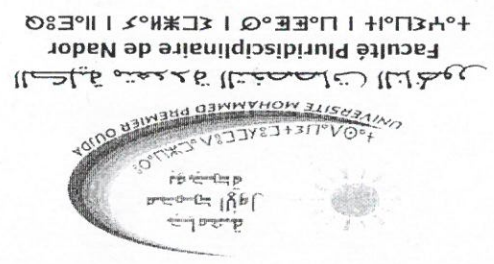


Mohamed I University - Oujda
Polydisciplinary Faculty - Nador
Department of English Studies



ORAL COMMUNICATION

DR. EL KOUY

Group A

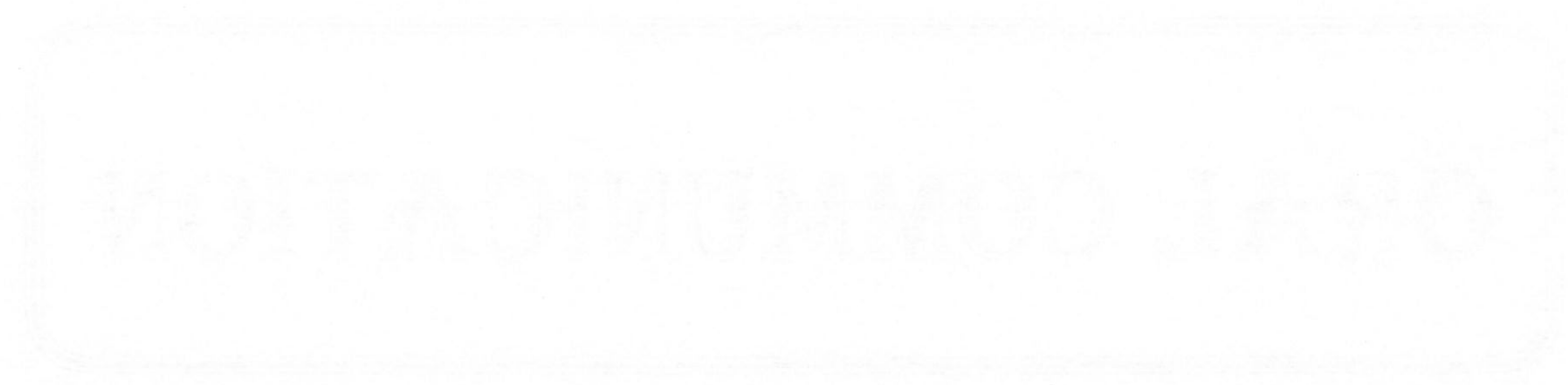
DR. AKKAOU

Group B

Semester : S2

Academic Year : 2019-2020

LIBRAIRIE ALOMRANE



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Content

Course One: Oral Communication: Introductory Notes

Course Two: Basics, Verbal, Non-Verbal Communication and Seven Cs of Communication

Course Three: Oral Communication:

- .The Importance of Oral Communication in Business
- .Face to face Communication
- .Telephone Communication
- .Communication with Visitors

Course Four: Qualities for Effective Communication

Course Five: Barriers to Communication

مكتبة وورقة العمل
LIBRAIRIE ALOMRANE

ORAL COMMUNICATION: INTRODUCTORY NOTES

This course aims at achieving the following objectives:

- ✓ To help students master both academic English and everyday English through listening practice and frequent dictations
- ✓ To help students develop their vocabulary and communication abilities, especially in cross cultural contexts.

Course description:

This course will cover the following areas:

- Academic English and everyday English
- Listening practice
- Frequent dictations
- Vocabulary. Idiomatic English. Discussions and presentations.
- Cultural topics related to Moroccan culture and Anglo-Saxon cultures.

Chapter 1: Communication

Introduction

This course has been designed to prepare you to be successful not only academically, but also in the competitive world that you will someday face. How well you will communicate with others will determine your success in your profession and in your interpersonal relationships. As college learners, you will need to explore the communication skills necessary in order to participate fully and productively in society.

What is Communication?

- Communication is the transfer of information from one person to another. We spend three-fourths of our waking hours communicating our knowledge, thoughts, and ideas to others. Experts believe that successful verbal communication depends 10 percent on what you say and 90 percent on how you say it. Yet, thanks in part to technology that allows for instant communication through e-mails, text messaging, and faxes, verbal communication is often downplayed and, in some instances, assigned the importance of a manual typewriter (Gurvis, 2008).
- Communication is the interaction between two or more people. That is, two or more people talking with or having a conversation with one another. Oral communication is only one method of interaction among many (Fisher, 2005).
- Communication can be defined as 'the process by which information meanings and feelings are shared by people through the exchange of verbal and non-verbal messages. Communication is transmitted by speech, signals and writing, or through behavioural information such as thoughts and emotions in order that it can be satisfactorily received and understood. Understanding the meaning of the communication involves

the process of contextualization and is often referred to as the process of 'sharing meaning'. Communication could therefore be defined as: 'the management of messages for the purpose of creating meaning'. Therefore the goal of effective communication is the successful sharing of meaning.

Oral and Written Communication

✓ Oral communication has the distinct advantage of being conducted almost any place where the two participants meet. The same does not hold true for written communication. The places where they are received are highly restrictive. Despite the disadvantage coupled with the cost factor that is rather high when compared to oral communication, written communication is still preferred in many situations. Probably one of the reasons for this is that written messages have a greater impact. The same things when stated orally may not create the same impression. Finally, there is the difference in terms of feedback. In the case of oral communication, feedback almost always is immediate. On the other hand, for written communication it is not immediate. If the time span in providing feedback exceeds the normal timeframe, conclusions are almost always arrived at: company is not interested, references are being worked at, and people are influencing and surveying the direction of the feedback. It is because of these differences that oral and written communication are used on different occasions and situations. Both have their advantages and disadvantages. However, none can replace the other. Both are essential and needed. What can, nevertheless be done, is develop awareness of the disadvantages and make attempts to improvise and make the best of the situation.

✓ In reality, you spend most of your time in communicating. You engage in group discussions, make presentations, converse with people, and many more. Because you talk to people of different backgrounds, beliefs,

attitudes, and values, communication training is a must. The goal, therefore, is to become a fully developed, thinking, and persuasive human being.

✓ Not only does effective communication mean speaking clearly and concisely, but it also means ensuring that information is passed on to and understood by the recipient. Many people speak clearly, yet communication so often fails because what is said is either incorrectly heard or not properly understood.

| ORAL LANGUAGE is | EFFECTIVE WRITTEN LANGUAGE is |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dynamic transfer of information. • Everyday spoken language, including some cultural expressions, such as "go crazy." • Able to engage the audience psychologically and to use complex forms of non-verbal communication. • Retractable (one can apologize for a mistake or offer clarification) • Highly subjective • Spontaneous • Dependent upon orientation signals (for example, "Well, in | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Precise and direct. • Chosen with greater deliberation and thought. • More sophisticated, and developed. • Less personal. • Driven by logic, organization, and explicitness • Achieved through sentence length, complex language style. • Validated by author's credibility. • Objective. • Non-retractable (it's forever... and so are mistakes and flaws). • Planned and deliberate. |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>the first place”), and projection terms (for example, “It seems to me”) to soften the tone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversational and indirect |
|--|---|

Specifically, the following are the reasons for taking up a communication course:

- To deliver quality presentations academically and on the job;
- To influence other people’s beliefs, ideas and values,
- To enjoy life;
- To establish your relationship with other people; and
- To establish credibility.

