brotherly, fatherly, motherly, friendly, gentlemanly, godly, goodly, homely, likely, lovely, manly, seemly, unseemly, womanly.

They can be changed into adverbs by using a phrase like 'in a brotherly manner or in a lovely fashion', or 'in a manly way'.

Example: 1. He is a very friendly boss. (adjective)

2. She received us in a very friendly manner. (adverb)

Caution The word 'kind' (adjective) has 'kindly' as its adverb. But kindly is also an adjective.

1. My father was of a kindly nature. (adj)
2. My father always talked to us in a very kindly manner. (adj)

10.2.2 Adjectival Complements

1. Study the following sentences:

   The sky became bright. (not brightly)

   This year good apples are rare. (not rarely)

   She got angry. (not angrily)

   The tea became bitter. (not bitterly)

   The job is difficult though it appears easy. (not easily)

   The price seems to be low. (not lowly)

   In the above sentences the verbs to be, to seem, to become, or any other verb having a similar meaning (appear, feel, look, grow, turn (in the sense become)) need an adjective and not an adverb to act as a complement which qualifies the subject to complete the meaning of the sentence. No adverb is required to modify the verb.

Caution When these three verbs 'turn', 'grow', and 'appear' are used in a different sense they are followed by an adverb, not adjective.

The ship appeared suddenly on the horizon (not sudden)

These plants have grown quickly (not quick)

She turned left unexpectedly (not unexpected)

Notes

In the above sentences, the verbs 'appear' means 'come into sight', 'grow' means 'increase in size', 'turn' means 'move into a direction'. Therefore, the need an adverb, and not adjective.

2. Use an adjective, not an adverb after verbs such as 'feel', 'sound', 'taste', 'smell', to show a quality experienced by one of the physical senses.

   This cloth feels smooth (not smoothly)

   These pipes sound nice (not nicely)

   This orange tastes sour (not sourly)

   That rose smells sweet (not sweetly)

Self Assessment

Complete the sentences with one of the words given in brackets:

11. The student could …… get passing marks. (hardly, hard)
12. She could …… raise her arms. (hard, hardly)
13. The child can …… lift the school bag. (hardly, hard)
14. She studies …… into the night. (lately, late)
15. The airbus arrived ten minutes …… . (late, lately)
16. The examinations will be held …… in April this time. (late, lately)
17. I reached home very …… last night. (late, lately)
18. Join the course which will help you the …… . (mostly, most)
19. It was my elder brother who guided me the …… to get this position. (most, mostly)
20. In computer course, the students are …… girls from renowned schools. (mostly, most)

10.3 Summary

- The parts of speech explain the ways words can be used in various contexts. Every word in the English language functions as at least one part of speech; many words can serve, at different times, as two or more parts of speech, depending on the context.
- Noun is a word or phrase that names a person, place, thing, quality, or act (*Ram, India, table, love, school*). A noun may be used as the subject of a verb, the object of a verb, an identifying noun, the object of a preposition, or an appositive.
- Pronoun is a word that substitutes for a noun and refers to a person, place, thing, idea, or act that was mentioned previously or that can be inferred from the context of the sentence (*he, she, it, that*).
- Adjective is a word or combination of words that modifies a noun (*red, beautiful, best, permanent*).
- Verb is a word or phrase that expresses action, existence, or occurrence (*throw, be, happen*).
- Adverb is a word that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb (*sweetly, persistently, much*).
- Preposition is a word or phrase that shows the relationship of a noun to another noun (*at, by, in, to, from, with*)

Notes

- Conjunction is a word that connects other words, phrases, or sentences (*and, but, or, after*).
- Interjection is a word, phrase, or sound used as an exclamation and capable of standing by itself (*oh, eh, oh my god, wow*).

10.4 Keywords

Adjectives: Word that modifies a noun or a pronoun by describing, identifying, or quantifying words.

Adverb: Words that modify a verb, an adjective, another adverb, a phrase, or a clause.

Conjunction: Words that are uses to link words, phrases, and clauses.

Interjection: A word added to a sentence to convey emotion.

Noun: A word used to name a person, animal, place, thing, and abstract idea.

Preposition: A word that links nouns, pronouns and phrases to other words in a sentence.

Pronoun: Words that can replace a noun (or another pronoun).

Verb: Word that asserts something about the subject of the sentence and express actions, events, or states of being.

10.5 Review Questions

1. Describe nouns. Give examples of collective and abstract nouns.
2. Explain the different degrees of comparison for adjectives. Give two examples.
3. Describe, with examples, different types of pronouns.
4. Define' verb'. What are the types of verbs?
5. What is an adverb? List the important kinds of adverbs.
6. Explain the use of prepositions and conjunction. Give suitable examples.
7. Explain how a needless shift in tense and mood of a verb can lead to the formation of a wrong sentence.
8. What do you mean by 'lack of subject-verb agreement'? What problems it can cause?
9. Complete the paragraph by filling in the blanks with suitable prepositions.

   The first McDonald's restaurant was opened …… Dick and Mac McDonald …… the 15th …… May 1940. The best selling products …… their restaurant were hamburgers. So the McDonald brothers thought …… a way to produce hamburgers more quickly. This was introduced …… 1948 and became known …… the Speedee Service System. The first franchised McDonald's restaurant was opened …… 1953, and today you can find McDonald's restaurants …… more than 100 countries. The meats …… the burgers vary …… the culture …… the country. Franchisees and future managers …… McDonald's restaurants are trained …… Hamburger University, which is located …… Oak Brook, a suburb …… Chicago. McDonald's is also known …… its sponsorship …… various international sport events.

10. Complete the second sentence by using an adverb or an adverbial phrase giving it the same meaning as of the first sentence.

    (a) I have hired this car on a monthly basis. I pay the car charges ……

    (b) The tutor gave daily classes. The tutor holds classes ……

Notes

(c) Most magazines are monthly publications. Most magazines are published ……

(d) She is a very gentle person. She always behaves ……

(e) He gave us a friendly advice. He advised us ……

Answers: Self Assessment

1. False	2. True	3. False	4. True
5. True	6. True	7. True	8. False
9. True	10. False	11. Hardly	12. Hardly
13. Hardly	14. Late	15. Late	16. Late
17. Late	18. The most	19. The most	20. Mostly

10.6 Further Readings

Books

Alice Oshima, *Writing Academic English*, Pearson Longman.

Betty Schrampar Azar, *Understanding and Using English Grammar*, Prentice Hall College Division.

Raymond Murphy, *English Grammar in Use*, Cambridge University Press.

Online links

http://www.englishclub.com/grammar/parts-of-speech.htm

http://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/elc/studyzone/330/grammar/parts.htm

http://www.shared-visions.com/explore/english/parts.html

http://www.eduplace.com/tales/help.html

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Unit 11: Use of Capitals and Basic Punctuations

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Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Know the rules of capitalization
- Identify the different punctuation marks
- Discuss the rules regarding the use of various punctuation marks

Introduction

Punctuation marks are symbols that indicate the structure and organization of written language, as well as intonation and pauses to be observed when reading aloud. You use punctuation marks to structure and organise your writing. The most common of these are the period (or full stop in British English), the comma, the exclamation mark, the question mark, the colon and semi-colon, the quote, the apostrophe, the hyphen and dash, and parentheses and brackets. Capital letters are also used to help us organise meaning and to structure the sense of our writing. In this unit, you will learn how and when to use different punctuation marks and how to use capitals.

11.1 Use of Capitals

Most often while writing, some people are confused when it comes to capital letters; which word should start with a capital letter and under what circumstances, especially when the word is not the first word of the sentence? Well, the rules for the capitalization of words in English are simple and not many.

Notes

The basic rules are:

1. Always capitalize the first word in a sentence, the first word in any quotation included within a sentence, and the first word of any phrase that is used as a sentence.

   Example: The office building is fully air-conditioned. (Sentence)

   She answered the telephone and said, "Good morning! May I help you? (Sentence, quotation, and phrase used as a sentence- ''Good morning!")

   Many newspapers gave news of India's N-test on the front page. (Sentence)

2. Capitalize the names of people; specific geographical locations; calendar indications such as the days of the week, the months of the year, and holidays; organizations, including governmental bodies; and historical events and documents.

   When capitalizing the names of people, you will sometimes encounter parts of names that are not capitalized, such as Emil *van* Hoffman, Leonardo *da* Vinci, and Simone *de* Beauvoir. Generally, all parts of a person's name are capitalized, including any initials used. If titles are used with the name, these titles are also capitalized.

   Example: Ram Chandra, Mrs. Deepti Chaturvedi, John S Morgan, Mr. H. E. Khan, Rev. Samuel Wilkins, Senator William Kaufmann, Ms. T. Sheila Kaul, etc.

   In written English, only proper nouns are capitalized. It is incorrect to capitalize such words *woman, man, boy,* or *girl.* Unless a specific person is named, capitalization is not used. The same is done for geographical designations. A specific location, site, or area must be mentioned. Remember the word *specific.* When a word such as *street, building, park, mountain, river* is included in the name of a particular place, the word becomes specific because it names a distinctive thing or place rather than a general locale. When the location is mentioned in specific terms, capitalize, but when it is given in general terms, do not capitalize.

   Example: 1. The *Times Building* was built in 1936. (Specific)

   2. The *building* that houses our office has been sold. (General)

   3. The *southeastern* section of the United States is known for its cotton production. (General)

   4. The *Southeast* has a temperate climate. (Specific)

   5. The *river* was muddy after several days of rain. (General)

   6. The *Ganges* gives up its eastern boundary. (Specific)

   Capitalize all calendar designations and names of holidays, but do not capitalize the names of seasons

   Example: July, Monday, Christmas, March, Friday, Teachers day, winter, summer, Diwali, etc.

   Capitalize the names of organizations, companies, and governmental bodies, but do not capitalize the word 'the' when it precedes the name unless it is a part of the official name.

   Example: The United Nations, The Bank of Korea, The Rialto Theater, The University of Delhi, The Advertising Council, Inc., The Better Business Bureau, The Internal Revenue Service The Rand Corporation, etc.

Notes

All names of continents, countries, states and cities and the adjectives derived from these are capitalized.

Example: The western part of Russia is in Europe, but its eastern section is in Asia.

Our company has branch offices in Seattle, Phoenix, Kansas City, Memphis, and Cleveland.

I plan to study the history of the Spanish-speaking people in the West Indies. C'ezanne and Renoir were French artists.

The names of commercial products should also be capitalized, but do not capitalize the generic name when it is not part of the brand name. For example, Esquire Boot Polish and Lipton Cup-a-Soup are the correct brand names, but Maxwell House Coffee and Van Heusen Shirts are not correct, although Maxwell House makes coffee and Van Heusen makes shirts.

Self Assessment

Which words from the following sentences should have been capitalized?

1. the mayor of san juan, mayor ortega, decided to retire sunday, july 16.
2. my friend, tom wilson, bought a new honda accord last week in san francisco.
3. yesterday, i finished reading lord of the rings.
4. the president of general motors was interviewed in the july issue of newsweek.
5. david johnson drove his chevy blazer off the delaware memorial bridge last friday.
6. when i opened the new york times, i read that lieutenant martin bailey had accused his commanding officer, colonel dunlap, of selling secret information to a north korean agent.
7. alan attended a lecture by professor c. r. klein on his treatise, "chemical properties of popular diet foods."
8. mary yelled to her little brother, "shut the door! it's freezing in here."

11.2 Basic Punctuation

In this unit, you will learn how and when to use the following punctuation marks:

Comma, full stop, colon, semi colon, hyphen, inverted commas and apostrophe.

11.2.1 Comma

There are some basic rules which you can apply when using the comma. However, you will find that in English there are many other ways to use the comma to add to the meaning of a sentence or to emphasise an item, point or meaning. Although we are often taught that commas are used to help us add 'breathing spaces' to sentences they are, in fact, more accurately used to organise blocks of thought or logical groupings.

Use the Comma

1. To set off main clauses joined by "and," "but," "or," "nor," "for"

Example: The first alternative certainly offered the company many advantages, but the second was probably more economical.

Notes

Caution If the clauses are short, the comma separation is unnecessary.

2. To separate long introductory elements from the rest of the sentence.

Example: When all the proposals had been fully investigated and discussed, we were able to make the final decision.

On Friday we were able to make the final decision. (Introductory element is particularly short, so comma separation is unnecessary)

3. To separate words in a series of three or more

Example: The controller of accounts, vice-president and president took part in the investigation.

Caution The last comma in the series is generally optional unless it is needed for clarity.

Example: The controller of accounts, vice-president and general manager, and the president took part in the investigation. (Last comma indicates that one person holds the dual position of vice-president and general manager)

4. To set off parenthetical expressions from the rest of the sentence

A parenthetical expression is inserted into a sentence; therefore the latter must be grammatically complete without it. Unless it begins or ends a sentence, a parenthetical expression must be set off by two commas.

Example: Ram, unlike his brother, was a good salesman.

Caution If the expression does not cause an abrupt interruption, the comma separation is often unnecessary (especially with words "also," "too," "indeed," "at least," "perhaps," "likewise").

Example: Ram's personality was indeed more pleasing than his brother's.

Caution When a parenthetical expression (particularly a lengthy one) causes an abrupt interruption, dashes or parenthesis may be used instead of commas. (Like the comma, the dash and parenthesis must be used in pairs. However they should be used much less frequently than the comma.)

Example: Ram was a good salesman—he sold more than anyone else in the company—and had a pleasing personality. (Emphatic)

Ram was a good salesman (he sold more than anyone else in the company) and had a pleasing personality. (Less emphatic)

5. To set off non restrictive elements

Non restrictive elements are parenthetical (see (d) above) and are not essential to the meaning of the sentence. They must be set off by two commas.

Notes

Example: Ram, who sold more than anyone else in the company, was awarded the salesmen's trophy. (Non restrictive)

Example: A man who sold more than anyone else in the company was awarded the salesmen's trophy. (Restrictive sentence does not make sense without it)

6. To set off a direct quotation from the rest of the sentence.

Example: The foreman replied, "I have done all I can," and left the room.

DO NOT use the Comma

1. To separate subject and verb or verb and object

Example: WRONG: The company with the best reputation in this area, was awarded the contract. (Subject-verb separation)

RIGHT: The company with the best reputation in this area was awarded the contract.

WRONG: The company knew last week, that it had been awarded the contract. (Verb-object separation)

RIGHT: The company knew last week that it had been awarded the contract.

Caution If words requiring punctuation (see (d) and (e) above) intervene between subject and verb or between verb and object, the comma is then necessary.

Example: AB C Company, which has a good reputation in this area, was awarded the contract. (Non restrictive clause intervenes between subject and verb)

The company knew last week, probably by Wednesday, that it had been awarded the contract. (non restrictive phrase intervenes between verb and object).

2. To join two main clauses unless "and," "but," "or;' "nor", or "for" comes between them.

Example: WRONG: The Salesman displayed his goods, then he talked about the newest product.

RIGHT: The Salesman displayed his goods; then he talked about the newest product,

RIGHT: The Salesman displayed his goods, and then he talked about the newest product.

3. To separate two words or phrases joined by "and," "but", "or," "nor," or "for"

Example: WRONG: I cannot remember whether the head office is in Calcutta, or in Bombay.

RIGHT: I cannot remember whether the head office is in Calcutta or in Bombay.

4. To separate an adjective from the noun it modifies

Example: WRONG: We should choose an economical, flexible, plan

RIGHT: We should choose an economical, flexible plan.

Notes

5. To separate parentheses () from the rest of the sentence

Example: WRONG: Several miscellaneous items are included in the total expense.

RIGHT: Several miscellaneous items are included in the total expense.

WRONG: Although several miscellaneous items are included in the total expense, they are not important.

RIGHT: Although several miscellaneous items are included in the total expense, they are not important. (Second comma necessary to set off introductory element)

Task Revise the following sentences by adding commas where they are needed.

1. Handguns knives and other weapons are turning up in locker checks.
2. The golfer wearing the plaid pants desperately needs to improve his game.
3. As cucumbers grow their vines need room to expand.
4. That movie in my opinion was too scary for children.
5. You will come to my dance recital won't you?

11.2.2 Full Stop or Period (.)

The period, which is known as a full stop in British English, is probably the simplest of the punctuation marks to use.

You use it like a cutter to cut the sentences to the required length. Usually, you can break up the sentences using the full stop at the end of a logical and complete thought that looks and sounds right to you.

Use the Full Stop

1. To mark the end of a sentence (which is not a question or an exclamation).

Example: 1. New Delhi is the capital of India.