Every time you communicate with people, you present;

- Yourself;
- Your ideas; and
- Information to others.

If you are ambitious and would want to move up the ladder of success; if you wish to have a positive impact on others; if you want to have your skills and talents recognized and rewarded, then strive to be a successful communicator NOW!

The Importance of Oral Communication

Good oral communication is essential to every aspect of life and work. Many surveys have identified it as one of the skills most highly valued by educators, employers, etc. People with good communication skills:

- can relate well to colleagues and customers
- are able to get information they need from organizations and individuals.
- can explain things clearly and contribute to meetings and discussions.
- are more successful in their careers.
- have more positive and productive relationships with others.

What you need is a strong will and determination to go beyond the barriers of communication. You have to make a choice that will shape your destiny in life. Do not forget that only YOU can make what you want to become because you think and will it. Your professor cannot produce this change for you. Only YOU can.

Types of Communication

There are two major types of communication: intrapersonal and interpersonal. The latter is composed of four specific examples:

1. **Intrapersonal Communication**: conversing with yourself by thinking. It is a process by which you convert raw data into information, organize information gathered, evaluate results and reach a conclusion.
2. **Interpersonal Communication**:
 - a. **One-to-One Communication**: Communication between two people.
 - b. **Group Communication**: Communication among three or more people.
 - c. **Public Communication**: it is a speaker-audience communication which is used when you wish to address an audience.
 - d. **Mass communication**: This is when you want to reach a bigger audience in different places at the same time. It can be in the form of radio, television, or newspaper.

Major Components of the Communication Process

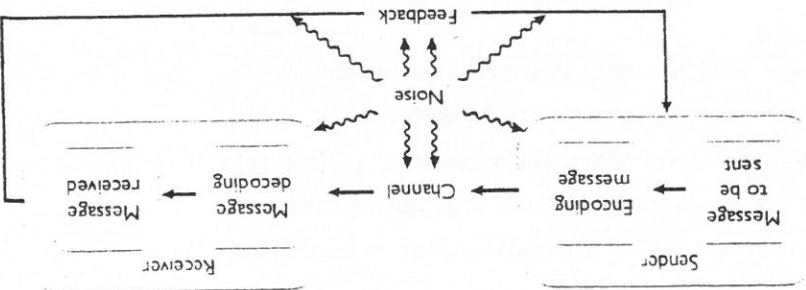


Figure 1: Process of Communication

The process of communication begins with the source who sends/encodes a message using speech or writing as medium or channel for communication. The message is received/decoded by the listener who evaluates the information and comprehends the meaning of the message.

The communication process may be perfect, but effective communication may only be achieved through an understanding of the different components of the communication process?

The communicators are the sources of information. The information translated into concepts make up the **Message**. The communicators then choose a **Channel** to move the message from A to B. Either speech or writing can be used as a channel. Feedback allows both parties to determine whether or not they were successful in conveying their ideas. It can come in the form of acceptance or rejection through verbal or nonverbal communication.

Noise, on the other hand, may occur anytime. These interferences may come in the form of physical noise (as in stammering, stuttering or annoying vocal

Chapter 2: Academic and Everyday English

Introduction

Academic English is the one used in textbooks, in classrooms, and on tests. It is different in structure and vocabulary from the everyday spoken English of social interactions. English learners often have trouble comprehending the academic language used in the high school and at the university.

The main obstacle to these learners' comprehension of texts and lectures is their academic vocabulary knowledge. Academic vocabulary is sub-technical vocabulary. This does not mean the technical vocabulary of a particular academic discipline. Academic vocabulary is used across all academic disciplines to teach about the content of the discipline. To set an example, before taking medicine, no student knows the technical words used in the field of medicine. People assume students comprehend such academic vocabulary, but such vocabulary is not often used in the everyday spoken English of many students. It is thus believed that academic vocabulary is based on more Latin and Greek roots than is everyday spoken English vocabulary.

As you develop your level of English, you need to think carefully about your choice of words. This is very important in academic communication. For example, you would not use contractions (can', wouldn't, isn't) or shorter forms of words (fridge, auto) because they signal informality and academic communication takes place in what is considered a formal context. What is more, academic communications are expected to be clear and straightforward so you must also make sure that your words are precise and correct and that your writing is concise.

This chapter gives you suggestions on how to choose words for your academic communications and provides examples of words that students often use wrongly. There are four main considerations:

- Use formal vocabulary
- Use appropriate transitions
- Avoid redundancy
- Beware of commonly misused words

Choosing words that are appropriate in your academic life can convince your listeners/readers that your language is serious and important. On the other hand, if your words are unclear, ambiguous and/ or incorrect, chances are your listeners/readers might feel confused about the content of your message or might even think that your words are not worth reading.

Use Formal Vocabulary

Certain words which we frequently encounter in everyday communication may not be suitable for use in academic contexts. These include words which are casual (informal) and commonly used only in spoken English. This does not mean that informal language is inferior to formal language. It simply means that there are words which are more appropriate than others for use in each context.

e.g., in reporting work done by others in a subject that you are investigating, you would not write:

A couple of researchers have **found out** that ...

Instead, you are more likely to write:

Several researchers have **discovered** that...

To make your language more formal, make sure that you avoid features of the informal one:

Table 1 : Examples of formal and informal language

| Features of Informal Language | Definition | Example | Appropriate | |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| | | | Alternative | |
| Contraction | Shortened words, with missing letters from the original | The authors don't provide evidence for their claim. | The authors don't provide evidence for their claim. | |
| Slang Words | Words characteristic of casual conversation among friends of a particular group of people | One wonders if the psychological challenges of busted individuals | One wonders if the psychological challenges if individuals. | |
| Abbreviations | Shortened forms of words and phrases of usually consisting of letters taken from their original forms. | The survey was conducted ASAP | The survey was conducted as soon as possible since the respondents needed to leave the country in two weeks' time. | |
| Cliches | Overused expressions or ideas whose original meaning or effect is lost. | The research of Yuan et al. (2007) on sustainable architecture in Singapore is considered to be the | The research of Yuan et al. (2007) on sustainable architecture in Singapore is considered to be the | |

Colloquialisms

| | | | |
|---|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Words, phrases. | While | cream of the crop. | best |
| or expressions of loss of jobs in the United States are | current | the concerns about the | current |
| characteristic of | While | the growing negative | the growing |
| but, unlike | the growing negative | slang, usually | the growing |
| use by only one | towards India among | attitude negative | attitude negative |
| particular group | those who have been | india among those | india among those |
| of people. | Bangalore. | who have lost their | who have lost their |
| companies have | relocated to India | for cheaper labour | for cheaper labour |
| costs. | | | |

Choosing Strong Verbs

In general, academic writers/speakers prefer strong verbs to phrasal verbs (verb+preposition), which are very common in spoken or more casual uses of English, e.g., establish, instead of set up, produce instead of churn out, tolerate instead of put up with and assemble instead of put together. Consider the examples that follow:

| | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Phrasal Verbs | The veteran researcher has churned | many articles in recent years. |
| Strong Verbs | The veteran researcher has produced | many articles in recent years. |

| | |
|---|---|
| The team that was hurriedly put together has not been productive because the members do not share common objectives. | The team that was hurriedly assembled has not been productive because the members do not share common objectives |
| In his attempt to establish absolute control, the dictator sought to wipe out all who were opposed to his rule. | In his attempt to establish absolute control, the dictator sought to eliminate all who were opposed to his rule. |
| The auditors' report suggest that the treasurer had tried to cover up the financial irregularities. | The auditors' report suggests that the treasurer had tried to hide the financial irregularities. |
| We must be prepared for discomfort in various sectors if we want to bring about change in the system. | We must be prepared for discomfort in various sectors if we want to effect change in the system. |

Choose Specific Verbs

In reporting what you have gathered from reading, you will need to use a variety of verbs that suit your purpose. Rather than using the words *say*, *show*, or *report* all the time, you can use more specific verbs in academic reporting as illustrated below:

In the article, "Euthanasia"...the author **outlines** the origins of the practice in the Nazi regime...

Many medical studies have **demonstrated** a clear correlation between smoking and the incidence of lung cancer...

The researcher **maintains** that nanoparticles are likely to remain lodged...

The paper concludes that university education must remain accessible to all who qualify and that none should be denied the opportunity...

Available literature seems to **support** the view that one acquires a second language...

The report **notes** that there are inconsistencies in the way the economic data have been presented...

Other useful words for reporting what you have gathered in your research are *assert*, *claim*, *argue*, *infer*, *reason*, *postulate*, and *illustrate*.

Use Appropriate Transitions

Transitions play an important role in the development of an academic essay. They help to create a sense of coherence and provide signposting for the reader to follow the writer's thread of thought. Choosing the appropriate transition that makes the logical connection will ensure that the reader understands the text in the way the author had intended. Consider the following examples:

- A. The authors have made a strong case for their view and also provided some statistical evidence to support their arguments against euthanasia. **On the other hand**, they have also appealed to the general moral sense of obligation for doctors to save and heal.
- B. The authors have made a strong case for their view and also provided some statistical evidence to support their arguments against euthanasia. They have **also** appealed to the general moral sense of obligation for doctors to save and heal.
- C. The authors have made a strong case for their view and also provided some statistical evidence to support their arguments against euthanasia. **On the other hand**, they have failed to consider the further distinction between active euthanasia and passive euthanasia.

not add words just to lengthen your essay or create fancy expressions. It is far more important to get your message across effectively.

To weed out redundancy, ask yourself whether what you have written is essential to the meaning you intend to communicate. For example, in an essay on euthanasia, a student wrote about *deliberate suicide*. That raises the question whether suicide is ever not deliberate. Can someone commit accidental suicide? Your answer to the question makes it clear that the word *suicide* should stand on its own without the qualifier *deliberate*.

Redundancy is also commonly seen in the use of *more* or *most* as in the following two examples:

There is a more preferable method to do this.
This is the most unique case we have yet seen.

If you prefer something, you will like it more than something else; therefore, *more* is redundant. In the second case, *unique* means one of its kind, with no equal, so strictly speaking, you cannot have varying degrees of uniqueness.

Another area where redundancy occurs is in the use of prepositions. These are often the ones which appear with verbs but are actually not necessary.

comprise (of); emphasise (on); stress (upon); despite (of); discuss (about); request (for);

➤ In academic English, always make sure that you are using formal vocabulary and that you are writing concisely without redundancy and precisely—with words that accurately convey your intended meaning. Also, ensure that your transitions make good logical sense and enhance the coherence of the text.

The use of *On the other hand* in text A is inappropriate because what follows is not in contrast with the point made in the predicating sentence. The student could have used *Moreover* or *Furthermore* since the intention is to add another point in support of the author's argument. Alternatively, the text could continue as in B without any transition since the use of *Also* in the sentence adequately links it to the previous one. Text C illustrates the correct use of the transition as it signals a contrast.

Here is a text showing another notoriously misused transition:

In the last few years, revenue from the export sector has been on the decline. On the contrary, revenue coming from the hospitality industry has seen a healthy growth.

In this case, the transition is inappropriate. The student could have used *contrast* or *on the other hand*. *On the contrary* is used to signal a contrast to an idea expressed just before it or to a claim made or implied, as in the following example:

In the last few years, revenue from the export sector has been declining sharply. We might therefore expect to see a reasonable dent in the overall growth of the economy. On the contrary, the economy is still as robust as before. This could be largely due to...

Avoid Redundancy

Conciseness is also a mark of good academic writing. To write an effective essay, you should learn to write precisely and concisely, using only as many words as are necessary to convey what you want to say. Do

Once students enter university, there are demands for academic language, which is significantly different from the everyday, conversational language they have been developing. Academic language includes more specific vocabulary, and more complex syntax and discourse structures based on the purpose of the writing. The demand for academic language increases as students move through the grades. Once students enter the later primary grades (third or fourth), the academic work requires increasingly greater understanding and skill with vocabulary, grammar, and varying functions of academic language (Butler et al. 2004; Collier 1995; Fillmore and Snow 2000; Grigorenko 2005; Schleppegrell 2004).

Research on academic language has primarily related to speakers of English as a second language and has focused on students in postsecondary education. More recently, researchers have begun to develop models or descriptions of academic language that apply to younger students. Several authors have described aspects of academic language but there is not a single comprehensive theoretical model of academic language that can be used as the basis of future research.

Academic Language & Academic Vocabulary

Chapter 2: Voice

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the different facets of speech. In speaking, you have to take note of pronunciation, enunciation, intonation, and accentuation. Mastering these elements would make communication flow smoothly and pleasantly. It would also give way to better understanding among speakers.

Using Your Voice to Communicate

Your voice plays a very important role in helping convey the meaning of language. Listeners are affected by your message. As you talk, they perceive and interpret your message.

Being conscious of your voice is necessary to communicate your level of enthusiasm for your central idea. Imagine a basketball announcer who lacks the vocal intensity and enthusiasm in announcing the play-by-play account of a game. An announcer must vividly portray what is happening specifically to radio listeners.

As a speaker, you should adapt your voice to the situation. Research has shown that the most successful speakers make their listeners feel that they are being addressed personally. Your voice, therefore must have that conversational quality that comes from the realization that you are talking “with” not “at” an audience.

The Effective Speaking Voice

Successful speakers use several vocal qualities to make their speech colorful and more vivid. Some of these qualities are:

1. Intelligibility

The ability to understand a message is dependent upon the following qualities: *loudness, rate, enunciation, and pronunciation*. These take a far greater significance when speaking in public with a big audience.

✦ Adjust your volume

Your speaking volume should consider the distance that exists between you and the audience and the amount of external noise. When you talk, your voice sounds louder to you than the audience. So you must speak louder specifically when the audience is far from you.

Aside from distance, you have to also compete with external noise. For example, an air conditioner may be heard more easily than your voice at the back of a room if you don't project over the sound it makes. Likewise, an empty theater generates noise at 25 decibels; when it holds an audience, the noise rises to 42 decibels.

✦ Control your rate

When addressing large groups, slow down your ordinary conversational rate to about one-third, or around 120-150 words per minute. Adjusting your rate though does not mean that you will or should speak at the same rate throughout your presentation. It is important to vary your rate to reflect the intensity of your commitment, the importance of key ideas, or the emotionality of your appeal.