2. We live in Mumbai.

3. I love eating apple pie.

2. To indicate an abbreviation

Example: I will be in between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Caution Most abbreviations taken from the first capital letters such as MA, PhD, CNN, RBI, etc. do not require full stops.

Special Case – Using Three Dots

You must have seen some sentence concluding with three dots. This indicates that only part of the sentence or text has been quoted or that it is being left up to the reader to complete the rest of the sentence.

Notes

Example: Shyam began reciting his story, "Once upon a time…"

Full Stop after a Single Word

Sometimes a single word can also form a sentence. In this case you place a full stop after the word as you would in any other sentence.

Example: 1. "Goodbye."

2. "Hello."

Caution This is often the case when the subject is understood as in a greeting or a command such as "Stop."

11.2.3 Colon (:)

Use the Colon

1. To introduce a list (often preceded by "the following" or "as follows")

Example: The following men were nominated for the top honour: Singh, Jain, Basu and Jha.

2. To separate two main clauses, the second of which explains the first

Example: The purpose of his speech was obvious: he wanted to present a concise outline of company policy.

11.2.4 Semi-Colon *(;)*

Use the Semi-colon

1. To separate two main clauses not joined by "and", "but", "or", "nor" or "for"

Example: Last year at this time, Mr. Singh was general manager; he is now president. (period could be substituted for the semi-colon, but the latter is preferable when the clauses are short and closely related in thought)

2. To separate two main clauses joined by "however", "therefore", "moreover", "consequently", ` "also", "furthermore", "nevertheless", "then", "thus", "likewise"

Example: We thought that Ram would be the new president: however, his brother was chosen instead.

3. To separate two main clauses when the second is preceded by "for example", "that is", or "namely"

Example: We do not like the attitude of the new manager that is, we resent his air of superiority.

Notes

4. To separate items in a series when the former contain commas

Example: We called on Mr. Singh, the president; Mr. Jain, the Vice President and general manager; Mr. Basu, the controller of accounts; and Mr.]ha, the secretary.

We chose these people because they held responsible positions, both within the company and in organizations outside; because they had valuable experience; because they had the ability to work well with others; and because they all had the time for outside work.

DO NOT use the Semi-colon

1. To separate a main clause from a subordinate clause

Example: WRONG: Mr. Singh was named honorary president; because of his long association with the firm.

RIGHT: Mr. Singh was named honorary president because of his long association with the firm.

Caution Except in (4) above, the semi-colon always separates one main clause from another main clause.

11.2.5 Hyphen (-)

A hyphen joins two or more words together (e.g. x-ray, door-to-door) while a dash separates words into parenthetical statements. (e.g. She was trapped - no escape was possible. Usually, hyphens are used to avoid confusion or uncertainty but today most hyphenated words are used without a hyphen as well (e.g. *e-mail* and *email*, *now-a-days* and *nowadays*). In many cases though a hyphen does make the sense clear:

Example: 1. I am thinking of re-covering my car (to put a new cover on it)

2. I would like to recover my car. (Perhaps from someone who has borrowed it as this means 'to get it back')

Hyphens in Compound Words

Hyphens are used in many compound words to show that the constituent words have a combined meaning.

Example: Sister-in-law, kind-hearted, computer-aided, user-generated, etc.

Or they can also be used to show that there is a relationship between the words that make up the compound.

Example: Rock-forming minerals are minerals that form rocks.

But you don't need to use them in every type of compound word.

Hyphens and Numbers

We use a hyphen with compound numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine.

Notes

Example: Thirty-one, seventy-nine, forty-five, sixty-nine, ninety-two, etc.

In written fractions, we place a hyphen between the numerator and denominator.

Example: Four-fifths, one-fourth, two-tenth, eight-hundredth, etc.

However, if there is already a hyphen in either the numerator or the denominator, you omit the hyphen between the numerator and denominator.

Example: Sixty-nine eighty-ninths (*not* 'sixty-nine-eighty-ninths')

twenty-two thirty-thirds

Use a hyphen when the number forms part of an adjectival compound:

Example: India has a 40-hour working week.

Ram won the 100-metre race.

Rabindranath Tagore was a great twentieth-century poet.

Hyphens Joining Prefixes to Other Words

Hyphens can also be used to join a prefix to another word, especially in case when the prefix ends in a vowel and the other word also begins with one.

Example: Pre-emptive, co-operate, etc.

However, this use is less common these days as one-word forms are becoming more usual (e.g. prearrange or cooperate).

We also use a hyphen to separate a prefix from a name or date.

Example: Post-Freudian, pre-1800, etc.

11.2.6 Inverted Commas

Inverted commas can be single ('abc') or double (''abc''). They are also known as quotation marks, speech marks, or quotes.

Use inverted commas:

1. To mark the beginning and end of direct speech (i.e. a speaker's words written down exactly as they were spoken):

Example: 1. 'India,' he said, 'is a great place to live.'

2. 'When are the exams starting?' she asked.

2. To mark off a word or phrase that's being discussed, or that's being directly quoted from somewhere else:

Example: 1. Rome is also known as the 'the city of seven hills'.

2. How do you define 'direct channel'?

Notes

Single or Double Inverted Comma Dilemma

There's no hard and fast rule about which one to use but it is advisable that you stick to one type all over a piece of writing.

If you find that you need to enclose quoted material within direct speech or another quotation, use the style you haven't used already. So, if you've been using single inverted commas, put any further quoted material within double ones and vice versa.

Example: Kiran still sounds startled when she says: 'We didn't get the job because "we represented too small a minority of the population". They could still get away with saying things like that then.'

Single inverted commas are generally more common in British English while double inverted commas are used more in American English.

Task **Punctuate**

1. Martin Luther King said I have a dream
2. What on earth are you going to do she asked
3. Have you seen the good the bad and the ugly
4. Music Hall songs like my old man said follow the van were very popular in their day

11.2.7 Apostrophe (')

Use the apostrophe to show possession in the following instances:

1. Possessive singular nouns

Example: Manager's salary

man's character (add ''s'' to noun)

2. Possessive plural of nouns

Example: Managers' salaries (add only the apostrophe if plural form of the noun ends in "s") e.g. men's salaries (add "'s" if the plural does not end in "s")

3. Possessive of the pronouns "one,'' "someone", "somebody", "everyone", "everybody", "anyone", "anybody", "none", "nobody"

Example: Anyone's (add "'s'' to pronoun)

DO NOT use the Apostrophe for

The pronouns "his", "hers", "its", "ours", "yours", "theirs", "whose", (because they are already possessive)

Example: WRONG The company announced it's new brand. ("It's" means "it is")

RIGHT: The company announced its new brand.

Notes

Self Assessment

Select the correctly punctuated sentence:

9. (a) Spain is a beautiful country; the beache's are warm, sandy and spotlessly clean.
   (b) Spain is a beautiful country: the beaches are warm, sandy and spotlessly clean.
   (c) Spain is a beautiful country, the beaches are warm, sandy and spotlessly clean.
   (d) Spain is a beautiful country; the beaches are warm, sandy and spotlessly clean.
10. (a) The children's books were all left in the following places: Mrs Smith's room, Mr Powell's office and the caretaker's cupboard.
    (b) The children's books were all left in the following places; Mrs Smith's room, Mr Powell's office and the caretaker's cupboard.
    (c) The childrens books were all left in the following places: Mrs Smiths room, Mr Powells office and the caretakers cupboard.
    (d) The children's books were all left in the following places, Mrs Smith's room, Mr Powell's office and the caretaker's cupboard.
11. (a) She always enjoyed sweets, chocolate, marshmallows and toffee apples.
    (b) She always enjoyed: sweets, chocolate, marshmallows and toffee apples.
    (c) She always enjoyed sweets chocolate marshmallows and toffee apples.
    (d) She always enjoyed sweet's, chocolate, marshmallow's and toffee apple's.
12. (a) Sarah's uncle's car was found without its wheels in that old derelict warehouse.
    (b) Sarah's uncle's car was found without its wheels in that old, derelict warehouse.
    (c) Sarahs uncles car was found without its wheels in that old, derelict warehouse.
    (d) Sarah's uncle's car was found without it's wheels in that old, derelict warehouse.
13. (a) I can't see Tim's car, there must have been an accident.
    (b) I cant see Tim's car; there must have been an accident.
    (c) I can't see Tim's car there must have been an accident.
    (d) I can't see Tim's car; there must have been an accident.
14. (a) Paul's neighbours were terrible; so his brother's friends went round to have a word.
    (b) Paul's neighbours were terrible: so his brother's friends went round to have a word.
    (c) Paul's neighbours were terrible, so his brother's friends went round to have a word.
    (d) Paul's neighbours were terrible so his brother's friends went round to have a word.
15. (a) Tims gran, a formidable woman, always bought him chocolate, cakes, sweets and a nice fresh apple.
    (b) Tim's gran a formidable woman always bought him chocolate, cakes, sweets and a nice fresh apple.
    (c) Tim's gran, a formidable woman, always bought him chocolate cakes sweets and a nice fresh apple.
    (d) Tim's gran, a formidable woman, always bought him chocolate, cakes, sweets and a nice fresh apple.

Notes

16. (a) After stealing Tims car, the thief lost his way and ended up the chief constable's garage.
    (b) After stealing Tim's car the thief lost his way and ended up the chief constable's garage.
    (c) After stealing Tim's car, the thief lost his way and ended up the chief constable's garage.
    (d) After stealing Tim's car, the thief lost his' way and ended up the chief constable's garage.
17. (a) We decided to visit: Spain, Greece, Portugal and Italy's mountains.
    (b) We decided to visit Spain, Greece, Portugal and Italys mountains.
    (c) We decided to visit Spain, Greece, Portugal and Italy's mountains.
    (d) We decided to visit Spain Greece Portugal and Italy's mountains.
18. (a) That tall man, Paul's grandad, is this month's winner.
    (b) That tall man Paul's grandad is this month's winner.
    (c) That tall man, Paul's grandad, is this months winner.
    (d) That tall man, Pauls grandad, is this month's winner.

11.3 Summary

- In English, we do not use capitals letters very much. We use them mainly for the first letter of sentences, names, days and months as well for some abbreviations.
- Capital letters should always be used for the beginning of sentences and questions.
- Capital letters always need to be used for titles and proper names.
- All kinds of places require capital letters.
- Punctuation marks are essential when you are writing. They show the reader where sentences start and finish and if they are used properly they make your writing easy to understand.
- There are many kinds of punctuation. Some of them can do many things. These are some common punctuation marks used in English:
    - **(,)** is a comma.
    - **(.)** is a period or full stop.
    - **(:)** is a colon.
    - **(;)** is a semicolon.
    - **(-)** is a hyphen.
    - **('abc' or "abc")** is inverted comma
    - **(')** is an apostrophe.

11.4 Keywords

Apostrophe: The superscript sign (') used to indicate the omission of a letter or letters from a word, the possessive case, or the plurals of numbers, letters, and abbreviations.

Notes

Colon: A punctuation mark (:) used after a word introducing a quotation, an explanation, an example, or a series and often after the salutation of a business letter.

Comma: A punctuation mark (,) used to indicate a separation of ideas or of elements within the structure of a sentence.

Full Stop: A period indicating the end of a sentence.

Inverted Comma: A quotation mark.

Punctuation: The use of standard marks and signs in writing and printing to separate words into sentences, clauses, and phrases in order to clarify meaning.

Semi-colon: A mark of punctuation (;) used to connect independent clauses and indicating a closer relationship between the clauses than a period does.

11.5 Review Questions

1. Discuss the rules for use of capitalization in English.
2. Re-write the following paragraph keeping rules of capitalization in mind:

   there were many Whales swimming in the Ocean a long time ago. then they were hunted and killed by native american tribes. they used the whale for Food, Oil, and other items. seventy years ago, they were told to stop killing them because the number of Whales was so small.

   now the native americans were told that they could start hunting them again. the problem was that other people did not want the Whales to be killed. they told the native americans that the Whales should be left alone. Many people were upset.
3. Re-write the following paragraph keeping the rules of capitalization in mind:

   Many people think that if you could only afford one kind of Insurance, you should buy Health Insurance. If you can afford only a small amount of Health Insurance, it is best to insure yourself against the big unexpected costs and pay the smaller common bills yourself.

   There are different kinds of Insurance you can get. hospital expense Insurance will pay for any costs you get while having to be in a Hospital. surgical expense insurance will pay for the doctor to operate on you. Regular Medical insurance will pay for any Non-Surgical treatment. Disability income insurance will help pay for living expenses if you are sick and cannot work.
4. Describe the relevance of using punctuation marks in a sentence.
5. In what cases, you should not use commas in a sentence? Give suitable examples.
6. Why do we use colons and semi-colons? Give examples of explain your answer.
7. There are some words which can be hyphenated or they can be written without hyphenating. Substantiate
8. Punctuate following paragraph:

   stanley is now confiding in meg. he wants to share how badly he had been treated by them. he was appointed to play in another concert nothing has a name. when he went to play the hall was closed the place was shuttered up. it did not even have a caretaker. they wanted to subjugated stanley they wanted to bring him under a yoke. he is bitter about the whole thing we would settle his score with them if only he knew who they were. he can gather that information he can take a tip he tells jack but we are not told who that jack is.

Notes

9. Punctuate the following:

   ENIAC was...the world's first fully electronic general-purpose (programmable) digital computer, although this claim, as well as the validity of the patents for ENIAC, was challenged in 1973 by John V. Atanasoff (b.1903,) a professor at Iowa State College.

10. Punctuate the following:

    Turing visited the United States in 1942 and apparently talked with John von Neuman (1903-1957), a mathematician, but had little impact on the American development of the computer until after the war,at which time there was extensive American-English discussion on the subject of computation.

Answers: Self Assessment

1. The, San Juan, Mayor Ortega, Sunday, July
2. My, Tom Wilson, Honda Accord, San Francisco
3. Yesterday, I, Lord, Rings
4. The, General Motors, July, Newsweek
5. David Johnson, Chevy Blazer, Delaware Memorial Bridge, Friday
6. When, I, New York Times, I, Lieutenant Martin Bailey, Colonel Dunlap, North Korean
7. Alan, Professor C. R. Klein, "Chemical Properties, Popular Diet Foods
8. Mary, Shut, It's

9. (d)	10. (a)	11. (a)	
12. (b)	13. (d)	14. (c)	15. (d)
16. (c)	17. (c)	18. (a)	

11.6 Further Readings

Books

Randolph Quirk, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech, Jan Svartvik, *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*, Longman Publications.

Raymond Murphy, *Essential English Grammar*, Cambridge University Press.

Urmila Rai and S.M. Rai, *Business Communication*, Himalaya Publishing House.

Online links

http://www.englishclub.com/writing/caps0.htm

http://www.say-it-in-english.com/BasicEnglish8.html

http://www.lifehack.org/articles/communication/how-to-punctuate-a-sentence.html

http://www.lifehack.org/articles/communication/how-to-punctuate-a-sentence.html

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Unit 12: Basics of Official Correspondence

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Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- State the characteristics of business correspondence
- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of business correspondence
- Identify the general stages in writing process
- Discuss the guidelines for writing general and business correspondence

Introduction

A famous English writer Francis Bacon said, "*Reading maketh a full man, writing an exact man, conference a ready man*." In order to make himself 'exact' i.e., to say effectively what he wants to say, the writer has to make considerable effort.

While speech comes to us naturally and spontaneously, writing comes after serious practice and careful organization of thought. The word 'write' has been derived from the old English word 'writan,' that means to scratch, draw or inscribe. It shows that man learnt writing through a long process of drawing, scoring and incising symbols on rock faces, dried skins, tree barks and clay tablets. The power of writing is eloquently expressed in the saying **"pen is mightier than the sword".**

Written communication has come to acquire great significance in the lives of individuals as well as business organizations. It reaches out across vast geographical areas and targets readers around the world. Most businesses rely on records and written documents, rather than on verbal contracts and oral commitments above.

It is impossible to think of business or an organization without such correspondence today. There are various reasons for this, namely:

1. In the first place, in an organization, there are too many people to have face-to-face communication with. They are generally spread over wide geographical distances, and are

sometimes not even connected by telephone. Though the situation is changing fast, even then, the exchange of letters remains an important component of communication.

2. People have to function with defined limits of authority and responsibility. In the absence of written communication, it becomes difficult to fix responsibility. This therefore is an essential part of any manager's responsibility to communicate on paper.