✦ Enunciate clearly

Enunciation refers to the crispness and precision used in forming your words. You do not enunciate when you slur sounds, drop syllables, insert new sounds, and skip over beginnings or endings of words. For example, say "going" instead of "go-in" and "orange" instead of "ornch." When speaking in public, you will need to

concentrate upon the clear and distinct enunciation of syllables and

words.

✦ Meet standards of pronunciation

If enunciation refers to precise vocalization, *pronunciation* refers to the regional or national pattern of how various words should be vocalized. It is important to speak in a manner that is generally accepted across the region, nation, and across the country. When you speak, analyze the situation to determine whether the regional dialect is appropriate, or whether you should use the grammar, vocabulary, and vocal patterns of near native speakers.

2. Variety

There is a need to vary the characteristics of your voice: rate, pitch, force, and pauses. If you vary your voice, it will make your presentation more pleasant to listen to. You can alter your normal pitch level by changing your pitch range to provide emphasis or call attention to your ideas. It will also make your speech more interesting and not monotonous.

The key to successful control of pitch ultimately depends on understanding the importance of pitch variation. Use the full pitch range you are capable of in giving ideas and thoughts their appropriate measure of emphasis.

As a general rule, use higher pitches to communicate excitement and lower pitches to create a sense of control or solemnity. Secondly, let the sense of the sentence control your pitch variations. For example, abruptly moving your step up at the end of a question is called a "step." A more gradual or continuous pitch inflection is termed a "slide."

3. Stress patterns

Stress patterns are ways in which sounds, syllables and words are accented. Stress is important to put emotion and understanding to the

message. Vocal stress is achieved through vocal emphasis and through the judicious use of pauses.

4. Vocal emphasis

Emphasis placed upon any syllable, word, group of words, or portion of a speech will bring out significant meanings. Unless you use it properly, important ideas will tend to be hidden by subordinate details. The commonest ways of achieving emphasis are by the use of inflection, pitch, volume, and pause.

5. Pauses

Pauses are intervals of silence between or within words, phrases, or sentences. When placed immediately before a key idea or the climax of a story, they punctuate thought to create suspense; when placed immediately after a major point or central idea, they add emphasis, and give an audience time to digest the material just presented. Meaningless fillers such as "umm," "ah," "er," "well-ah," "you know," "like," and the like must be avoided. These are speech defects that suggest lack of confidence. Use pauses to your advantage when speaking.

6. Controlling emotional quality

The audience may judge you as angry or happy, confident or fearful, sincere or sad. Your voice can also be described as full or thin, as harsh, husky, nasal, breathy, or resonant. Emotional characterizers, including cues such as laughing, crying, whispering, inhaling, or exhaling, help an audience understand how you are feeling about what is being said. In communicating different shades of meaning, you will find yourself varying loudness, rate, pitch, and vocal stress.

Pronunciation:

Activity 1

Student A

1. radiator
2. calm
3. Salmon
4. Aborigine
5. abalone
6. comfortable
7. archives
8. foyer
9. senate
10. acumen

Student A

1. is
2. genre
3. Cupboard
4. Merengue
5. debut
6. heir
7. subtle
8. vehicle
9. margarine
10. plumber

Student B

1. towards
2. of
3. vacate
4. jeopardy
5. leopard
6. leotard
7. admirable
8. amiable
9. panacea
10. devout

Student B

1. Roosevelt
2. Stephen
3. Realm
4. says
5. gestures
6. gale
7. demise
8. Coupon
9. epitome
10. Lindsay

What is Academic Language?

Academic language is the language used in textbooks, in classrooms, and on tests. It is different in structure and vocabulary from the everyday spoken English of social interactions. Many students who speak English well have trouble comprehending the academic language used in high school and college classrooms. Low academic language skills have been shown to be associated with low academic performance in a variety of educational settings.

The main barrier to student comprehension of texts and lectures is low academic vocabulary knowledge. Academic vocabulary is sub-technical vocabulary. In other words, it is not the technical vocabulary of a particular academic discipline. Academic vocabulary is used across all academic disciplines to teach about the content of the discipline. For example, before taking chemistry, no students know the technical words used in chemistry. But the underprepared students also don't know the vocabulary used to teach the chemistry concepts. Underprepared students are unfamiliar with words like evaluation, theory, hypothesis, assumption, capacity, validate. Professors assume students comprehend such academic vocabulary, but such vocabulary is not often used in the everyday spoken English of many students.

Academic vocabulary is based on more Latin and Greek roots than is everyday spoken English vocabulary. In addition, academic lectures and texts tend to use longer, more complex sentences than are used in spoken English.

Unit 1

BASICS, VERBAL, NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION AND SEVEN CS OF COMMUNICATION

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Unit Structure | 1.1 |
| Objectives | 1.2 |
| Introduction | 1.3 |
| Basics of Communication | 1.4 |
| Channels of Communication | 1.5 |
| Importance of Communication | 1.6 |
| Non Verbal Communication | 1.7 |
| Seven Cs of Communication | 1.8 |
| Summary | 1.9 |
| Exercise: | |

1.1 OBJECTIVES

- To understand the basics of communication
- To understand the concept of verbal and non verbal communication

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will introduce you to various theoretical concepts of communication in general to help you to relate them to various day to day situations. Communication skills progresses from the birth of child to the adulthood to the oldhood. The learning of communication commences with the observation of the world surrounding you. The nomenclatures of the various situations one may come across in his/her personal or formal life are the events of communication. Imagine, you complete your B.Sc. IT with flying colours.

colours and you find a different world outside the classrooms you have attended and you are confused to begin with, how will you face such unusual situations that you have never experienced? The answer is if you are aware of the content of the communication skills you have learnt as a part of your academics, your half way is done. Now let us begin understanding each component of the soft skills you required to understand.

1.3 BASICS OF COMMUNICATION

1.3.1 Concept of Communication

Every individual needs to be well equipped with the tools to communicate effectively, whether it is on the personal front, or at work. In fact, according to the management gurus, being a good communicator is half the battle won. After all, if one speaks and listens well, then there is little or no scope for misunderstanding. Thus, keeping this fact in mind, the primary reasons for misunderstanding is due to inability to speak well, or listen effectively.

The word communication is derived from the Latin word 'communicate' which means to make common, to transmit, or to impart the ideas, knowledge, feelings, emotions and gestures. According to the various dictionaries the definition of effective communication skills are as follows:

"Effective communication skills includes lip reading, finger-spelling, sign language; for interpersonal skills use, interpersonal relations."

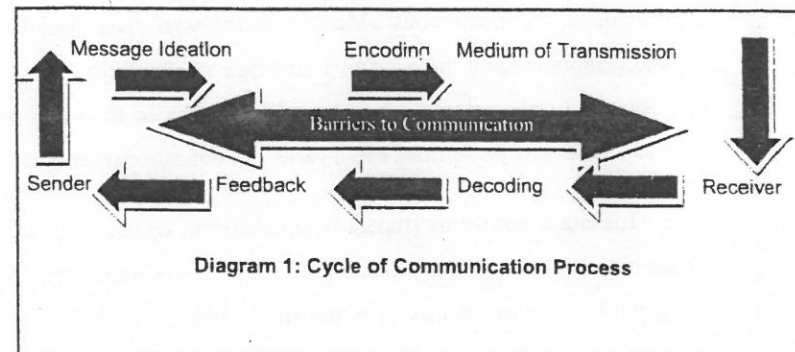
"Effective communication skills are the ability to use language (receptive) and express (expressive) information."