12.1 Characteristics of Business Correspondence

Business conversation has following characteristics:

- ***Most formal type of communication:*** Usually most of the informal, casual conversation or friendly conversation is done orally. Whenever there is need for formal communication, it is the written mode in business conversation that is preferred.
- ***Used for documentation:*** Business conversation is mostly used for documentation. In an organization, documentation of records and decisions made from time to time are very important for future conversations, as well as rules and guidelines.
- ***Used for circulation of information:*** This is used for circulation of information in the organization. Business conversation circulates information without distortions and misrepresentations.
- ***Conventional by nature:*** There are not many rules of grammar for oral communication, as there are for written communication. And business conversation most often than not is only written. Written communication is conventional in the sense that it has to follow definite pattern as per rules laid down by the language.
- ***Presence of both sender and receiver is not necessary at the same time:*** It is an important feature of written form of business conversation that the presence of just the sender or the receiver is sufficient at a given point in time, to continue the process of communication.
- ***A creative activity:*** Written form of business conversation is essentially a creative activity which requires conscious and creative effort. The creativity of this effort comes from the stimuli produced by the mind. The stimuli of oral communication are picked up from outside by sensory receptors. In other words, written communication is more specifically, more carefully thought out than oral communication that is based on spontaneous reaction to signs picked up from outside.

Example: Let us take up the writing and production of a report that we want to present. For this purpose, we gather all the necessary information and data. Then, we process it through our logical thought processes and encode our communication. This is not a face-to-face communication situation. There is no interchange of message or external stimuli rather, an entirely creative activity of the mind.

- ***Time factor:*** Another salient feature of written form of business conversation is the time factor it involves. While in a face-to-face communication, situation, the sender's encoded messages are instantaneously decided by the receiver in a written communications some delay necessarily takes place. There is no fixed time limit to this delay. The sender or encoder takes his own time in formulating the message which in turn takes quite some time to reach the receiver or decoder. The receiver will take his own time in filtering it through his mind and responding to it.
- ***It has fewer cycles:*** Written form of business conversation has fewer cycles than face-to-face oral communication. In oral communication there are multiple exchanges of symbols, leading to multiple cycles. Most written communication is a one-cycle event. Usually a

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message is sent and received, and that is the end of the event. Of course, letters do lead to repeated cycles or communication exchanges. But they cannot compare with the quick succession of cycles involved in a dialogue or informal meeting.

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

1. Written communication is …… in the sense that it has to follow definite pattern as per rules laid down by the language.
2. The stimuli of oral communication are picked up from outside by …… .
3. Most written communication is a …… -cycle event.

12.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of Business Correspondence

"Documentation of knowledge and experience facilitates institutionalization of individual wisdom."

- ***Ready reference:*** First and foremost, the various forms of business conversation esp. those in written form have the advantage of providing records, references, etc. In the absence of ready reference, great confusion may be created and the working of the organization will virtually come to a halt.
- ***Legal defence:*** Maintenance of proper records, letters, reports and memos build up legal defense of the organisation. An organization is like a living organism. And like any organism even an organisation is vulnerable to offence, both from within and outside. Organizations usually have their legal advisors who cannot be of any help unless proper records are made available to them.
- ***Promotes uniformity:*** It promotes uniformity in policy and procedure. It is the only means of laying down clear guidelines for the working of the organization.
- ***Mass access:*** Written business conversation gives access to a large audience through mass mailing. It is a common practice on the part of a well known organization to reach out to people at large and win customers through wisely drafted 'mail shots' or unsolicited Circulars.

Example: Whenever a new brand of two-wheeler is introduced in the market or a bank comes forward with some attractive deposit/investment scheme, it succeeds in getting the names and addresses of all the members of an institution/organization who are offering them their services on easy terms.

- ***Suitable for distance communication:*** Written form of business conversation is most suitable when the receivers are spread over vast geographical distances and oral communication is either not possible or will cause the message to lose its effectiveness.
- ***Image building:*** Business conversation builds up the organization's image. It is not at all surprising, therefore, that the outgoing letters/messages of certain well known companies are cited as examples to be emulated.
- ***Accurate and unambiguous:*** Business conversation in written form has the advantage of being accurate and unambiguous. Great care has to be taken in drafting any letter, memo or notice so that the message is effectively conveyed. Oral communication may often give rise to confusion because every speaker has his own way of putting himself across.

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- ***Permanent in nature:*** Written form of business conversation is permanent. The growth of an organization is promoted, to a large extent, by reference to its old, well-maintained records and minutes of meetings.
- ***Facilitates in order to assign responsibility:*** Business correspondence facilitates proper assignation of responsibilities. One may sometimes go back on the spoken word, but not on words which have been, put on paper. Moreover, the lower staff behaves with more responsibility, and also feels secure, when communication is sent in writing. There is greater pursuance and seriousness attached to something that is "in writing".
- ***Permits substitution and revision:*** While spoken words cannot be taken back or erased, since they have to be instantaneously and thoughtfully planned out, the sender of a written message gets time to conceive the idea and formulate his message after due substitution and revision of his text.

Task Collect some newspaper articles/advertisements from companies that were aimed at image building.

Like oral communication, even written communication is not free from demerits. Some of the major disadvantages of written communication are as follows:

- ***Limited to literate world:*** Written communication is limited to literate people, who have the capability to read and write. Though, in spite of literacy levels rising across the world, there still remains a great chunk of people who are still devoid of this skill.
- ***Time consuming:*** Unlike oral communication, written communication takes time to reach the target. Both encoding and transmission of the message take time, resulting in delays. It is, therefore, a time-consuming process. Postal delays cause a lot of time to be elapsed between despatch of written message and its receipt by the target.
- ***Lot of paper work:*** Written communication creates mountains of paper cluttered around the premises of an organization. It is a common sight in offices, and the staff has a tough time trying to handle it. Very often valuable papers get lost. Managers, therefore, have to be extra careful to keep sensitive or confidential material in their own custody.
- ***Needs expertise in expression:*** Written communication runs the risk of becoming ineffective in the hands of people otherwise good in their job, but poor in expression. That is why it is a serious concern of a modern organization to recruit people who are very good in expression, especially in letter and report-writing ability.
- ***Lack of immediate feedback:*** Written communication is mostly handicapped by its inability to get immediate feedback. The receiver of the message takes his time to understand and respond to the message.
- ***Costly:*** Written communication is a costly process in terms of stationery and the number of people involved in typing and sending out letters.
- ***More man hours needed:*** By the same logic, it is costly in terms of man-hours lost in taking dictation, typing, entering in the diary, dispatching etc., The same job can be done more efficiently and expeditiously by harnessing modern technology like video conferencing, computers and e-mails.
- ***No immediate clarification:*** Written communication has another disadvantage. If the receiver of a written message at a distance seeks some clarification, he cannot have it, as quickly as he would like to. He will also have to write back and wait for the reply to his query. Immediate clarification is also not possible in exchange of written communication.

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Self Assessment

State whether the following statements are true or false:

4. Written business communication is the only means of laying down clear guidelines for the working of the organization.
5. Written form of business conversation is most suitable when the receivers are spread over vast geographical distances.
6. Written business correspondence is not permanent.
7. Written correspondence is less time consuming than oral communication.
8. Written correspondence facilitates immediate feedback.

12.3 General Stages of Writing Process

We have seen above that different forms of correspondence have different approaches, structure and format, yet there is a common thread among them all. They have certain general stages of writing.

Accomplished managers move back and forth between the stages of the writing process, both consciously and unconsciously. For technical writing to be effective, you have to get your message across. And that, in turn, means proper planning. Young managers, however, benefit from the structure and security of following the writing process in their writing.

1. ***Prewriting (Generating ideas for writing):*** At this stage, decide the purpose of writing a document. Fix the objectives, gather data and find out the types of readers. Good managers generally plan their documents in advance. This stage is often called prewriting stage.
2. ***Rereading:*** Now, you must read over your story and make sure that there are no missed mistakes and everything is the way you like it.
3. ***Rough Draft:*** At this stage, write without concern for conventions. Written work does not have to be neat; it is a 'sloppy copy'. You may have discussions with the people in the organisation to decide the content. A brainstorming session may help. Prepare an outline, discuss it further and modify it using the feedback. Accuracy, relevance and significance of the matter should be kept in mind during the process.
4. ***Sharing with a Peer Reviser:*** At this stage, good managers share and take suggestions for improvement. Asking who, what, when, where, why, and how questions about parts of the story the peer does not understand; looking for better words; and talking about how to make the work better.
5. ***Revising:*** You have put your ideas on paper or in the computer file. But they may not be in the best form possible. Your option is to revise and improve it. Any draft permits revision for improvement. This is an essential process in any writing, and not something that may be done, only if you have time for it. Good managers, at this stage, look again at their writing to add, substitute, delete, and/or modify the content to clarify meaning and expand ideas. Revision is the key to effective documents. Here you think more deeply about your readers' needs and expectations. The document becomes reader-centered.
6. ***Editing:*** After you have written your rough draft of your idea it is time to edit your draft. Writers focus on the mechanics of the piece; they edit and proofread for spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and syntax to enhance the clarity and effectiveness of the writing. Check for such things as grammar, mechanics, and spelling. The last thing you should do before printing your document is to spell-check it.

7. ***Publishing:*** What's the point of writing if no one will ever read it? Though some of us are content to write diaries or notes to ourselves, the mangers write only with the need and desire for others to read and hopefully enjoy or benefit from their documents. So the last stage is getting your document published for future use.

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

9. In the …… stage, managers plan the document.
10. …… is the key to effective documents.
11. Thorough check for grammar, mechanics, and spelling is done in the …… stage.
12. …… is the last stage of the writing process.

12.4 Principles of Writing General and Official Correspondence

Effective writing communication is possible only when the following three principles are adhering to:

Accuracy

For accuracy, there is need to check or double-check the information regarding facts, figures, words, language and tone. Following are the main principles to attain accuracy for effective writing.

1. ***There should be correctness of words:*** Check the choice of words for correct usage.

   Example: We should always write between you and me and not between you and I.

   As a matter of fact, the correctness of words is determined by the appropriateness of words for the subject, audience and purpose for a particular piece of writing.

2. ***Communication language should be technically accurate:*** A message should be communicated correctly in terms of grammar, punctuation, and spellings. Of course, it is not easy to be accurate in expression; still some obvious pitfalls can be avoided by being alert to some of the things indicated below:

   (a) *Concord:* The rule of agreement between words in gender, number, case, or person.

   (b) *Dangling Modifier:* A word or phrase that modifies a word that is not clearly mentioned in the sentence.

   (c) *Unnecessary Shift in tenses:* Tenses should be consistent within the sentences and from sentences within the paragraph.

   (d) *Prepositions:* Wrong prepositions change the meaning of the statement. Here are no rules for correct prepositions. They are governed by usage.

   Example: Wrong: He pointed the target.

   Correct: He pointed at the target.

   (e) *Punctuation:* In English, punctuation matters. It determines the meaning of the sentence and paragraph. Sometimes, even the meaning of a word gets changed by the punctuation mark.

   Wrong: The president's speech was so long, it's actual message was lost.

   Correct: The President's speech was so long its actual message was lost.

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(f) *Check words for spelling and usage:* For effective written communication, while revising you must check the spellings of the words and proper usage of the words.

Brevity

It means conciseness or saying only what need be said and leaving out unnecessary words or details. Brevity brief does not mean saying less than the occasion demands. Brevity alone can help maintain focus on the purpose of business communication.

Brevity, however, not achieved at the cost of clarity. Likewise, it is not to gain by sacrificing proper English. In order to achieve brevity, keep the following essentials in mind.

1. *Avoid wordiness:* Do not use four or six words when one or two will do.
2. Wordiness can be avoided by changing clauses into phrases.

Example: Wordy: Mr. Singh, who was a newcomer to the city, mentioned earlier in this report, proved to be a very able administrator. Concise: Mr. Singh, a newcomer to the above-mentioned city, proved to be a very able administrator (clause reduced to phrase and phrase reduced to single word).

3. Drop 'which' and 'then' clauses when possible.

Example: Wordy: I need cards that are of formal type.

Concise: I need formal cards.

4. Do not use the passive voice.

Example:

Dear Sir,

We are in receipt of your letter dated July 10, and have pleasure in informing you that the order you have placed with us will receive our best and immediate attention and the 20 computers you require will be provided to you as soon as we are able to arrange and supply them to you.

We are, however, very sorry to say that our stock of these computers is at this moment of time quite short, and we have been informed by the manufacturers that they are not likely to be in a position to supply us with a further stock for another three weeks or so.

We are extremely sorry not to be in a position to satisfy your requirements immediately; but we wish to assure you that we will always try to do everything we possibly can to see that your order for 20 computers is met as soon as possible. If you are not able to obtain from elsewhere the computers you need, or if you are able to wait for them until the end of the next of the month, you are requested to immediately inform us.

Once again expressing our sincerest regret at our inability to fulfill your esteemed order on this occasion with our usual promptness and trusting you will continue to favour us with buying from us.

Yours truly,

The brief and concise form of the above letter is as follows:

12 July, 2008

Dear Sir,

We thank you for your order of 10th July, but regret that due to the exceptional demand for computers, we are at present out of stock of the make you ordered. The manufacturers,

however, have promised us further supply by the end of this month, and if you could wait until then we would ensure the prompt delivery of 20 computers you require.

We are sorry that we cannot meet your present order immediately.

Yours truly,

Clarity

For effective business writing, the 3rd basic principle is clarity. Clarity means written business messages must clarify the basic contents of the message to the receiver. It means the language and the tone must be appropriate. The level of formality in tone, the use of words of casual conversation, your attitude, use of natural language, avoiding sexist language are some of the essentials for clarity. These are discussed as under:

1. ***Language and tone:*** The language used in formal writing such as book, magazine, letters, memos, reports and other forms of academic writing must be simple and understandable. It must be consistent with the clarity and nature of the audience.

   Having determined the purpose of audience, you have to choose appropriate tone in terms of formality. Tone refers to feeling created by words used to communicate the message. In writing the tone basically defend upon the relationship between the writer and the receiver. It is the skill and competence of the writer to use the tone according to the direction of communication determined by the status of reader/receiver. *It is obvious that while writing to our superior, our tone will be quite formal and to our peers, less formal or more informal.*

   The tone can be informal, semi-formal and strictly formal. Informal tone is used for social or personal communication. The informal tone may use slang words and regional words. Slang words are non-conventional. They are just coined for new definitions. They are used in some special sense. Slang in fact consists of very informal words, phrases and meanings not regarded as standard and often used by a specific professional class and so on.

   Regional words are used basically in a particular geographical area. The slangs and regional words both constitute the nature of language. They give colour and tone to the language of communication. In the words of business, the main concern is to impress the reader with sincerity, courtesy and sense of mutual respect. The basic aim of business writing is to earn the good will of the reader. The writing should sound, friendly and cooperative, by avoiding harsh and rude words.

   For good human relationship, our letters and memos should accentuate the positive thoughts and expressions.

Notes **Essentials for Language and Tone**

1. Avoid using words that underline the negative aspects of the situation.
2. Write with a cool frame of mind. Do not write a letter or memo when you are angry or excited.
3. Do not allow your anger or harshness to creep into your letters/memos.
4. Focus on the positive whenever you can or project the neutral rather than the negative viewpoint.

2. ***You-Attitude:*** In all writing, the author has a point of view. The you-attitude refers to the reader's point of view. In good business writing, especially letters, the author writes from

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the reader's point of view. He views things as readers would do. Thereby, he is able to see and present the situation, as the reader would see it. As a writer, you should try to convey your understanding of the reader's position. Present the information by visualizing how it will affect the feelings of your reader and of what interest it will be to him.

Example: In the following illustrations, the focus is shifted from the author's point of view to the reader's point of view by emphasizing the benefits and interests of the reader in the given situation.

Author's emphasis: We are sending interview calls on next Monday.

Receiver's emphasis: You should receive the interview letter by Thursday, August 10.

Notes **Essentials for reflecting 'you' point of view in Business Correspondence**

- Empathic with your reader. Place yourself in his/her positions.
- Highlight your reader's positive gain or actions in the situation.
- Adopt a pleasant tone as far as possible.
- Avoid negative words and images. Do not use words that insult or accuse the reader.
- Offer some helpful suggestions if possible.
- Use words which are familiar, clear and natural. Avoid expressions which are old-fashioned.

3. ***Use of Natural language:*** Letters and memos should be written in the language of everyday speech. It should not be allowed to lose its quality of living speech by bringing in clichés and hackneyed expressions. Archaic expressions in your letter or memo will make the message dull and uninteresting for the reader. Do not use old-fashioned expressions, generally found in business letters and memos.

   To help the reader read quickly and know the main subject of the message at the very beginning of a sentence, choose active voice. Avoid passive voice in issuing the instructions. The instructions should be clear, direct and complete.

4. ***Avoid Sexist Language:*** Sexist language consists of words or phrases which shows a bias against the competence or importance of women. Often, the use of sexist language is unconscious. We often fail to realize that a certain phrase or word used implies an unfavourable reference to the honour and competence of women. Moreover, such expressions are not acceptable to the readers of modern sensibility. Do not use words that lower the dignity and status of women. Also, never use slang words for women.

Finally, to write your business letters clearly and accurately, you should pay attention to the following:

- Construct your sentences and paragraph according to the principles of unity and coherence.
- A sentence is the smallest unit of a complete thought.
- Each sentence should have only one thought.

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Task **Rewrite the given case study in a brief and concise form**

It won't do to say that the snoozing reader is too dumb or too lazy to keep pace with the train of thought. My sympathies are with him. If the reader is lost, it is generally because the writer has not been careful enough to keep him on the path.

This carelessness can take any number of forms. Perhaps a sentence is so excessively cluttered that the reader, hacking his way through the verbiage, simply doesn't know what it means. Perhaps a sentence has been so shoddily constructed that the reader could read it in any of several ways. Perhaps the writer has switched pronouns in mid – sentence, or has switched tenses, so the reader loses track of who is talking or when the action took place. Perhaps Sentence B is not a logical sequel to Sentence A—the writer, in whose head the connection is clear, has not bothered to provide the missing link. Perhaps the writer has used an important word incorrectly by not taking the trouble to look it up. He may think that 'sanguine' and 'sanguinary' mean the same thing, but the difference is a bloody big one. The reader can only infer (speaking of big differences) what the writer is trying to imply.

Faced with these obstacles, the reader is at first a remarkably tenacious bird. He blames himself – he obviously' 'lacks' something, and he goes back over mystifying sentence, or over the paragraph, piecing it out like an ancient rune making guesses and moving on. But he won't do this for long. The writer must work hard, and the reader will look for one who is better at his craft. The writer, therefore, must constantly ask himself: What am I trying to say? Surprisingly often, he doesn't know. Then he must look at what he has written and ask: Have I said it? Is it clear to someone encountering the subject for the first time? If it's not, it is because some fuzz worked its way into the machinery. The writer is a person clear-headed enough to see this stuff for what it is—fuzz.

I don't mean that some people are born -clear-headed and are therefore, natural writers, whereas others are naturally fuzzy and 'will never write well. Thinking clearly is a conscious act that the writer must force upon himself, just as if he were embarking on any other project that requires logic: adding up a laundry list or doing an algebra problem. Good writing doesn't come naturally, though most people obviously think it does.

(***Source:*** Internet/ William Zinsser, New York, Harper, 1998)

12.4.1 General Guidelines

There are certain general guidelines that have to be followed by all while formulating business correspondence:

- The major purpose of most business messages is to inform or persuade.
- Getting a strong mental picture of your receiver helps you tailor the message to the needs of a specific audience.
- Empathy helps you anticipate the receiver's reaction to your message.
- "You attitude" increases clarity and builds relationships.
- Avoid sexist language.
- Avoid language that reflects bias for race and ethnic group, age, religion, and disability.
- Insincere compliments are detrimental to good communication.

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- Avoid expression of surprise, doubt, and judgment when they would be interpreted as insults.
- Use the subjunctive mood. Subjunctive sentences employ such conditional expressions as I wish, as if, could, would, might, and wish. Subjunctive sentences speak of a wish, necessity, doubt, or conditions contrary to fact.
- Outlining involves identifying the major and minor ideas and arranging them in the right sequence.
- The deductive sequence begins with the main idea.
- The inductive sequence began with the explanation and details.
- For emphasis, place an idea in an independent clause; for de-emphasis; place an idea in a dependent clause.
- To emphasize a word, let it appear more than once in a sentence.
- In paragraphs, the first and last words are in particularly emphatic positions.
- An idea that deserves emphasis can be placed in either position, but an idea that does not deserve emphasis can be placed in the middle of a long paragraph.
- Words preceded by numbers get special attention.
- Transition sentences are very helpful if properly used, but they can be overused.
- For most part, transition sentences before major headings are sufficient. The word coherence is used sometimes to mean clarity and understandability; it is used to mean cohesion.

12.4.2 Adapting to Legal Responsibilities

One of the primary responsibilities of writing for an organization is to avoid language that may land you in the court. In the current business environment, law suits in majority are on the use and abuse of language. If you want to protect yourself and avoid litigation you must know what is legal by adapting your language accordingly. In this context, one has to be careful while communicating in following four areas: investment, safety, marketing and human resources.

- ***Investment information:*** Writers describing the sale of stocks or financial services must follow specific laws written to protect investors. Any messages—including letters, newsletters, and pamphlets—must be free of misleading information, exaggerations, or half-truths. Experienced financial writers know that poor timing or language may provoke litigation.
- ***Safety information:*** Writers describing potentially dangerous products worry not only about protecting people from physical harm but also being sued. Manufacturers are to warn consumers for risk in their products. Warnings on dangerous products must be written especially clearly. Clearly written messages use easy-to-understand words, such as doctor instead of physician, clean instead of sanitary, and burn instead of incinerate. Technical terms are defined.
- ***Marketing information:*** Sales and marketing messages are illegal if they falsely advertise prices, performance capabilities, quality, or other product characteristics. Marketing messages must not deceive the buyer in any way. Letters, reports and proposals that describe services to be performed are interpreted as contracts in court. Therefore, language must not promise more than intended. Here are some dangerous words (and recommended alternatives) that have created misunderstanding leading to lawsuits.
- ***Human resources information:*** The vast number of lawsuits relating to employment makes this a treacherous area of business communicators. In evaluating employees in the workplace, avoid making unsubstantiated negative comments. Defamation lawsuits have become so common that some companies no longer provide letters of recommendation for former employees. To be safe, give recommendations only when the former employee

authorizes the recommendation. Statements in employees' handbooks require careful wording, because a court might rule that such statements are "implied contracts". In adapting messages to meet today's litigious business environments, be sensitive to the rights of others and to your own rights. The key elements in this adaptation process are awareness of laws, sensitivity to interpretations, and careful use of language.

Self Assessment

State whether the following statements are true or false:

13. Brevity alone can help maintain focus on the purpose of business communication.
14. Language and tone of the correspondence must be consistent with the clarity and nature of the audience.
15. Slangs should be used to make formal correspondence more effective.
16. Writer should consider the reader's point of view while drafting a business correspondence.
17. Insincere compliments are beneficial to good communication.

12.5 Summary

- Business correspondence makes an integral part of day to day business.
- Without business correspondence, the work may actually come to a standstill.
- There are many forms of correspondence methods, each suitable for a specific occasion.
- The advantages of written communication are that it provides ready reference, legal defence, promotes uniformity, mass access, image building and permits substitution and revision.
- The disadvantages of written communication are that it is limited to literate world, it is time consuming, involves lot of paper work, needs expertise in expression and lacks feedback.
- Managers must know how, and when to use which particular type of correspondence so as to make the best possible use of the resources available.
- Good business correspondence ensures the best the possible quality and quantity of production.

12.6 Keywords

Brevity: The quality of expressing much in few words

Business Correspondence: A written communication between two parties

Concord: A state of agreement; harmony; union.

Dangling Modifier: A word or phrase apparently modifying an unintended word because of its placement in a sentence

Documentation: Act or an instance of the supplying of documents or supporting references or records.

Empathy: Identification with and understanding of another's situation, feelings, and motives.

12.7 Review Questions

1. Explain the main purposes of writing in business communication.
2. Describe the different stages in business writing.

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3. State the relevance of written business communication for organizations.
4. Why is 'revising' considered as an essential step to preparing business messages?
5. How should business messages be composed? What factors are to be kept in mind?
6. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of written communication.
7. Discuss the principles of clarity and brevity.
8. State the general guidelines for writing effective business correspondence.
9. "The creativity of this effort comes from the stimuli produced by the mind." Explain with reference to business correspondence.
10. "Documentation of knowledge and experience facilitates institutionalization of individual wisdom." Substantiate.
11. "For technical writing to be effective, you have to get your message across." Discuss.
12. Explain the importance of being accurate in business correspondence.

Answers: Self Assessment

1. Conventional	2. Sensory receptors	3. One	4. True
5. True	6. False	7. False	8. False
9. Pre-writing	10. Revision	11. Editing	12. Publishing
13. True	14. True	15. False	16. True
17. False			

12.8 Further Readings

Books

Asha Kaul, *Effective Business Communication*, Prentice Hall of India, P.239.

Mary Ellen Guffey, *Business Communication, Process & Product*, Thomson Asia Pvt. Ltd., Singapore, 2004, P.102-105.

Meenakshi Raman, Prakash Singh, *Business Communication*, Oxford University Press, 7th Impression 2008, P. 236.

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http://www.savvy-business-correspondence.com/

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Unit 13: Format of Basic Formal Letter

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Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Know the basic format of a business letter
- Realise how orders are placed/letters of order are written
- Know how a cancellation order is written
- Realise how an enquiry letter is written

Introduction

A formal letter is distinguished by its distinct 'form' or format. Most formal letter aim at transferring a message to another person and make him/her do something in a particular way. The message is however transferred in a style, layout and format that are fixed by convention for almost everyone who wants to write a letter of that sort. In order to write an effective formal letter, you must use a standard format which is very different from your informal letter formats.

You should know that although the language and subject matter of every commercial letter written to parties and clients may differ, but the basic form and structure remains the same. A special feature of the business letter is that it must create an impression on the mind of receiver as from where and from whom the letter has come, in what subjects with it. This unit introduces you to the basic formal letter formats that will help you in drafting effective official letters.

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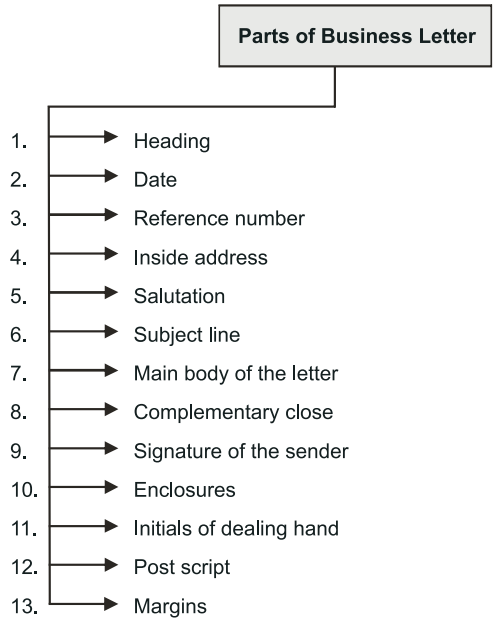
13.1 The Basic Format of a Business Letter

The major parts of a business letter are discussed briefly as under:

Figure 13.1: Parts of Business Letter



Heading: Heading is the name of the firm printed in the letter pad in an attractive form. A good and beautiful heading attract the receiver of the letter to go through thoroughly. Heading contains the name of the firm, nature of business, address of registered office, telephone number, telegraphic address etc. The heading is usually printed in attracting colours.

Caution According to the view of experts the heading portion should not cover more than 1/5th of the letter paper. Suitable measurement for heading is 2″ to 2.5″.

Date: Date is important part of a letter. It should be written clearly with date, month and year. There are different ways of writing the date in a letter, like 1-8-2008 or 1/8/2008, etc. But this way of writing the date becomes very old-fashioned and at present the old forms are changed over in this way.

Example: Sept. 1, 2003 or 1 Sept., 2003 and so on.

Reference number: Reference number is the number and date of the previous correspondence held in this behalf. If the reference number and date is given, there will be no need to write the previous letter again or to send a copy of it. Only the letter number and date of the previous letter is sufficient for the receiver of the letter to refer back his file to understand the details of previous letter. This is the reason that the letters received and the replies sent against each letter are maintained in a file.

Example: Reference number is given in continuation of a code number; as RAC/96-97/101 or 96-97/101.

Notes

Inside address: Inside address is the name and address of the person or institution to which the letter is addressed. This is written at the left-hand side just below to the reference number; written in three lines. The first line is used to write the name of the person or institution, second for writing lanes, flat/plot no., etc., and the third line for city town. Semicolon is used at the end of first and second lines and third line is closed with full stop. A specimen of inside address is given below:

Notes While writing the address respectful words like Shri or Mr. is used. The word Esq. (Esquire) must be used to address a person of high status, after the name. While addressing woman, the word Mrs. or Miss. Must used, for company or organizations the word Messer (M/s) is used.

Salutation: After writing inside address, salutation word is written below it. This is a word of respect to the receiver. In business correspondence, the words "Dear Sirs", "Honorable Sir", or "Honorable Madam" is used. After the salutation, semicolon is put.

Subject heading: Subject heading is the brief statement of the main body of the letter. For the convenience of the reader, subject heading is written. This helps the reader to understand the contents of the letter and the department to which it is related, at the first sight. This will enable to direct the letter to the person or department concerned without any delay and initiate action immediately. A few examples of subject heading are given below:

- ***Subject:*** Enquiry of prices
- ***Subject:*** Regarding damages of goods
- ***Subject:*** Payment of outstanding money, etc.

Body of the letter (contents): This is the major part of the letter. The subject matter is explained in this part. This part should be written very carefully using simple language in very effective manner. All the facts should be stated in order of priority so that the reader could understand every point clearly.

The body of the letter has mainly three parts:

1. ***Introductory part or opening paragraph:*** In case a reply is being sent against a letter just received, the introductory part gives that letter number and date (reference). If a reply to some earlier letter or letters is being sent, the reference of that letter is also made in the introductory part.
2. ***Main body of the letter:*** The main body of the letter states the subject matter in detail. Every point is explained in different paragraphs. It is written legibly using good words and phrases to attract the attention of the reader, so that he may act upon immediately on the letter.
3. ***Conclusion or closing paragraph:*** Concluding part is the third and final part of a letter. In this part the writer of the letter makes it clear cleverly what he expects from the other party. The conclusion is usually expressed in any of the following ways:
   (a) I am confident that you will give me an opportunity to serve you better.
   (b) An early reply is much awaited.
   (c) Please oblige us by taking personal interest in executing our purchase order, etc.

Complementary close: The way in which a letter begins with saluting, in the same manner a letters closed with complementary close. Complementary close is written at the right hand side below the body of the letter. The words like, "Yours sincerely", "Yours faithfully" is quite a common term.

Notes

Signature: After the complementary close, the writer of the letter puts his signature. One should sign personally not by affixing his specimen seal. Ball point pen or ink pen should be used for signature.

Usually the name of the signatory is also written or printed below his signature, along with his official's position, as stated below:

Example:

1. In the case of a letter from the proprietor of a sole-trading business:

Yours faithfully,

Sd/-

(Prem Kumar)

Proprietor

2. In the case of partnership firm:

Yours faithfully,

Sd/-

For Nawal Kishore & Sons

(Nawal Kishore)

Partner

3. In the case of company:

Yours faithfully,

Sd/-

For National textiles Ltd.,

(Nawal Kishore)

Manager

Enclosures: The number of documents, if any, to be sent along with the letter is mentioned in the left hand side of the letter. Usually cheque, draft, bills or invoice, etc. are enclosed with the letter. This will bring to the notice of the reader about the number documents enclosed with the letter and he can check at his end the enclosures that have been duly received with the letter or not.

Typist/clerk's initials: The letter is initialed by the typist or the dealing clerk, who shall be made responsible for any mistake remaining unnoticed in the letter. In terms of name, his first spelling (initials) is written.

Post Script or P.S.: Sometimes, any matter of importance may be left out for including in the main body of the letter. In such a situation, that can be included in the letter by giving a footnote as P.S. After writing the post script, the writer of the letter should sign below it.

Margin: Margin is the space left out at the left hand side of the letter paper. Provision of margin increases the beauty of the letter. Moreover, if sufficient margin is provided, any written portion will not hide inside the filing portion.

Notes

Figure 13.2: Format of a Business Letter

Format of a Business Letter

.....…….. (Heading)

…… (Nature of business)

Address……..

Telegraphic

Address…….....

Place……

Telephone No……....

Date…….