"Effective communication skills are the set of skills that enables a person to convey information so that it is received and understood. Effective communication skills refer to the repertoire of behaviors that serve to convey information for the individual."

While it is an undisputable fact the communication forms one of the essential bases of human existence, yet most individuals overlook the need to refine their communication skills, from time-to-time. Effective communication skills is a must whether it is individual or then effective team communication skills.

1.3.2 Process of Communication

Communication is a two-way process in which there is an exchange and progression of ideas towards a mutually accepted direction or goal. For this process, to materialise, it is essential that the basic elements of communication be identified. These elements are: Ideation/Message, Sender, Encoding, Receiver, Medium and Transmission, Barriers, Decoding and Feedback.



1.3.2.1. Ideation/Message

The process of communication begins with ideation, which refers to the formation of the idea or selection of a message to be communicated. It consists of the "What" of communication and is concerned with the content of the specific message to be presented. The scope of 'ideation' is generally determined by the sender's knowledge, experiences, and abilities, as well as the purpose of communication and the context of the communicative situation. However, the form of ideation depends on several other factors.

Messages generally have two kinds of content, logical and emotional. Logical messages consist of factual information, while emotional messages consist of feelings and emotions. In formal communicative situation, 'ideation' may consist of finding and selecting a subject or general topic, looking for ideas and thoughts, and deciding the type, scope, and sources of information.

1.3.2.2. Sender

The person who initiates the communication process is normally referred to as the sender. From his personal data bank he selects ideas, encodes and finally transmits them to the receiver. The entire burden of Encoding of communication then rests upon the sender or encoder. His message choice of images and words, and the combination of the two is what goads the receiver to listen carefully. In this process a number of factors come into play, primary among them being an understanding of the recipient and his needs. If the message can be formulated in accordance with the expectations of the receiver, the level of acceptance is going to be higher.

1.3.2.3. Encoding

Encoding is the next step in communication. It is the process of changing the information into some form of logical and coded message. The encoding process is based on the purpose of communication and the relation between the sender and the receiver. In a formal situation, encoding involves: Selecting a language; selecting a medium of communication; and selecting an appropriate communication form.

Selecting the right language is essential for effective encoding. Verbal messages need a common language code, which can be easily decoded by the receiver. If the receiver is not able to decode or understand the message, communication will fail. For example, a person who does not understand Tamil cannot decode a message encoded in Tamil

As selecting the right medium of communication involves making the right choice out of many available options, it determines the effectiveness of encoding. There are three basic options for sending interpersonal messages that is speaking, writing, and non-verbal signs and symbols. The spoken word involves vocalization while non-verbal message cues are generally visual (auditory and tactile). Non-verbal clues play a significant role in oral communication. These clues include body movements, facial expressions, touching patterns, speech mannerisms. The selection of the appropriate form largely depends on the sender-receiver relationship and the overall goal of the communicative situation. Oral communication may be face-to-face interpersonal communication, group communication, speaker-audience

1.3.2.4. Receiver

The listener receives an encoded message which he attempts to decode. This process is carried on in relation to the work environment and the value perceived in terms of the work situation. If the goal of the Decoding of sender is envisioned as similar to his own, the listener becomes message more receptive. The decoding of the message is done in almost entirely the same terms as were intended by the sender

1.3.2.5. Medium and Transmission

Another important element of communication is the medium or channel. It could be oral, written or non-verbal. Prior to the composition of the message, the medium/channel should be decided. Transmission refers to the flow of message over the chosen channel. Transmission confirms the medium selected during the process of encoding and keeps the communication channel free from interference or noise so that the message reaches the receiver without any disturbance.

1.3.2.6. Barriers

The barriers refer to the various hurdles the message may come across in process of transmission. Noise may disturb the proper encoding, the psychological barriers of the receiver may hamper the basic purpose of the message or the barriers may hinder the smooth completion of the cycle of the process of communication. The barriers could be cross cultural, linguistics, semantics, socio-psychological, etc.

1.3.2.7. Decoding

Decoding is the process of converting a message into thoughts by translating the received stimuli into an interpreted meaning in order to understand the message communicated. It is important to note that it is the message that is transferred, as meaning cannot be transferred from one person to another. The receiver has to assign meaning to a message in order to understand it.

The process of decoding involves interpretation and analysis of a message. Decoding in written communication refers to reading and understanding a written message. On the other hand, in oral

communication, decoding includes listening and understanding. Effective decoding is very important for successful communication as any misinterpretation of a message leads to communication breakdown and creates confusion and misunderstanding.

1.3.2.8. Feedback

Effective communication takes place only when there is feedback. Feedback is the last stage in the communication process. It is the action or reaction of the receiver to the message. It helps the sender know that the message was received and understood. The feedback that goes to the sender makes it clear whether the receiver has accepted the information and filed it in his/her memory or rejected it. He or she may ask for more information or clarification. Response is, thus, the key to communication as the effectiveness of communication depends on how congruent a receiver's response is with the meaning intended by the sender.

1.4. CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is essential for the internal functioning of any organisation. By integrating the managerial functions and serving to influence the behaviour and attitudes of people through persuasion, it encourages them to perform in order to achieve organisational objectives. The interaction between the different individuals working in a company or organisation takes place through different channels. These channels could be both informal and formal.

Informal channels transmit official news through unofficial and informal communicative interactions known as the 'grapevine'. This informal communication network includes tea time gossip, casual gatherings, lunch time meetings and so on. These channels may not be very reliable as they may be company rumours or just gossip. Such channels are more active in organisations that are not transparent. As employees want to know what is going on in their organisation, they seek out unofficial sources of information. The grapevine is not always negative for an organisation and can, in fact, be helpful as it helps in positive group building by acting as a safety valve for pent-up emotions. It may help in building up organisational solidarity and harmony.

1.4.1 Downward Communication

As the main function of downward communication is providing direction and control, it refers to communication from the higher level in managerial hierarchy to the lower ones. A communication from the general manager of a company to the branch managers is an example of downward communication. Other examples of downward communication include annual confidential reports, performance appraisals, notices, project feedback, announcements of company policies, official instructions, and so on. Forms of downward communication may include notes, notices, memos, telephone conversations, voice mails, emails, or face-to-face conversations.

Downward communication is essential for the functioning of any organisation as it involves the transfer of information, instruction, advice, request, feedback, and ideas to subordinate staff. It increases staff awareness and facilitates implementation of new policies, guidelines, decisions, and evaluation and appraisal of the performance of employees. However, too much downward communication can lead to reaction from subordinates and can hamper better employee-employer relationship.

1.4.2 Upward Communication

As the main purpose of upward communication is to provide feedback on several areas of organisational functioning, it refers to communication from subordinates to superiors. A business report from the branch manager of a company to the managing director of the company is an example of upward communication. Other examples of upward channel include business proposals, suggestion box, exit interviews, grievance committees, and so forth.