Reference No……....

Inside Address……..

…….

…….

Salutation,

Subject…….....

Reference……..

Main contents .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Enclosure……

(Complimentary Close)

Initials of typist or clerk ……..

Signature……

PS……..

……..

Self Assessment

State whether the following statements are true or false:

1. Heading of a business letter contains the name of the firm, nature of business, address of registered office, telephone number, telegraphic address, etc.
2. Even if the reference number and date is given, it is advisable to write the previous letter again or to send a copy of it.
3. The first line of the inside address is used to write the name of the person or institution.
4. Usually, a salutation is given at the end of a business letter.
5. Complementary close is written at the right hand side below the body of the letter.
6. After writing the post script, the writer of the letter should sign below it.
7. Provision of margin increases the beauty of the letter.

Notes

13.2 Letters Placing Orders

Orders are routine letters and their effectiveness depends on the accuracy of its details. Most of the contents of an order can be tabulated. An order is a formal document, which places a demand for goods or services, along with the details of the product/service required. Before placing an order, one must get all the details of what you want to buy.

13.2.1 Ways to Place an Order

Orders can be placed through:

1. ***Letter:*** Orders can be placed in the form of a letter, stating the reference number, price quoted, specification of goods, quantity and quality required, time limit and discount.
2. ***Order form:*** These are standardized forms containing all the necessary instructions and blank space to be filled at the time of sending out an order. Details to be given in an order are easy to tabulate, and hence printed forms are used for placing orders. Sellers prepare the forms with columns required for their products. This ensures that no essential details are left out. The form makes it easy for the customer to place an order. Carbon copies as required are arranged in the pad. Regular customers are given pads of forms. A set of forms is sent with a quotation to encourage a potential customer to place an order.
3. ***Telephone/fax:*** Orders can be placed by telephone/fax. These must then be followed by a letter, for future reference or record.

Task Collect order forms of various companies (available on internet) and find out what all information/details you need to give to place an order with a company.

13.2.2 Drafting Orders

Placing orders through an order form is quite simple, as it requires no formal language. Only the blank spaces are to be filled in carefully.

While writing a letter for order, one needs to display good communication skills.

An order can be divided into three groups:

- First or trial order
- Repeat order
- Routine order

First or Trial Order

Prices and terms are settled by a quotation and discussion, and samples are approved; but you have still to make sure that the seller gives efficient service, that is, proper packing, delivery of goods in time, prompt receipts for payments etc. A trial order is placed to check the efficiency of all this. A retailer may also place a trial order to find out the demand for a new product. Only a small quantity is ordered for trial.

Situations Leading to the First Order

Notes

Any of the following situations may lead to a first order:

- Buyer willing to try an offered substitute
- Seller's sample and /or quotation are approved
- A bargain has been concluded-request granted
- Buyer convinced to order on offered terms
- Buyer intends to try a product in a new area

The **opening and the ending** for each of these are given below:

1. Open with a reference to the received quotation.

   - Your quotation is approved and we are pleased to place an order for the following:
   - Thank you for your quotation, for we are glad to place a trial order with you as follows:

   When you have a reason to be very particular about the quality of the product, as in the case of medicines or precision goods, testing of samples leads to the order. Start the letter by mentioning satisfaction with samples.

   - We have tested your sample of … and found that sample No. 099 suits our requirements.
   - We are glad to say that we approve of your sample of terry wool suiting, and would like to receive supplies as follows:

   End with the expectation that the trial order will be satisfactory and lead to regular business.

   - We hope to find everything satisfactory and are looking forward to placing frequent orders with you.

   If you order goods on the basis of a sample, you expect them to match with the sample. You may refuse to accept the goods if they are different and it may be prudent to mention this at the end of the order:

   - We expect that your goods will be of the same high standard as the sample which has led us to place this order. It is essential that goods supplied should be of the same quality as the selected sample and that we reserve the right to reject goods, which do not tally with the sample.

2. When the seller has agreed to a bargain, open the order letter with a reference to it.

   - We thank you for agreeing to give us special packing at no extra charge.

   The corresponding ending would be:

   - We assure you that a large amount of business will follow if the trial order is found satisfactory.

   If you are convinced that the seller cannot give better terms, but still wish to place the order, mention this in the opening.

   - We understand that it is not possible for you to give us export packing without charging extra, but we are willing to take a trial lot of your milk powder tins.

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End with the expectation of high standard of good/services.

- We hope to find your goods and services of high standard, to justify our placing this large order with you.

3. If you decide to try an offered substitute, you may order a small lot.

- We are willing to try the Super Disinfectant Cleaning Fluid which you have offered instead of Yellow Brand Phenyl we had asked for.

End by suggesting that more will be ordered only if the trial order proves satisfactory.

- We shall ask for further supplies, only if we find it suitable for our requirements.

4. A buyer may place on an order, on his own initiative, on seeing an advertisement, if he feels that a certain product has potential demand. The opening sentence refers to this.

- There is a reasonably good demand for pure cotton shirts in this town and we would like to have a trial consignment according to the following details.
- We have received several inquiries from local customers about your Vacuum Cleaners. As there is a no supplier of your products in this area we would like to try the market. Please send us a trial consignment according to details given below:

End with the hope that a regular demand will be established.

- We hope to establish a sustained demand and expect to place frequent orders with you.

5. An order placed by telephone or telegram is confirmed further by a letter because a signed and written document is necessary for the formalization of a contract. Open the letter with a reference to the already placed letter and its confirmation, for example:

- We confirm our order for… placed by telephone this morning.

The new IT bill has provisions for certification of digital signature in an e-mail order in e-commerce in which case it will not be necessary to confirm orders placed by e-mail.

Example: **Order Letters**

1.

Dear Sir,

We have tested your sample of adhesive paste and found that sample No. 27 is suitable for our requirements.

We are glad to place an order for 500 large tins of this paste. Please deliver the tins at our factory address given below. Our cheque of Rs.5000/- as advance payment, and our Sales Tax declaration form are enclosed.

The material supplied should be of the same quality as the sample and we reserve the right to reject material of any other quality.

Yours Faithfully,

ABC

2.

Dear Sir,

We are willing to try the range of Super Disinfectant Cleaning Fluids which you have suggested instead of the Yellow Brand Phenyl we had asked for.

Please send a trial lot of all the disinfectant products, suitable for hospital use, to our address given above.

Notes

We shall consider placing an annual contract on the supply of the products, if the quality is suitable for our requirements.

Yours Faithfully,

ABC

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

8. …… letter is a formal document, which places a demand for goods or services.
9. …… are standardized forms containing all the necessary instructions and blank space to be filled at the time of sending out an order.
10. A …… is placed first to check the efficiency of the seller.

13.3 Cancellation Letters

A negative response letter in a business situation, such as a request for replacement or credit or adjustment or return of product, is bound to create unpleasant feelings of disappointment in the reader. Our purpose is to write about the "no" information while producing the minimum disappointment.

The letter would be more acceptable if the following points are kept in mind at the time of writing the letter.

1. The go of the audience should be emphasized.
2. The language used should be positive.
3. There should not be direct statement of the word "no".
4. There should not be a hint of apology.
5. Indicate in a natural or friendly tone the reason that would lead to a negative information or refusal.
6. Begin the letter with a paragraph that brings out the general situation (conditions) as a context in which the reader's request was considered. Indicate in a neutral or friendly tone the reasons that would lead to a negative information or refusal.

   Some of the possible methods:

   (a) Assure the receiver the negative message that his/her matter is considered with great understanding and care.

   (b) Make the reader believe that it is the circumstances or situation, and not the merit of his/her request that is responsible for the "no" response.

   (c) Agree with the reader in some way ("You are right that the guarantee period is one year…")
7. Give facts, reasons and factors for refusal.
8. In the same paragraph, mention the refusal.
9. It is important not to highlight the refusal.

   Therefore, no separate paragraph should be given to this negative point. Just state the refusal at the end of the paragraph that mentions the facts for refusal.

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10. The end seeks to maintain good business relations with the reader by suggesting to her/him an alternative course of action or a better deal in future.

Self Assessment

State whether the following statements are true or false:

11. The purpose of cancellation letter is to write about the "no" information while producing the minimum disappointment.

12. In a cancellation letter, we should always mention the facts and reasons for refusal.

13.4 Enquiry Letters

The most common letters in business are buyers' enquiries about goods and services and sellers' replies giving information and quotations. Enquiries generally figure in the first category of letters sent by an organization or an individual. They are, first and foremost, information-seeking letters. The writer may however, also give valuable information about himself or the organization, his or the organization's requirements, expectations etc. In this way, a letter of enquiry triggers off a two-way communication or information exchange process.

When, for example, a buyer seeks information about the price, quantity, availability of goods to be purchased or about the terms and conditions of sale, he sends a letter of enquiry to the seller. In such a letter, direct approach is used to save time. The letter is short and it is possible that formalities will not be required.

13.4.1 Writing Letter of Enquiry

A letter of enquiry is ideally a direct approach letter. It should, therefore, be straightforward, courteous and to the point. Special care must be taken about the opening that sets the tone of urgency or the need for information and the close of the letter that shows the writer's expectation of a quick response.

1. To ask for information, one can begin with a question like:

   Could you give us the following information?

   Or sentences like:

   Please send us the following information:

   Or

   I would appreciate receiving the following information from you:

2. Indicate the purpose for which the information is needed. In some fields, the information is very vast and only some of it, is needed by different users.

   For example, a dealer in kitchen accessories will be able to give useful information and a quotation only when he knows the buyer's specific need. The letter may begin with an explanation of the need.

   (a) We intend to set up a vast kitchen for our hotel. The area of the kitchen measures 8*7 meters.

   (b) We are setting up a huge manufacturing unit of plastic goods. We wish to enquire about the plastic manufacturing machines which you sell.

   A series of direct questions may follow this opening paragraph.

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3. End the letter with a friendly comment which will indicate a sense of personal relationship. Endings like, "an early reply would be appreciated," or "Thanking you in anticipation" are conventional in use. One could be more informal, by ending with sentences like:
   (a) "We could discuss the matter over a cup of tea, in my office, if you wish to…."
   (b) "I would be most grateful if you could e-mail this data to me."

Example:

1. **Asking a sports goods supplier to send their price list and catalogue**

MSV COLLEGE,

Model Town,

Rohtak.

June 10, 2006

Unique Sports,

Sector 11,

Chandigarh.

Dear Sirs,

We are wishing to buy kits of various games like basketball, cricket, hockey, etc., and other sports goods for the Physical Education Department of our College. Kindly send us your latest price-list of sports goods.

Yours faithfully,

Rohit Aneja,

Director.

2. **Write a letter to Aligarh Brass Fittings, enquiring the prices, terms of sale, etc**

BANSAL CONSTRUCTION CO.

TANK ROAD, GHAZIABAD.

June 13, 2006.

Aligarh Brass Fittings

Railway Road,

Aligarh.

Dear Sir,

We are a leading construction contractors and we deal in construction materials in this area. The demand for brass fittings is steadily increasing in this part and we have a larger number of enquiries and orders for them.

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Kindly send us your catalogue and price-list for wholesale purchase. Since our annual requirements in metal fittings of all kinds are large, we would like to place regular orders with you. Hence, please quote your most favourable prices and terms.

Yours faithfully,

Aman Verma

Manager-Purchasing

13.4.2 Quotations

A letter of quotation is a specific offer of sale made in response to an enquiry. It includes details about the prices of the goods needed, terms of payment, conditions of delivery etc. It is, in this way, an estimate of how much something will cost. It is supposed to be competitive in nature, i.e. lower and more attractive than what the seller thinks his competitors in the market would quote.

Asking for Quotations

When one intends to buy a product or service, one asks for quotations from several suppliers and then selects the most suitable one. If the orders are likely to be large or might lead to further orders, one must clearly mention this in the request for quotation to the suppliers, as they offer special terms to large buyers.

One must mention all the details of requirements when asking for a quotation. If it is for services like painting, renovation, air conditioning or a machine, whose working one wishes to see, one must ask for a representative to be sent.

Task You must have read various advertisements placed by government/non-government organisations in newspaper seeking quotations for various items. Collect such advertisements and read them.

Points to be included in this letter are:

1. Polite request for quotation.
2. Details of requirements with quality and quantity of goods.
3. Place and time of delivery of goods required, carriage paid of carriage forward.
4. Any special request about the mode of delivery or packing.
5. Suggestion that the volume of business will be large, if the quotation is favourable.

Example:

Dolma Paper Mill,

Karnal.

Sub: Inviting Quotation for Paper Rims

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Respected Sir,

We intend to purchase large stocks of printing papers of A4 size, required by our printing press, in large numbers, due to recent orders. We invite you to send your most competitive quotation for the same.

If your prices and terms are favourable, and your goods are of good quality and high standard, we shall consider giving a five year contract for the supply of paper reams.

Please send the quotation and carriage paid, within a week.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely

X Y Z

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

13. Letter of …… is the first and foremost, information-seeking letter.
14. A …… should include details about the prices of the goods needed, terms of payment, conditions of delivery etc.
15. One must mention all the details of …… when asking for a quotation.

13.5 Summary

- A special feature of the business letter is that it must create an impression on the mind of receiver as from where and from whom the letter has come, in what subjects with it.
- A business letter contains the following (in the given order): heading, date, reference number, inside address, salutation, subject heading, body, complementary close, signature, enclosures, typist initials, Post script and margin.
- An order is a formal document, which places a demand for goods or services, along with the details of the product/service required.
- Placing orders through an order form is quite simple, as it requires no formal language. Only the blank spaces are to be filled in carefully.
- A trial order is placed to check the efficiency of the seller. A retailer may also place a trial order to find out the demand for a new product.
- A negative response letter in a business situation, such as a request for replacement or credit or adjustment or return of product, is bound to create unpleasant feelings of disappointment in the reader.
- The most common letters in business are buyers' enquiries about goods and services and sellers' replies giving information and quotations.
- A letter of enquiry is ideally a direct approach letter. It should, therefore, be straightforward, courteous and to the point.
- A letter of quotation is a specific offer of sale made in response to an enquiry. It includes details about the prices of the goods needed, terms of payment, conditions of delivery etc.

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13.6 Keywords

Heading: The name of the firm printed in the letter pad in an attractive form.

Inside address: It is the name and address of the person or institution to which the letter is addressed.

Letter of Quotation: It is a specific offer of sale made in response to an enquiry.

Margin: It is the space left out at the left hand side of the letter paper.

Order Letter: It is a formal document, which places a demand for goods or services, along with the details of the product/service required.

Reference Number: It is the number and date of the previous correspondence held in this behalf.

Subject Heading: It is the brief statement of the main body of the letter.

13.7 Review Questions

1. Collect the order forms of four or five companies selling different kinds of products and compare them. Order forms are also available on the websites of companies. How are these different from printed forms?
2. Discuss the basic points to be kept in mind while making an enquiry.
3. What do you mean by a quotation? How is it drafted?
4. Customers who make unfair demands should be told that they are being unfair. Is it true? Why/ Why not?
5. A college library intends to buy display boards and racks. Draft a Letter by the college Principal, asking for quotations from Ruby Displays Ltd.
6. You are organizing a seminar as a part of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of your College/ Institute. Draft a letter to send to a firm of caterers asking for a quotation to arrange for lunch for the guests.
7. Write a Sample Order Letter to order for 150 books of Business Communication from Excel Publishers, New Delhi. Ask for relevant discount and give consignment and payment mode details.
8. You are a purchasing manager of an institution. You require printers and fax machines for your institute. You have noticed an advertisement by XYZ IT Solutions about the new models of HP Fax /printer/ copier in a newspaper. Write an enquiry letter to the company.
9. Considering the same situation as in question 7, write an order letter to XYZ IT Solutions.
10. You had placed an order for 100 cartridges with ABC Company which you now want to cancel. Write a letter to the company for the same.

Answers: Self Assessment

1. True	2. False	3. True	4. False
5. True	6. True	7. True	8. Order
9. Order form	10. Trial form	11. True	12. True
13. Enquiry	14. Quotation	15. Requirements	

13.8 Further Readings

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Books

Francis Soundararaj, *Speaking and Writing for Effective Business Communication*, Macmillan, 2007, p.84.

Herta A Murphy, Herbet Writing Hildebrandt, Jane P Thomas, *Effective Business Communication*, 7th Edition, Mcgraw Hill.

M.J. Mathew, *Business Communication*, RBSA Publishers, 2008, p.243.