Since upward communication involves the transfer of information, request, and feedback from the subordinates to their seniors, it promotes better working relationships within an organisation by giving the subordinate staff opportunities to share their views and ideas with their supervisors. It facilitates employee involvement in the decision making process. Nevertheless, in any organization there has to be a balance between downward and upward communication channels.

1.4.3 Lateral Communication

The main objectives of horizontal communication are developing teamwork, and promoting group coordination within an

organisation. It takes place between professional peer groups or people working on the same level of hierarchy. Horizontal communication is less formal and structured than both downward communication and upward communication, and may be carried out through informal discussions, management gossip, telephone calls, teleconferencing, videoconferencing, memos, routine meetings, and so on.

1.4.4 Diagonal Communication

Diagonal communication is the product of modern changes in information technology and management and is the result of the growing realisation of fraternity and equality in the corporate sector. It is basically a response to market needs that demand speed and efficiency. As the diagonal channel occurs between people who do not have to follow rigid norms of communication protocol, it flows in all directions.

1.5 IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

Management has emerged as one of the dynamic field in the modern business scenario. The importance of communication in management in organisation is best summed up in the words of expert Harold Janis, "The world of management is a world of action. Services are designed made and sold. People are hired. Services are rendered. Policies are devised and implemented. Jobs are learned and performed. Yet there is no practical way in which any of these events can take place without communication."

1.5.1 Era of Specialisation

Unless the specialists know how to communicate, their vast knowledge of a limited field remains unused. Mr. Jadhav Rajee may be expert on taxation and the life insurance but if he cannot communicate his knowledge to others and give them the benefit of his advice, his knowledge is wasted. Similarly in an organisation the engineers, accountants, storekeepers and scientists must be able to communicate with each other and their superiors.

1.5.2 An Age of Tension

Not being able to communicate can result in tremendous mental tension (not to mention physical strain), especially when the banks knows that their rivals are more successful only because they are better communicators.

1.5.3 Reduces Miscommunication

The manner in which a message is perceived by the receiver often leads to miscommunication. To avoid this banks must learn to communicate, keeping in mind the attitudes and mental framework of the customers as well as employees who receives messages. If a manager asks a new clerk to get him information about the "composition of the liquidated party", the young man will be at a total loss to understand, for composition means the amount paid by a bankrupt to his creditors. Such situations arise because most specialised branches of business have their own sub codes or "jargon" and sometimes individual business houses have their own special set of terms which outsiders cannot understand.

1.5.4 Healthy Organisational Environment

Many banks and insurance organisation are so large that they may be termed "empires". They contain several branch offices within the country and even overseas and have many sub branches too. Not only should the managements of such organisations be able to communicate effectively with all the units but should also be able to do so speedily. Modern banks and insurance organisations are managed by communication which has in recent times become the chief management tool for achieving coordination and control. Effective communication leads to a healthy organisational environment, better management - employee relations, proper delegation of authority and division of work, helps to deal better with competition and solve trade union created problems.

1.5.5 Aid to Managerial Process

This means that unless these organisations are effective, speedy, and use the best means and instruments they will be wasting valuable time ("time is money" in these organisations) and will lag behind their rivals. Also while receiving communications they tries not to receive maximum communication but pertinent information. Effective communication promotes managerial efficiency and performance.

1.5.6 Creates Relations

Lack of effective communication in any organisation may lead to many problems like misunderstandings, gossipism and negative thinking. An effective and systematic communication system can do much to solve these problems. Good relationship within the organisation and with outsiders is essential for success in

business. This objective can only be achieved with the help of effective communication.

It ensures success. There is need to save on cost and time in modern business. Only effective communication can achieve this.

1.6 NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

1.6.1 Concept of Verbal and Non verbal Communication

We communicate by exchanging symbols to describe our ideas and experience. Language is a common symbol system which we use for sharing our experience with others. We can also use other symbols like pictures, colours, signs and sounds to communicate. We do communicate a number of things by our facial expressions, movements, clothing, and so on, whether we speak or not.

Communication through words is called verbal communication; communication through other symbols is called non-verbal communication.

1.6.1.1 Verbal Communication

The communication mode which we rely on most often to carry meaning from one person to another is the verbal mode. Everyone who has ever thought about it has come to the insight, however, that there are enormous difficulties in sole reliance on this mode of communication. History is replete with examples of misunderstandings among people who were relying on words to carry meaning. Perhaps the most significant learning that has come out of this experience has been that words themselves do not have meaning. People have meaning, and words are simply tools that we use for trying to convey meaning that is idiosyncratic to one person into the idiosyncratic meaning system of the other person. One of the difficulties with words is that we attach to them different experiential and emotional connotations. Words are not always associated with similar experiences or similar feelings on the part of the listener and speaker. Other difficulties encountered in using the verbal mode include the use of jargon, the use of clichés, and the use of specialized vocabularies. It is often said that words have meaning only in context; it can be better said that words only have meaning when they are associated with people in context.

It is not uncommon to observe people attempting to find the right words to say what they mean. There is a myth that there is a way to "say it right." If we extrapolate from that phenomenon, it is easy to hypothesize that there are some people who, instead of experiencing feelings and sensations, more often experience language; that is, their experience parameters are defined by their vocabularies and their ability to be articulate. The psychologist, Piaget, describing cognitive development in children, says that we go through three phases: concrete, imagic, and abstract. When the little baby first experiences the world, he is incapable of a highly differentiated emotional or sensational experience. He experiences only distress or delight, and his/her major inputs are concrete; that is; he touches, tastes, sees, hears, and smells things. As it becomes necessary for him to interact with the world and significant others in his environment in order to have his needs met, he develops a fantasy life, an imagic experience. He can imagine mother when mother is not concretely present. That fantasy life can remain throughout his life. As he develops verbal fluency, he begins to abstract, from physical stimuli which bombard him and from the images that are triggered by those stimuli, meanings which he attaches to his experiences. This abstract experience is a translation of sense data into a meaning system. The difficulty with adults, of course, is that very often we do not let into awareness the physical sensations which we experience. We often mistrust our fantasy lives and tend to be afraid to permit ourselves to dream. We experience the world, then, in an abstract way rather than in a concrete and imagic way. The meanings that we permit ourselves to be aware of are verbal and abstract. What we abstract from the physical stimuli which we experience is dependent on our vocabularies and our reasoning abilities. But those three layers of experience concrete, imagic, and abstract are going on continuously. People experience concretely, people experience imagically, and people experience the abstracting process which they do when they are awake and attributing meaning to what they see, hear, feel, taste, and touch. Not all of these meanings can be carried from one person to another through the verbal mode only. Verbal communication may be oral or written. Oral communication is more natural and immediate. It needs training and practice to speak effectively in a formal situation.

Oral communication requires the presence, simultaneous attention of both the persons, personal presence and must be able to respond to the body language of the other. Written

communication can greatly extend the field and powers of oral communication. Writing overcomes the limits of space and time which confine speech.

1.6.1.2 Non Verbal Communication

You cannot say anything! Try to sit for one minute without speaking. Even if you are able to keep from moving you will still communicate rigidity, anxiety, or something. We are always saying something. It is important to observe and try to understand what is intellectually rather than what they feel emotionally. There is some truth in the old cliché "actions speak louder than words." Body language, carefully observed and interpreted, can tell a lot about what others are feeling.