Mary Ellen Guffey, *Business Communication;* Thomson, 2004, Singapore, P.178.

Soundararaj, *Speaking and Writing for Effective Business Communication*, Macmillan, 2007, p.76.

Online links

http://www.wiziq.com/tutorial/52553-Writing-Formal-Letters

http://www.xtec.es/~vfeliu/writing/form.htm

http://www.selfhelparticles.net/formal-letter-template/

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Unit 14: Writing and Planning Effective Business Letters

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Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the principles/guidelines to write effective business letters
- Describe the types of business letter

Introduction

Business letters differ from other kinds of writing activities in several ways. *First*, it is usually addressed to only one specific person and thus, it is important for the writer to think about the reader with a 'you-point' or 'you-attitude'. *Second*, every business letter can be a legal document or contract so that it is important to have a good strategy for letter writing.

There are various kinds of letters following in and out of a business organization. The simple reason is that the organization has to keep in touch with the world outside that comprises its suppliers, customers, government departments, banks, insurance agencies, transporters, job-seekers and

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so on. Then there are different occasions/contexts for which suitable letters have to be written. The writers of the letters are in different departments of the organization. In a way every letter is a unique piece of communication. And yet there are certain time-honoured conventions/ ways of writing that are supposed to be followed. Over the years quite some changes in styles of writing have been introduced by imaginative writers. Even then the basic aims remain the same. A systematic study of the art of letter writing requires that we classify them according to their functions, stricture, tone and approach.

In this unit, you learn the guidelines for writing effective business letters and different types of business letters.

14.1 Effective Letter Writing

Writing business letters involves the ease with which words are selected and combined so to clear the message to the readers. There are certain do's and don'ts of writing commercial letters. A few principles or essentials of a good business letters are discussed as under:

14.1.1 Write Clearly

The basic guideline for writing, the one that must be present for the other principles to have meaning, is to write clearly—to write message in such a way that the reader can understand, depend on, and act on. You can achieve clarity by making your message accurate and complete, by using familiar words, and by avoiding dangling expression and unnecessary jargon.

1. ***Be accurate:*** A writer's credibility is perhaps his or her most important asset, and credibility depends greatly on the accuracy of the message. If by carelessness; lack of preparation, or a desire to manipulate, a writer misleads the reader, the damage is immediate as well as long lasting. A reader who has been fooled once may not trust the writer again.

   Accuracy can take many forms. The most basic is the truthful presentation of facts and figures. But accuracy involves much more.

   Example: Consider the following sentence for a memo to a firm's financial backers.

   The executives committee of Mittal Financial Service met on Monday, Sept. 1, to determine how to resolve the distribution fiasco.

   Suppose, on checking, the reader learns that Sept. 1 fell on a Wednesday this year not on a Monday. Immediately, the reader may suspect everything else in the message. The reader's thinking might be, "If the writer made this error that I did catch, how many errors that I didn't catch are lurking there?"

   Now consider some other subtle shades of truth. The sentence implies that the committee met, perhaps in an emergency session, for the sole purpose of resolving the distribution fiasco. But suppose this matter was only one of five agenda items being discussed at a regularly scheduled meeting. Is the statement still accurate? Suppose the actual agenda listed the topic as "Discussion of Recent Distribution Problems." Is fiasco the same as problems?

   The accuracy of a message, then, depends on what is said, how it is said, and what is left unsaid (see, for example, the following section on the importance of completeness). Competent writers assess the ethical dimensions of their writing and use integrity, fairness, and good judgment to make sure their communication is ethical.

2. ***Be complete:*** Closely related to accuracy is completeness. A message that lacks important information may create inaccurate impressions. A message is complete when it contain all the information the reader needs—no more and no less – to react appropriately. As a start, answer the five Ws: Tell the reader who, what, when, where, and why. Leaving out any of

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this information may result either in decisions based on incomplete information or in extra follow-up correspondence to gather the needed information.

3. ***Use familiar words:*** Your message must be understood before someone can act on it. So you must use words that are both familiar to you (so that you will not misuse the word) and familiar to your readers.

4. ***Avoid dangling expressions:*** A dangling expression is any part of a sentence that does not logically fit in with the rest of the sentence. Its relationship with the other parts of the sentence is unclear; it dangles. The two most common types of dangling expressions are misplaced modifies and unclear antecedents.

   To correct dangling expressions, (i) make the subject of the sentence the doer of the action expressed in the introductory clause; (ii) move the expression closer to the word that it modifies;

   Don't: After reading the proposal, a few problems occurred to me. (As written, the sentence implies that "a few problems" read the proposals).

   Do: After reading the proposals, I noted a few problems.

   Don't: Dr. Ellis gave a presentation on the use of drugs in our auditorium. (Are drugs being used in the auditorium).

   Do: Dr. Ellis gave a presentation in our auditorium on the use of drugs.

   Don't: Robin explained the proposal to Joy, but she was not happy with it. (Who was not happy—Robin or Joy?)

   Do: Robin explained the proposal to Joy, but was not happy with it.

5. ***Avoid unnecessary jargon:*** Jargon is technical vocabulary used within a special group. Every field has its own specialized words, and jargon offers a precise and efficient way of communicating with people in the same field. Nevertheless, problems arise when jargon is used to communicate with someone who does not understand it. For example, to a banker, the term CD means a "certificate of deposit," but to a stereo buff or computer user, it means a "compact disc." Even familiar words can be confusing when given a specialized meaning.

   Caution Does the field business communication have jargon? It does. The word jargon itself might be considered communication, precise and efficient. Competent writers use specialized vocabulary to communicate with specialists who understand it. And they avoid using it when their readers are not specialists.

14.1.2 Prefer Short and Simple Words

Short and simple words are likely to be understood, less likely to distract the reader. Literary authors often write to impress; they select words to achieve a specific reader reaction, such as amusement, excitement, or anger. Business writers, on the other hand, write to express; they want to achieve comprehension. They want their readers to focus on their information, not on how they convey their information. Using short, simple words helps achieve this goal.

Don't: To recapitulate, our utilization of adulterated water precipitated the interminable delays.

Do: In short, our use of impure water caused the endless delays.

It is true, of course, that quite often short, simple words may not be available to convey the precise shade of meaning you want. For example, there is no one-syllable replacement for ethnocentrism

Notes

(the belief that one's own cultural group is superior). Our guidelines are not to use only short and simple words but to prefer short and simple words.

Did u know? As Mark Twain, who was paid by the word for his writing, noted, "I never write metropolis for seven cents because I can get the same money for cop".

When you speak and write, no law says you have to use big words. Short are as good as long ones, and short, old words like sun and grass and home are best of all. A lot of small words, more than you might think, can meet your with a strength, grace, and charm that large words lack.

Big words can make the way dark for those who hear what you say and read what you write. They add fat to your prose. Small words are the ones we seem to have known from birth. They are like the hearth fire that warms the home and they cast a clear light on big things: night and day, love and hate, war and peace, life and death.

Short words are bright, like sparks that glow in the night; sharp, like the blade of a knife; hot, like salt tears that scald the cheek; quick, like moths that flit from flame to flame; and terse, like the dart and sting of a bee.

If a long word says just what you want, do not fear to use it. But know that our tongue is rich in crisp, brisk, swift, short words. Make them the spine and the heart of what you speak and write. Like fast friends, they will not let you down.

Leader practices what he preaches.

Did u know? All 223 words in these four paragraphs are one-syllable words! Similarly, 71% of the words in Lincoln's Gettysburg addresses (190 out of 267) are only one syllable long.

You have probably heard the advice "Write as you speak." Although not universally true, such advice is pretty close to the mark. Of course, if your conversation were peppered with redundancies, jargon, and clinches, you would not want to put such weakness on paper. But typical conversation uses mostly short, simple words—the kind you do want to put on paper. Don't assume that the bigger the word, greater the level of intellect. In fact, you need a large vocabulary and a well developed word sense to select the best word. And more often than not, that word is short and simple. Write to express – not to impress.

14.1.3 Write with Vigour

Vigorous language is specific and concrete. Limp language is filled with clinches, slang, and buzzwords. Vigorous writing holds your reader's interest. But if your reader isn't even interested enough to read your message, your writing can't possibly achieve its objective. A second reason for writing with vigor has to do with language itself. Vigorous writing tends to lend vigour to the ideas presented. A good idea looks even better dressed in vigorous language, and a weak idea looks even weaker dressed in limp language.

1. ***Use specific, concrete language:*** As discussed, communication barriers caused by over abstraction and ambiguity when possible, choose specific words—words that have a definite, unambiguous meaning. Likewise, choose concrete words—words that bring a definite picture to your reader's mind.

   Don'ts: The vehicle broke down several times recently.

   Do: The delivery van broke down three times last week.

   In the first version, what does the reader imagine when he or she reads the word vehicle—a golf cart? Automobile? Boat? Space shuttle? Likewise, how many times is several—two? Three? Fifteen? The revised version tells precisely what happened.

Notes

Sometimes we do not need such specific information.

Example: In "The president answered several questions from the audience and then adjourned the meeting", the specific number watch out for words like several, recently, a number of, substantial, a few, and a lot of. You may need to be more exact.

Likewise, use the most concrete word that is appropriate; give the reader a specific mental picture of what you mean. That is, learn to talk in pictures:

Don't: The vice president was bored by the presentation.

Do: the vice president kept yawning and looking at her watch.

But sure that your term convey as much meaning as the reader needs to react appropriately. Watch out for terms like emotional meeting (anger or gratitude?), bright colour (red or yellow), new equipment (postage meter or cash register?), and change in price (increase or decrease?).

2. ***Avoid clichés, slang, and buzz words:*** A cliché is an expression that has become monotonous through overuse. It lacks freshness and originality and may also send the unintended message that the writer couldn't be bothered to choose language geared specifically to the reader.

   Don't: Enclosed please find an application form that you should return at your earliest convenience.

   Do: Please return the enclosed application form before May 15.

   As noted earlier, slang is an expression, often short-lived, that is identified with a specific group of people. If you understand each word in an expression but still don't understand what it means in context, chances are you're having trouble with a slang expression.

   Example: Read the following sentences:

   It turns my stomach the way you can break your neck and beat your brains out around here, and they still stab you in the back.

   To anyone unfamiliar with American slang (a non-native speaker, perhaps), this sentence might seem to be about the body because it refers to the stomach, neck, brains, and back. The real meaning, of course, is something like this:

   I am really upset that this company ignores hard work and loyalty when making personnel decisions.

3. ***Same rules the world over:*** The strategies for writing effective business messages discussed in this unit are universal.

   Avoid slang in most business writing, for several reasons. First, it is informal and much of business writing, being formal and businesslike calls for standard word usage. Second, slang is short-lived. A slang phrase used today may not be in use-and thus may not be familiar-in three years, when your letter is retrieved from the files for reference. Third, slang is identified group of people, and others in the general population may not understand the intended meaning.

   A buzz word is an important-sounding expression used mainly to impress other people. Because buzz words are so often used by government officials and high ranking business people-people whose comments are "newsworthy"– these expressions get much media attention. They become instant clichés and then go out of fashion just as quickly. At either end of their short life span, they cause communication problems. If an expression is currently being used by everyone, it sounds monotonous, lacking originality. If it is so longer being used by any one, readers may not understand the intended meaning.

Notes

Caution Be especially careful of turning nouns and other types of words into verbs by adding-ize. Such words are agendize, prioritize, unionize, and operationalize quickly.

14.1.4 Write Concisely

Businesspeople are busy people. The information revolution has created more paperwork, giving businesspeople access to more data. Having more data to analyze (but presumably not being able to read any faster or having any extra time in which to do so), mangers want information presented in the fewest possible words. To achieve conciseness, make every word count. Avoid redundancy, wordy expressions, hidden verbs and nouns, and other "space-eaters".

1. ***Avoid redundancy:*** Redundancy is unnecessary repetition of an idea that has already been expressed or intimated. Eliminating the repetition contributes to conciseness.

   Don't: Signing both copies of the lease is a necessary requirement.

   Do: Signing both copies of the lease is necessary.

   Don't: Combine the ingredients together.

   Do: Combine the ingredients.

   A requirement is by definition necessary, so only one of the words is needed. And to combine means to bring together, so using both words is redundant. Don't confuse redundancy and repetition. Repetition-using the same word more than once-is occasionally effective for emphasis. Redundancy, however, serves no purpose and should always be avoided.

Notes Some redundancies are humorous, as in the classic Samuel Goldwyn comment "Anybody who goes to a psychiatrist ought to have his head examined," or the sign in a jewellery store window, "Ears pierced while you wait", or the statement in an automobile advertisement, "Open seven days a week plus weekends". Most redundancies, however are simply verbiage-and hence must be avoided.

   Do not use the unnecessary word together after such words as assemble combine, cooperate, gather, join, or mix. Do not use the unnecessary word new before such words as beginner, discover, fad, innovation, or progress. And do not use the unnecessary word up after such words as connect, divide, eat, lift, mix, and rest.

2. ***Avoid wordy expressions:*** Although wordy expressions are not necessarily writing errors (as redundancies are), they do slow the pace of the communication and should be avoided. For example, try substituting one word for a phrase whenever possible.

   Don't: In view of the fact that the model failed twice during the time that we tested it, we are at this point of time searching for other options.

   Do: Because the model failed twice when we tested it, we are now searching for other options.

Caution The original sentence contains 28 words; the revised sentence, 16 you've "saved" 12 words. In his delightful book *Revising*, Lanham speaks of the "lard factor": the percentage of words saved by "getting rid of the lard" in a sentence.

Notes

In this case,

28 – 16 = 12; 12¸ 28 = 43%

Thus, 43% of the original sentence was "lard", which fattened the sentence without providing any "nutrition". Lanham suggests, "Think of a lard factor (LF) of 1/3 to ½ as normal and don't stop revising until you've removed it."

3. ***Avoid hidden verbs:*** A hidden verb is a verb that has been changed into a noun form, weakening the action. Verbs are action words and should convey the main action in the sentence. They provide interest and forward movement. Consider this example:

   Don't: Carl made an announcement that he will give consideration top our request.

   Do: Carl announced that he will consider our request.

   What is the real action? It is not that Carl made something or that he will give something. The real action is hiding in the nouns: Carl announced and he will consider. These two verbs forms, then, should be the main verbs in the sentence. Notice that the revised sentence is much more direct-and four words shorter (LF = 33%).

4. ***Avoid hidden subject:*** Like verbs, subjects plays a prominent role in a sentence and should stand out, rather being obscured by an expletive is an expression such as there is or it is that begins a clause or sentence and for which pronoun has no antecedent. Because the topic of a sentence that begins with an expletive is not immediately clear, you should use sentences sparingly in business writing. Avoiding expletives also contributes to conciseness.

   Don't: There was no indication that it is necessary to include John in the meeting.

   Do: No one indicated that John should be included in the meeting.

   Imply or Condense: Sometimes you do not need to explicitly state certain information; you can imply it instead. In other situations, you can use adjectives and adverbs instead of clauses to convey the needed information in a more concise format.

   Don't: We have received your recent letter and are happy to provide the date you requested.

   Do: We are happy to provide the data you recently requested.

   Don't: This brochure, which is available free of charge, will answer your questions.

   Do: This free brochure will answer your questions.

Task Give concise phrases that can be substituted for the following lengthy phrases ones.

1. Enclosed you will find
2. Please feel free to write
3. Endorse on the back of this check
4. Are of the opinion that
5. Arrived at the conclusion

14.1.5 Prefer Positive Language

Words that create a positive image are more likely to help you achieve your objective than are negative words. For example, you are more likely to persuade someone to do as you ask if

you stress the advantages of doing so rather than the disadvantages of not doing so. Positive language also builds goodwill for you and your organization and often gives more information than negative language. Note the difference in tone and amount of information given in the following pairs of sentence:

Don't: The briefcase is not made of cheap imitation leather.

Do: The briefcase is made of 100% belt leather for years of durable service.

Don't: We cannot ship your merchandise until we receive your cheque.

Do: As soon as we receive your cheque, we will ship your merchandise.

Don't: I do not yet have any work experience.

Do: My two terms as secretary of the management club taught me the importance of accurate record keeping and gave me experience in working as part of a team.

Expressions like cannot and will not are the only ones that convey negative messages. Other words, like mistake, damage, failure, refuse, and deny, also carry negative connotations and should be avoided when possible.

Don't: Failure to follow the directions may cause the blender to malfunction.

Do: Following the directions will ensure many years of carefree service from your blender.

Don't: We apologize for this error.

Do: We appreciate your calling this matter to our attention.

Don't: We close at 7 p.m. on Fridays to give you time to shop after work.

Do: We're open until 7 p.m. on Fridays to give you time to shop after work.

Sometimes you can avoid negative language by switching to the subjunctive mood, which uses words like wish, if, and would to refer to conditions that are impossible or improbable. Such language softens the impact of the negative messages, making it more palatable to the reader. Here are two examples:

Don't: I cannot speak at your November meeting.

Do: I wish it were possible for me to speak at your November meeting.

Don't: I cannot release the names of our clients.

Do: Releasing the names of our clients would violets their right to privacy.

In short, stress what is true and what can be done rather what is not true and what cannot be done. This is not to say that negative language has no place in business writing. Negative language is strong and emphatic, and sometimes you will want to use it. However, unless the situation clearly calls for negative language, you are more likely to achieve your objective and to build goodwill for yourself and your organization by stressing the positive.

Notes **Writing Effective Sentence**

A sentence has a subject and predicate and express at least one complete thought. Beyond these attributes, however, sentences vary widely in style, length, and effect. They are also very flexible; writers can move sentence parts around, add and delete information, and substitute words to express different ideas and emphasize different points. To build effective sentences, use a variety of sentence types, and use active and passive voice appropriately.

Notes

Because words are the building blocks for your message, choose them with care. Using short and simple words, writing with clarity, vigor, and conciseness; and using positive language will help you construct effective sentences and paragraphs.

14.1.6 Use a Variety of Sentence Types

There are four basic types—Simple, compound, complex and compound-complex-all of which are appropriate for business writing.

1. ***Simple sentences:*** A simple sentence: It contains one independent clause (a clause that can stand alone as a complete though). Because it presents a single idea and is usually (but not always) short, a simple sentence is often used for emphasis. Although a simple sentence contains only one independent clause, it may have a compound subject or compound verb (or both). All of the following sentences are simple. I quit.

   Individual retirement accounts are a safe option.

   Both individual retirement accounts and simplified employee pension plans are safe and convenient options as retirement investments for the entrepreneur.

2. ***Compound sentence:*** A compound sentence: This contains two or more independent clauses. Because each clause presents a complete idea, each idea receives equal emphasis. (If the two ideas are not closely related, they should be presented in two separate sentences). Here are three compound sentences:

   (a) Stacey listened, but I nodded.

   (b) Morris Technologies made a major acquisition last year, and it turned out to be a disaster.

   (c) Westmoreland Mines moved its headquarters to Prescott in 1984; however, it stayed there only five years and then moved back to Globe.

3. ***Complex sentence:*** *A complex sentence:* It contains one independent clause and at least one dependent clause.

   Example: In the first sentence below, "Two scanners will save valuable input time" is an independent clause because it makes sense by itself. "Although it cost $235" is a dependent clause because it does not make sense by itself. Although it cost $235, the scanner will save valuable input time.

   (a) George Bosley, who is the new CEO at Hubbell, made the decision.

   (b) I will be moving to Austin when I assume my new position.

   The dependent clause provides additional, but subordinates, information related to the independent clause.

4. ***Compound-clause sentence:*** A compound-complex sentence: This contains tow or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses.

   (a) I wanted to write the report myself, but I soon realized that I needed the advice of our legal department. (Two independent clauses and one department clause).

   (b) If I can, I'll do it; if I cannot, I'll ask Shelia to do it. (Two independent clauses and two dependent clauses).

5. ***Sentence variety:*** Using a variety of sentence patterns and sentence lengths helps keep your writing interesting. Note how simplistic and choppy too many short sentences can be and how boring and difficult too many long sentences can be.

Notes

The sentence in these paragraphs should be revised to show relationships between ideas more clearly, to keep readers interested, and to improve readability. Use simple sentences for emphasis and variety, compound sentences for communication-ordinate (equal) relationships, and complex sentences for subordinate relationships.

The first two sentences in the revision are complex, the third sentence is simple, and the last sentence is compound. The lengths of the four sentences range from 12 to 27 words. To write effective sentences, use different sentences patterns and lengths. Most sentences in good business writing range from 16 to 22.

14.1.7 Use Active and Passive Voice Appropriately

Voice is the aspect of a very that shows whether the subject of the sentence acts or is acted on. In the active voice, the subject performs the action expressed by the very. In the passive voice, the subject receives the action expressed by the verb.

Active: Inmac offers a full refund on all orders.

Passive: A full refund on all orders is offered by Inmac.

Active: Shoemacher & Doerr audited the books in 2002.

Passive: The books were audited in 2002 by Shoemacher & Doerr.

Passive sentences add some form of the verb to be to the main verb, so passive sentences are always somewhat longer active sentences. In the first set of sentences, just given, for example, compare 'offers' in the active sentences with is offered by in the passive sentences.

In active sentences, the subject is the doer of the action; in passive sentences, the subject is the receiver of the action. And because the subject gets more emphasis than other nouns in a sentence, active sentences emphasize the doer, and passive sentences emphasize the receiver, of the action. In the second set of sentences, either version could be considered correct, depending on whether the writer wanted to emphasize Shoemacher & Doerr or the books.

Use active sentences most of the time in business writing, just as you naturally use active sentences in most of your conversations. Note that verb voice (active or passive) has nothing to do with verb tense, which shows the time of the action. As the following sentences show, the action in both active and passive sentences can occur in the past, present, or future.

Don't: A very logical argument was presented by Hal. (Passive voice, Past tense)

Do: Hal presented a very logical argument. (Active voice, past tense)

Don't: An 18% increase will be reported by the eastern region. (Passive voice, future tense)

Do: The eastern region will report on 18% increase. (Active voice, Future tense)

Passive sentences are most appropriate when you want to emphasize the receiver of the action, when the person doing the action is either unknown or unimportant, or when you want to be tactful in conveying negative information. All the following sentences are appropriately stated in the passive voice:

- Protective legislation was blamed for the drop in imports. (Emphasizes the receiver of the action)
- Transportation to the construction site will be provided. (The doer of the action not important)
- Several complaints have been received regarding the news policy. (Tactfully conveys negative news)

Words, sentences, and paragraphs are all building blocks of communication.

Notes

You have seen how using a variety of sentences types and using active and passive voice appropriately can help make your sentences more effective. Now you are ready to combine these sentences to form logical paragraphs.

Developing logical paragraphs: A paragraphs is a group of related sentences that focus on one main idea. The main idea is often identified in the first sentence of the paragraph, which is then known as a topic sentence. The body of the paragraph supports this main idea by giving more information, analysis, or examples. A paragraph is typically part of a longer message, although one paragraph can contain the entire message, especially in such informal communication as memorandums and e-mail.

Paragraphs organize the topic into manageable units of information for the reader. Readers need a cue to tell them when they have finished a topic, so that they can pause and refocus their attention on the next topic. To serve this purpose, paragraphs must be unified and coherent, be stated in parallel structure, and be of an appropriate length.

14.1.8 Keep Paragraphs Unified and Coherent

Although closely related, unity and coherence are not the same. A paragraph has unity when all its parts work together to develop a single idea consistently and logically. A paragraph has coherence when each sentence links smoothly to the sentences before and after it.

Unity: A unified paragraph gives information that is directly related to the topic, presents this information in a logical order, and omits irrelevant details. The following excerpt is a middle paragraph in a memorandum arguing against the proposal that Collins, a baby-food manufacturer, should expand into producing good for adults:

Don't: (1) We cannot focus our attention on both ends of the age spectrum. (2) In a recent survey, two-thirds of the under-35 age group named Collins as the first company that came to mind for the category "baby food products". (3) For more than 50 years we have spent millions of dollars annually to identify our company as the baby-food company, and market research shows that we have been successful. (4) Last year, we introduced Peas 'N Pears, our most successful baby-food introduction Peas 'N Pears, our most successful baby-food introduction ever. (5) To now seek to position ourselves as a producer of food for adults would simply be incongruous. (6) Our well-defined image in the marketplace would make producing food for adults risky.

The paragraph obviously lacks unity. You may decide that the overall topic of the paragraph is Collin's well-defined image as a baby-food producer. So Sentence 6 would be the best topic sentence. You might also decide that Sentence 4 brings in extra information that weakens paragraphs unity and would be left out. The most unified paragraphs, then, would be Sentences 6,3,2,5 and 1, as shown here:

Do: Our well-defined image in the marketplace would make producing food for adults risky. For more than 50 years we have spent millions of dollars annually to identify our company as the baby-food company, and market research shows that we have been successful. In a recent survey, two-third of the under 35 age group named Collins as the first company that came to mind for the category "baby-food products" to now seek to position ourselves as a producer of food for adults would simply be incongruous. We cannot focus our attention on both ends of the age spectrum.

A topic sentence is especially helpful in a long paragraph. It usually appears at the beginning of a paragraph. This position helps the writer focus on the topic, so the paragraph will have unity. And it lets the reader know immediately what the topic is.

Coherence: A coherent paragraph weaves sentences together so that the discussion is integrated. The reader never needs to pause to puzzle out the relationships or reread to get the intended meaning. The major ways to achieve coherence are to use transitional words and pronouns, to repeat key words and ideas, and to use parallel structure.

Notes

Transitional words help the reader see relationships between sentences. Such words may be as simple as first and other indicators of sequence.

Ten years ago, Collins tried to overcome market resistance to its new line of baby clothes. First, it mounted a multimillion-dollar ad campaign featuring the Mason quintuplets. Next, it sponsored a Collins baby look-alike contest. Then it sponsored two network specials featuring Dr. Benjamin Spock.

Finally, it brought in the Madison Avenue firm of Morgan & Modine to broaden its image.

The words first, next, then, and finally clearly signal step-by-step movement. Now note the following logical transitions, aided by connecting words:

I recognize, however, that Collins cannot thrive on baby food alone. To begin with, since we already control 73% of the market, further gains will be difficult. What's more, the current baby boom is slowing. Therefore, we must expand our product line.

Transitional words act as road signs, indicating where the message is headed and letting the reader know what to expect.

A second way to achieve coherence is to use pronouns. Because pronouns stand for words already named, using pronouns binds sentences and ideas together. The pronouns are underlined here:

If Collins branches out with additional food products, one possibility would be a fruit snack for youngsters. Funny Fruits were tested in Columbus last summer, and they were a big hit. Roger Johnson, national marketing manager, says he hopes to build new food categories into a $200 million business. He is also exploring the possibility of acquiring other established name brands. These acquired brands would let Collins expand faster than if it had to develop a new product of its own.

A third way to achieve coherence is to repeat key words. In a misguided attempt to appear interesting, writers sometimes use different terms for the same idea. For example, in discussing a proposed merger a writer may at different points use merger, combination, union, association, and syndicate. Or a writer may use the words administrator, manager, supervisor, and executive all to refer to the same person. Such "elegant variation" only confuses the reader; who has no way of knowing whether the writer is referring to the same concept or to slightly different variations of the concept. Avoid needless repetition, but use purposeful repetition to link ideas and thus promote paragraph coherence. Here is a good example:

Collins has taken several steps recently to enhance profits and project a stronger leadership position. One of these steps is streamlining operations. Collins's line of children's clothes was unprofitable, so it discounted the line. Its four produce farms were likewise unprofitable, so it hired an outside professional team to manage them. This team eventually recommended selling the farms.

Ensure paragraph unity by developing only one topic per paragraph and by presenting the information in logical order. Ensure paragraph coherence by using transitional words and pronouns and by repeating key words.

14.1.9 Use Parallel Structure

The term parallelism means using similar grammatical structure for similar ideas-that is, matching adjectives with adjectives, nouns with nouns, infinites with infinites, and so on. Much widely quoted writing uses parallelism,

Example: Julius Caesar's "I came, I conquered" and Abraham Lincoln's "government of the people, by the people, and for the people".

Notes

Parallel structure smoothly links ideas and adds a pleasing rhythm to sentences and paragraphs, thereby enhancing coherence.

Don't: The news dispatcher is competent and a fast worker.

Do: The dispatcher is competent and fast.

Don't: The new grade of paper is lightweight, nonporous, and it is inexpensive.

Do: The new grade of paper is lightweight, nonporous, and inexpensive.

Don't: The training programme will cover

- Vacation and sick leaves
- How to resolve grievances
- Managing your workstation

Do: The training programme will cover

- Vacation and sick leaves
- Grievances resolution
- Workstation management

Don't: One management consultant recommended either selling the children's furniture division or its conversion into a children's toy division.

Do: One management consultant recommended either selling the children's furniture division or converting it into a children's toy division.

Don't: Gladys is not only proficient in word processing but also in desktop publishing.

Do: Gladys is proficient not only in word processing but also in desktop publishing.

In the last two sets of sentences above, note that correlative conjunctions (such as both/and, either/or, and not only/but also) must be followed by words in parallel form. Be especially careful to use parallel structure in report headings that have equal weight and in numbered lists.

14.1.10 Control Paragraph Length

How long should a paragraph of business writing be? As with other considerations, the needs of the reader, rather than the convenience of the writer, should determine the answer. Paragraphs should help the reader by signaling new ideas as well as by providing a physical break. Long blocks of unbroken text look boring and needlessly complex. And they may unintentionally obscure an important idea buried in the middle. On the other hand, a series of extremely short paragraphs can weaken coherence by obscuring underlying relationships.

Essentially, there are no fixed rules for paragraph length, and occasionally one or ten-sentence paragraphs might be effective. However, most paragraphs of good business writers fall into the 60 to 80 word range-long enough for a topic sentence and three or four supporting sentences. Although a single paragraph should never discuss more than one major topic, complex topics may need to be divided into several paragraphs. Your purpose and needs of your reader should ultimately determine paragraph length.

In the end please note the statement given by ***Sir Earnest Gowers***

"If he (the person you are replying to) is rude, be especially courteous.

If he is muddle-headed, be especially lucid. If he is pig headed, be patient.

If he is helpful, be appreciative. If he convicts you of a mistake, acknowledge it

freely and even with gratitude".

Notes

Self Assessment

State whether the following statements are true or false:

1. Being accurate only involves the truthful presentation of facts and figures.
2. A dangling expression is any part of a sentence that logically fits in with the rest of the sentence.
3. Competent writers use specialized vocabulary to communicate with specialists who understand it.
4. You should not be afraid of using a long word if it says just what you want.
5. A buzz word is an expression that has become monotonous through overuse.
6. Cliché is an important-sounding expression used mainly to impress other people.
7. A hidden verb is a verb that has been changed into a noun form, weakening the action.
8. Positive language builds goodwill for you and your organization and often gives more information than negative language.
9. A simple sentence is one that contains more than one independent clause.
10. A compound-complex sentence is one that contains two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses.
11. You should use passive sentences most of the time in business writing.
12. In order to appear interesting, you should use different terms for the same idea.

14.2 Types of Business Letters

There are different kinds of business letters, used for different purposes. Business letters include sales letters, request letters, goodwill letters, acknowledgement letters, credit and collection letters, inquiry letters, demand letters etc.

14.2.1 Routine Business Letters

Routine business letters will fall into one of three categories: they may be asking for information or action or they may be placing orders for products or they may be making a claim requiring an adjustment when something has gone wrong. Writing routine letters is one of the most helpful manners of communicating with customers; therefore, it is important to follow the rules of creating direct requests, direct replies and goodwill messages. Successful business letters contain several attributes such as clear content, goodwill tone, and correct form. The writing process includes three phases: analysis, anticipation, and adaptation; research, organization, and composition; revision, proofreading, and evaluation. Here, we focus on creating direct request letters, direct replies, and goodwill messages.

Direct requests can be divided into three groups: information or action request letter, order letter, and direct claim letter. Although these three types of letters have different purposes; they have similar attributes in the writing process. In fact, working with the direct pattern requires writers to put their requests first, followed with a detailed explanation of the purpose or facts, and finally showing appreciation and an end date.

Direct replies consist of complying with requests, recommendation letters, and adjustments letters, creating direct replies has some similarities with writing requests letters, such as stating the purpose directly at the beginning, explaining supporting information in the body, and ending with a pleasant expression. However, there are also some additional factors to be considered when writing replies and these are: the use of a subject line, provide information about the candidate, and win customer's confidence.

Notes

Response, and sympathy are all suggestions of goodwill messages. In addition, writers also have to pay attention to the five Ss: selfless, specific, sincere, spontaneous, and short. Writers can use 3 × 3 writing process for creating goodwill messages in several different statements, as expressing thanks, accepting praise, and offering assistance.