Nonverbal communication is learned and practiced often on an unconscious level. We attract people by using these nonverbal signals, and sometimes those we attract (or who are attracted to us) are unwholesome. As we grow older and become more aware of ourselves we should be able to recognize and weed out the unwholesome in favor of those for whom we have an affinity.

Non-verbal methods of communication can be consciously created and used with both written and oral communication. Graphics of all kinds can enrich the message presented in a document or in a speech. Pictures, maps, charts, graphs and diagrams add quality and clarity to a verbal message.

Besides using these symbols consciously, we may convey meaning by facial expressions, gesture, tone of voice, clothing, and other aspects of our personality and body. This is called body language.

Non-verbal methods can be consciously used to enhance what we speak; a trained speaker can use gesture, facial expression and posture to enrich the meaning of words.

A good deal of body language is unintentional and unconscious. It occurs through visual appearances and sounds related to us and around us. Personal appearance, colours used in clothing and in office decor, stationery, voices and other office sounds make an impression on others; they communicate information about us.

Non-verbal communication comprises all the impressions we receive and the interpretations we make from what we perceive through our senses.

Non-verbal communication occurs even when there is no verbal communication. And it always accompanies verbal communication, whether oral or written; it is more difficult to control and may sometimes betray the truth which the speaker/writer is hiding behind the words. Hence the saying, "non-verbal communication speaks louder than Words."

Thus, there can be unintended and unconscious non-verbal communication as well as conscious use of signs and sounds to communicate. An understanding of non-verbal methods and aspects of communication will help you to improve your oral and written presentation by using the methods and by gaining control over body language.

1.6.2 Use of Non Verbal Communication

Non-verbal methods have almost instant effect because of quicker grasp by the recipient. It takes less time to see a colour or picture, and to hear a horn or bell than to hear or read and understand words and sentences. This quality of speed in conveyance and response makes non-verbal methods extremely useful in many situations.

1. For traffic signs and signals, it is the red or green colour or a pictorial representation that tells the road user of the safety or danger of proceeding. Motorists and pedestrians respond at once on hearing a horn or a whistle.

2. Visual non-verbal methods are extremely useful as an aid to verbal communication; maps, charts and graphs are absolutely necessary for conveying ideas related to geography, locations, data, and most of the sciences. They can present a large amount of complex data in a compact form; one page can contain material which would need several pages to convey in words. This makes the information available conveniently, at a glance; comparisons can be made and conclusions drawn by studying a single sheet of paper which shows the data in a graph or a chart.

3. Human beings respond more powerfully to pictures, colours and plain sounds than to language. A cry of agony arouses a much stronger response than a tale of woe; a film showing the actual events or a story is more effective than a narrated or written story. News on the TV is more interesting, effective and realistic than on the radio because of the visuals.
4. For illiterate people, the best method of conveying important information is by non-verbal symbols. Bottles and containers of poisons are marked with a skull and cross-bones as a warning; illiterate drivers can manage with the non-verbal traffic signals and signs.
5. Films are used to explain processes to people who may not follow oral explanations easily. Actual or filmed demonstration is useful for teaching processes. Non-verbal communication can overcome the barrier of language.

1.6.3 Attributes of Verbal and Non Verbal Communication

1 Speed

Written communication is slower in preparation, in conveyance and in reception; it takes more time to draft, type, dispatch, and to receive and read a letter than it takes to speak, and to hear, listen to, and understand an oral message. Feedback is also slower in written communication.

2 Record

Written communication serves as a record and can be used for future reference. It is a documentary proof, and can be used as legal evidence. Oral communication may be taped for later reference, but the authenticity of the voice may be questioned; moreover, tapes can be edited and the message distorted. Written records and documents are more reliable and acceptable.

3 Precision and Accuracy

Written communication is more precise and accurate than oral. Choice of precise words is possible in written communication because the writer has the time to look for suitable words and phrases, and to revise and change the draft, if necessary. In oral communication, it is not always possible to be so precise in the choice of words; there is no time to seek and consider words while speaking; however, the recipient can seek clarification on the spot.

4 Support

Oral communication has the support of vocal tone and gestures and expressions which enrich the meaning of the words. This is not available with written communication, however, examples and illustrations serve the above purpose.

5 Length

A written message is usually shorter than an oral communication. The situation of oral communication requires some preliminary and closing remarks, while for written messages there are standard formats for opening and closing that can keep the message short. On the other hand written communication is suitable for long and lengthy communication.

6 Expense

Written communication requires stationery, preparation, and transmission, all of which cost money. Oral communication can also cost a great deal since it requires simultaneous presence and attention of the two parties, and getting together costs money. Costs will depend on the availability of the required person(s) at the particular place. Each type requires different channels for transmission. Availability and cost of each of the channels is a factor to be considered.

1.6.4 Various Methods of Non Verbal Communication

Non-verbal methods may be visual or auditory. Visual methods are those which are seen and auditory methods are those which are heard. Signs, pictures, colour, designs are visual; a sound, bells, tunes, whistles are auditory.

1 Visuals: Appearance and Other Cues

We say a great deal to each other about who we are and how we experience each other and the rest of the world through symbolic means. The symbolic communication mode is essentially passive, and messages emitted in this way are very easily misinterpreted.

What are some of the symbols that we use? First, our choice of clothes can tell a great deal about who we are, what our values are, what our status is, how conservative or liberal we are. We associate differences in occupational status with different uniforms. The banker wears a suit; the farmer wears overalls, and so on.

The second set of symbols with which we often associate meaning is hair. The type of haircut, length and color of hair, and the presence or absence of facial hair say a great deal about who we are. However, these signals are often highly ambiguous.

A third symbolic form is jewelry. Married people often wear wedding rings, some people do not wear a watch, and some people wear highly expensive jewelry, and so on. These are passive messages that are given out continuously to other people. A flag in the lapel, a red ribbon, an earring in one ear or in the nose say many things to other people.

A fourth form of symbolic communication to other people is cosmetics, or makeup. We associate meanings with different ways women apply makeup to their bodies. The prostitute usually has heavier makeup than other women. The man who uses a great many cosmetics is giving out a symbolic message about the meaning that his world has for him.

A fifth symbolic mode is the choice of automobiles. The business executive who drives a sports car is giving out a different set of messages to the world than his colleague who drives a luxury sedan or an ordinary family car.

A sixth symbolic mode is the choice and location of our houses. Social status is directly related to the type of dwelling one life in and its location.

Seventh, the geography of our living spaces is a form of symbolic communication. If you sit behind your desk in your office interviewing somebody who is on the other side of the desk, you are giving out a fundamentally different set of messages than if the two of you sit face to face with no intervening furniture.

So we are giving out a continuous stream of signals about our meaning to other people through the symbols that we choose to surround ourselves and invest ourselves with. These symbols are essentially passive. They are, however, a real part of our communication. When we are talking, when we are not talking, and when we are sleeping, we emit passive symbolic signals

2 Visuals: Cues
A cue is a type of communication used by an adult to let a child know what is expected of him/her in a given situation. Cues are a type of receptive communication.

Designing and using a consistent routine is the beginning of teaching cues. Given time in this type of the routine, the child will first begin to anticipate his/her part in the routine. Given more experience with the routine, the child may begin to anticipate the routine from some part of the routine.