Table 14.1: Guide for Writing Routine

Routine Reply	Routine Claim	Routine Adjustment Re: possible loss of goodwill. Tone is crucial	Goodwill No true business objective Written out of sense of kindness
1. Put good new first-you are responding favorably-first is where it receives most attention	1. Write as soon as problem is identified	1. Be gracious & Answer promptly Show confidence in readers' honesty.	1. Be prompt, sincere, specific, brief & direct
2. Prompt & Courteous answer negative tone loses goodwill	2. Appropriate address to Customer Service or other	2. Show worth of company & products	2. Congratulatory: for major business & personal achievement
3. Answer all questions state or implied add more info. to help reader	3. Use Courteous & non-emotional language	3. Use neutral or positive language	3. Thanks: valuable to employee formal: typed informal: handwritten & personal
4. Use of FORM letters when answering same info	4. Identify problem & explain it Provide as much background information as necessary (dates, model numbers, check copies, other letters)	4. Good news first: if granting claim Do not apologize	4. Sympathy: appreciated need to be handwritten
5. Optional Promotion sales Build goodwill	5. Describe action you expect reader to take. Make sure action is fair & reasonable	5. Explain why problem happened & the steps that are being taken to ensure it won't happen again	
6. END positive & friendly	6. End Be confident	6. Resale: re-establish customer's confidence in company. Don't make promises can't keep	
		7. Customer's fault: explain/be tactful/ impersonal	
		8. END: friendly & positive imply continuing relationship with customer	

Notes

Examples:

1. **Routine Request Letter**

PEARLS REPAIR SERVICE

155, Kashmere Gate
New Delhi

April 30, 2003

Mr. Abhishek Harit
Order Department
MML Electronics Suppliers, Inc.
135 C, Kolkata

Dear Mr. Harit,

Re: OUR ORDER NUMBER 149, YOUR SHIPMENT NO 126031

In our order of April 08, 2007, included a request for an electron tube X518E. The shipment we received today does not include the tube we ordered but does include proton. Upon checking your catalogue, I discovered that you intend this tube to be a replacement for tube X518E, which you have discontinued from your product line.

The supervisor of our repair shop, however, says that he cannot use the replacement tube sent by you. Because of this, we are returning this one item from the shipment. Please credit our account for ₹ 3000 for the tube we did not order and have returned.

Sincerely, yours,

Raj Goel
Office Manager

2. **Sample Reply Letter**

BAJAJ OFFICE PRODUCTS

B-38, Lajpat Nagar
New Delhi

July 22, 2008

Mr. Anil Sharma
Office Manager
Maria Interiors, Inc.
12, Andheri West
Mumbai- 400012

Dear Mr. Sharma,

The following items were shipped to you today by Worldwide Express, rush service:

18pkgs.	D33E	Colour-code files with heavy manila folders-letter size.
24	D33E-3325	Large capacity 3-ring binders-letter size..

Enclosed is the invoice for ₹ 5000, including sales tax. Your order for four boxes square-bottom box files – 2 in capacity (D33E – 276) should reach you within 10 days, also by Worldwide Express. Because of the great popularity of these durable, high-capacity hole punchers, they are currently out of stock. A shipment from the supplier is due shortly, and when it arrives, we will fulfill your order immediately. Thank you for your order, and please let me know if

Notes

I can be of service in the future. For your convenience, I am enclosing a preview copy of the new catalogue, No. 51 that will be mailed to our customers in early December.

Sincerely,

Rajneesh Gupta
Manager Sales
RB:rb
Encl: Catalogue No.51
: Invoice

3. **Adjustment/ Goodwill Letter**

NEW INDIA TILE COMPANY

444, New Main Street
Charki Dadri - 120072

April 13, 2002

Ms Sonia Suri
General Manager
Escorts Medical Hospital
Neelam-Bata Road
Faridabad, Haryana

Dear Ms Suri,

You are certainly correct that we guarantee our tile for 20 years after installation.

We always stand behind our products when they are used according to the recommendations of the manufacturers and design consultant.

When I received your letter, I immediately studied sales contract and checked the reports of the design consultant. Our records show that the consultant did explain on March 6, 2000 that Paloma Tile - model 672 - was not recommended for heavy traffic. Although another tile was suggested, you preferred to order the Paloma Tile, and you signed a waiver of guarantee. For your information, I'm enclosing a copy of that page of the contract. Because our recommendation was to use another tile, our usual 20-year guarantee is not in force in this situation.

For your needs, we do recommend the Watermark Tile, which is specially sealed to withstand heavy traffic. The Watermark Tile is available in a design that would complement the Paloma Tile already in place. Our design consultant, Mr. Ramesh, would be happy to visit Escorts Medical Hospital and recommend a floor pattern that could incorporate a new Watermark Tile, without sacrificing the Paloma Tile that does not show wear. Enclosed is a brochure showing the Watermark designs? Mr. Ramesh will call you for an appointment this week, and because you are our customer, we will be happy to schedule prompt service for you.

Sincerely,

Mokshit Sharma
Production Installation Manager
MS/dc

Encls: Watermark brochure

Contract page

Cc: Mr. Ramesh

4. **A letter complaining the dispatch of defective goods** **Notes**

LEARNING TOGETHER LIMITED

Ph....
Fax...

Lakshmi tower,
Gr. Floor,
Mangalore-57004
April 1, 200...

M/S. Children's Book house,
Beverley Buildings,
Mysore-570001.

Dear Sirs,

Sub: Defective and damaged books

Thank you very much for the dispatch of 16 books on "Effective Correspondence" sent to us as per our order No. LTC /71/7 dated March 28, 200.... On going through these books we found that one of the copies sent by you is incomplete as pages 45 to 64 (20 pages) are missing while another copy is badly damaged.

Will you please let us know immediately whether we should send them back so that you may replace them with defect free copies?

Thank you

Yours faithfully,

For Learning Together Limited

Madhukar

Partner

Task Visit various websites that provide samples of business letters and read various order letters and direct claim letters. Choose any two out of those and re-write them in your own words.

14.2.2 Pervasive Business Letters

Persuasion is the main function of many communications both formal and informal, but especially of business communication. Understandably, it is most evident in effective business letters. A persuasive letter is written in a variety of circumstances and for a variety of reasons but each case involves skilful use of words to impress something on someone else. Just as the selling of a product or a service involves persuasion, so does the 'selling' of an idea, point of view or even oneself.

Sales Letters

A sales letter is a form of direct mail in which an advertiser sends a letter to a potential customer. A sales letter is a marketing tool that promotes a good or service. Sales letters may be individually typewritten, typeset and printed, fully computer typed, or printed as a form letter and then completed by inserting the names and addresses of prospects. Its objective is to persuade the reader to buy what the letter offers. To be effective, its scope must describe a particular benefit the reader will gain by making the purchase, such as a problem solved or a need fulfilled.

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Before you begin, you should be familiar with what your sales letter intends to promote and the people you intend it to reach. This may require a little research and some brainstorming, but without preparation your sales letter will be less effective. Then decide on the features that best highlight the good or service; identify its selling points, in other words. Bigger, brighter, stronger, faster, cheaper, etc., are common selling points when writing a sales letter. Once you have made a selection, you must persuade the readers that the benefit of your offer outweighs the cost. In other words, convince them that what you have to offer is a good deal.

A sales letter persuades the reader to place an order; to request additional information; or to lend support to the product or service or cause being offered. It influences the reader to take a specific action by making an offer – not an announcement – to him. To sell, the sales letter must be specific, go to the right audience, appeal to the readers needs, and it must be informative.

Keep in mind that people do business with people. When you personalize your sales letter, addressing the reader by name, you recognize that person's individual importance and their value as a human being.

Identifying Prospective Target

A sales letter should be addressed to a group of prospective buyers who meet an established set of criteria. Selecting their names should be done carefully, ideally with the help of a professional who specializes in direct mail marketing. He or she will be able to assist you in constructing a mailing list tailored to your specific needs.

Once assembled, the names of your potential customers should be placed in the salutation and inside heading of your sales letter. They should also be included on the top line of your envelope.

Establishing Objective

The objective of a sales letter is threefold:

1. To attract attention
2. Generate interest
3. Induce a purchase

Your sales letter may not induce an immediate purchase, however, it should, at the very least, meet the first two objectives. It should provide its readers with enough information to heighten their brand awareness about who you are and what goods or services you have to offer. They may return as a customer in the future.

Formatting the Sales Letter

Working from an outline is the simplest way to draft a sales letter.

Heading and Image

Use your business or a personal heading or nameplate, minus the logo. The next component is the headline. Type the headline in a few short lines where the inside name and address would go. Or, you could consider centering the headline or putting it in a text box to grab attention. You may want to add color or shading to the box for more attractiveness.

In the inside heading of the sample sales letter, the reader is identified by both his name and the position he holds.

The image, if used, should be near the headline. It helps to catch the reader's eye. The headline is usually 3-30 words long. It grabs the reader's attention, and tells him what the ad (sales letter) is

about. It makes a promise regarding what the item you are selling will do for him. The sub-headline or lead paragraph is optional. Sometimes it's used to expand the headline. The body expands the theme, fills in details, offers proof, and shows how you plan to fulfill the promise you made in the headline. The closing, or call to action, urges the reader to take the next step you want him to take.

Body of the Letter

Here, using the same tone and staying with the spirit of the headline, you begin to give details of your unique selling point. You continue talking about the benefits and offer proof of the claim you made early on. You share the details of the benefits. You prove your case or claim.

Caution Remember, by the end of the body, the goal is to create an emotional response that will cause the reader to do what you are now going to tell him to do.

Closing or Call to Action

A sales letter should close in a professional manner. Once your last paragraph is written, sign off between a complimentary close such as "Sincerely," or "Thank you," and your printed name. If you ask the reader to order, support, or to contact you for the specified reason you must make it easy for him to reply. Support the sales letter with a post card or prepaid envelope, and an order form. If not appropriate, supply a toll free telephone number, an E-mail link, and or your URL. Always close with a thank you and use a signature at the end of the letter. Save one of the best points for last: Always use a Post Script.

Example: "If you order before March 1, we will include a free..." Or "Money back guaranteed..." Or "Discount is good until..."

Examples:

1. **Sample Persuasive Letter**

Mr. Rakesh Sharma
528, Sector 8
Chandigarh

30 July, 2001.

You have been a valued member of the Idea Cellphone family. As you may be aware, Idea Cell phones Co. is now one of the largest cellular operators in India and in the world. We have taken the leadership in launching new and exciting tariff plans in India thereby making cellular telephony more affordable.

As per the honourable TRAI ruling dated January 25, 2001, an amount of ₹ 900 is refundable against your contract No. 00123130 mobile number 9812031984. This refund is on account of reduction in license fees. This amount will be refundable to you vide an account payee cheque on the address mentioned above.

If you have any queries regarding the same, please feel free to contact us on our toll free hotline number 9820398223 and we would be glad to address the same.

Keep Smiling!

Aarti Bajaj
General Manager, Customer Services

Notes

2. **Basic Sales Letter**

Mr. Ravi Jha,
Chief Accountant,
ABC Accountants,
24 VP City,
Delhi

25th October 2006

Dear Mr. Jha,

Are you experiencing problems with calculating tax returns for your clients? Does your company sometimes find that the work is overwhelming? Avenue Software has the solution for you.

Our team of software programmers and tax specialists has designed a new program that will help ease the workload you are experiencing. Our software will help you keep records and update them online while allowing your clients to view and make appropriate changes. Calculations can be done in a matter of minutes using this novel software.

If you want to reduce your current workload, visit us at our website for a free demonstration at www. avenuesoftware.com.

Yours truly,

Anju Ahuja,
Marketing Manager,
Avenue Software

3. **Sample Sales Letter**

Ram Music House
587 ABC Street, XYZ City, India

August 15, 2004

Shree Sharma
Guitars and Such
784 PR Street
Yourtown, India

Dear Mr. Sharma,

I will be in Yourtown on September 5, 2004 and would like to meet with you at your office to discuss the new guitar models that you may be interested in for the upcoming year.

I have enclosed our latest catalogue. Please note the items in light blue highlights. They are the new guitar models to come in and are now on a special to preferred clients.

I will contact you later this week to schedule an appointment. If you need to get in touch with me, please call me at 23445666. I look forward to talking with you. Thank you for your continued business.

Sincerely Yours,

Rita Arora
Sales Representative

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Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

13. Order letters fall into the category of …… letters.
14. Direct requests can be divided into three groups: information or action request letter, order letter, and …… letter.
15. Letters that are written to check customer satisfaction or sympathize with the customers are …… letters.
16. A …… letter is a form of direct mail in which an advertiser sends a letter to a potential customer.
17. …… and …… are used to expand the headline of the letter.

14.3 Summary

- A good Commercial letter has to create, nurture and sustain a good business relationship and act as your relationship officer.
- Clarity, impact, relevant information, brevity, simplicity, timeliness, language, vocabulary, appeal, style and striving for excellence are the essentials of a good business letter.
- The parts of a letter are Heading, Inside Address, Reference, Date, Attention line, Subject line, Salutation, Body of the letter, Complimentary Close, Signature, CC, Post Script.
- Business correspondence is a vast area of communication. It is, therefore, not very easy to classify letters. We can, however, classify letters on the basis of certain criteria like. The broad categories viz information letters, sales letters.
- Problem letters, goodwill letters etc. Our approach-direct, indirect, indirect or persuasive. Official, demi-official, etc. The subject of the letters. Correspondence of the departments of an organization.

14.4 Keywords

Buzz Word: An important-sounding expression used mainly to impress other people.

Clichés: An expression that has become monotonous through overuse.

Complex Sentence: It contains one independent clause and at least one dependent clause.

Compound Sentence: This contains two or more independent clauses.

Dangling Expression: It is any part of a sentence that does not logically fit in with the rest of the sentence.

Hidden Verb: It is a verb that has been changed into a noun form, weakening the action.

Jargon: It is technical vocabulary used within a special group.

Sales Letter: It is a form of direct mail in which an advertiser sends a letter to a potential customer.

14.5 Review Questions

1. Define the concept 'commercial letter'. Discuss the essentials of a commercial letter. Also give a specimen of such letter.
2. The single-most significant characteristics of the commercial letter is that it must have a human face." Discuss.
3. "Communication is the sum of all things one person does when he wants to create understanding in the mind of another. It is a bridge of meaning. It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding." Is it true in case of commercial letter? Argue your viewpoint with suitable example.

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4. A man who has worked efficiently with you for 8 years as sales representative has applied to another company for the post of assistant sales manager. You have received an enquiry about his ability and character. Draft a reply.
5. You have received an enquiry about an ex-employee of your accounts department. The employee had a poor service record and had been persuaded to resign his post. Draft a reply.
6. An employee of your firm has been invited to represent a paper in an international conference at Singapore. Write a letter of congratulation to him.
7. A cloth merchant of Delhi ordered 10 parcels of textile items from a merchant of Ahmedabad. The goods were dispatched through goods train. Two bundles have been stolen in transit. Write a letter to the Railway authorities to compensate the loss.
8. What are the essentials of a good business letter?
9. A timber merchant wants to open a current account in a nationalized bank. Write a letter to the bank manager on this behalf.
10. Write a letter to Fire Insurance Company for the payment claim due to loss because of fire.
11. Write a letter from M/s Pratap and Sons, Delhi to M/s Nirma Chemicals, Ahmedabad, giving a proposal for taking an agency.
12. Two letters have been sent to a client requesting to make the payment of outstanding money by the sale of textile goods. But he has not responded to any of these letters. Write a final letter to him.

Answers: Self Assessment

1. False	2. False	3. True	4. True
5. False	6. False	7. True	8. True
9. False	10. True	11. False	12. False
13. Routine	14. Direct claim	15. Goodwill	16. Sales
17. Sub-headline, lead paragraph			

14.6 Further Readings

Books

Bowman, Joel and Branchaw, *Business Communication: From Process to Product*, Dryden Press.

Courtland Bovee and John Thill, *Business Communication Today*, Random House, New York.

P.D. Chaturvedi, Mukesh Chaturvedi, *Business Communication: Concepts, Cases and Applications*, Pearson Education.

Urmila Rai and S.M. Rai, *Business Communication*, Himalaya Publishing House.

Online links

http://www.sampleletters.in/category/sales-letters/

http://esl.about.com/b/2011/02/12/types-of-business-letters.htm

http://www.business-plans-guide.com/example-of-business-letters.html

http://www.englishclub.com/business-english/business-letters.htm