Touch cues are ways an adult can touch a child to communicate a desired action. For example, an adult may gently pull a child's arm upward with a grasp at the wrist to cue the child to lift arm during a dressing routine.

A sensory cue is some sensory input used to help a child anticipate an event. For example, a smell of lotion before it is applied to the child's arm or the sound of water splashing before placing the child in the bathtub.

Object cues are some concrete piece of a routine that is used to represent that routine. For example, a diaper may be an object cue for diaper changing.

When deciding what cues to use with a child, it is important to remember to select cues that the child can easily discriminate one from the other. Otherwise the cues may be confusing to the child.

3 Visuals: Colour
Colour is a very important and powerful means of communication. Colour is so much a part of our daily life; we use it in clothing, design, and decoration; we introduce colour to enliven a dull environment. Colours are associated with different moods and feelings like black with death and sorrow, white with peace and purity, red with danger and so on.

Colour has psychological effect; motivation and state of mind of employees is influenced by the colour in the place of work. Pleasant and cooling colours in the work-place have good influence on workers. Black and other dark and gloomy colours are known to reduce productivity of workers; very bright and gaudy colours may

be disturbing and over-exciting; well-matched and softly blending colours are pleasant and soothing.

Colour is an important means of formal communication. Think of traffic signals; nothing could be more important than to convey correctly and instantly, that it is dangerous to proceed. Matters of life and death are dependent on colour for communication

Besides traffic signals, colour is mainly used for classification and identification. In the chemical industry, colour is used to identify drums, pipes, cylinders or containers of a particular material or gas, e.g., red cylinders are used only for cooking gas. The cosmetics industry uses colour for soaps and shampoos to make them attractive as well as to classify and differentiate the various types. In offices, carbon copies of forms, orders, challans and other documents are made out on papers of different colours in order to distinguish copies meant for different departments. Teams, regiments and countries have their combination of colours on their flag.

Colour gives an added dimension to maps, chart and graphs, and makes it possible to convey a greater amount of information within the same visual/graphic representation.

Pictorial representation: A large variety of pictures from simple drawing to sophisticated coloured pictures and photographs are used on posters and in advertisements.

4 Visuals: Charts and graphs

In a country like India, with a large number of illiterate and semi-literate people, a picture with very few words is more suitable for mass communication. Pictures are universally understood, and more easily remembered. They make an immediate impact because they are easier to "take in" than a written message. Writing being linear (moving in a line), requires practiced eye movement, while a picture may be tackled by the recipient in any order that suits the eye.

A poster combines pictures and words. The use of words is kept to the minimum. A poster can convey simple instructions or a process by a series of pictures. It can be used for education and persuasion in matters like the importance of saving, the danger of drinking, the value of neat and clean appearance, etc.

Charts and graphs are pictorial representations of statistical information and can be made in different ways. Special skills and techniques are needed to prepare them; they cannot be understood by the uneducated-, even educated persons need some explanation and training before they can follow a chart or a graph. There are great advantages in this method of presenting statistical data. The overall situation can be seen at a glance, and the relationships between the figures are seen more easily than in tables. It needs less space than description.

Charts and graphs must be properly titled and labelled to show what information is being represented; the date of the information must be shown. Graphs and charts must always have a scale and a key to explain the symbols used.

Maps are representations of territory and are used for conveying the space relationships between places. They are used for geographical information of all kinds, such as transport routes, climatic conditions, distribution of population, crops, animal life and vegetation; sociological factors like religion, literacy, health and nutrition can also be represented by maps. Maps of small areas are used to give information about routes and to locate places. Key and scale are needed in all maps.

A sign is a mark used as a representation of something; for example, + for "plus", x for "multiply" skull and cross bones for "danger." A sign is mostly visual, and has a fixed meaning. A signal is a previously agreed movement which serves to warn, direct, or command; for example, the coming on of a green light or the waving of Green flag is a signal to go ahead; the firing of a gun salute signals the arrival of VIP a signal may be visual or auditory.

Signs communicate instantly; therefore, they are most useful in communicating simple but important ideas. Traffic signs must instantly convey information to the drivers about what lies ahead on the road. Words cannot be so quick as signs; where instant decision has to be taken on the information conveyed, signs and signals are the only effective method.

Previous knowledge and a certain amount of conditioning are required for a person to respond to signs and signals; but once this is done, the response is a reflex action. A driver does not have to think that he must apply brakes when his eyes see a red flag or

light; he just applies brakes. Most of us do not need to think that we must keep off places and things which show a skull with two cross bones below it. These are universally known signs for mass communication.

5 Visuals: Signals

Signals are commonly used for communication among members of a group. Individuals use visual signs and signals to communicate if they are not within hearing distance of each other. Such signs may be made with hands, lights, coloured cloth, smoke, or anything which can be seen at the required distance.

Signals are movements the child uses to communicate needs, desires and feelings to adults. Signals are a form of expressive communication. Signals may start as a behavior that the child is not intentionally using to communicate. But because an adult consistently responds to this behavior, the child begins to understand that producing this behavior causes a particular event to occur. For example, a child may inadvertently clap hands with an adult. If hand clapping is enjoyable for the child and the adult consistently responds by hand clapping with the child, the child may signal for more hand clapping by clapping the adult's hand again. Signals are usually first seen within an already occurring activity. As the child becomes more sophisticated, he or she may produce the signal to initiate the activity.

6 Visuals: Symbols

Symbols are representations of an event, action, object, person, or place that can be used to communicate about the event, action, object, person, or place. Symbols can be used for both receptive and expressive communication. Objects, parts of objects, pictures, print, actions, gestures, signs, and speech can all be symbols. Symbols may start as cues and signals. If a child recognizes a cue out of context, that cue may be acting as a symbol. If a child uses a signal or an object cue to communicate about an event, action, object, person or place out of context, the child may be using that signal or cue as a symbol.

The more a symbol resembles what it represents, the more concrete that symbol is. The less a symbol resembles what it represents, the more abstract that symbol is. An example of a concrete symbol would be a spoon, used during mealtimes, to represent mealtime. A less concrete (or more abstract) symbol

would be a small line drawing of a person eating. The spoken phrase "time to eat" would be the most abstract because those sounds don't look, smell, or feel like food or the action of eating. Concrete symbols are more easily associated with what they represent than are abstract symbols. When determining how closely a symbol resembles an event, action, object, person, or place it is important to consider how the child perceives that event, action, object, person, or place. For example, a symbol based on visual similarities may not be as concrete for a person with a visual impairment as it would be for an individual who is fully sighted. A symbol based on an action may be abstract for an individual with physical impairment such that he/she had never performed that action.

7 Auditory Symbols

The use of auditory symbols is very limited. Only very simple information can be conveyed by sounds. Sound signals are used mainly for warning; in war time, sirens are used to warn about enemy air-raids; sirens are used in factories to warn of fire or accident, and by police vehicles. Whistles are used by the police and the army to call members to assemble, and to convey different instructions. Trains and ships use whistles as signal for departure and for warning. Bells and buzzers are used to indicate the starting and ending of work periods; bells are also used by special vehicles like the fire engine and the ambulance, to warn other road users to give way. A bell with a pleasant sound is associated with worship since it is used to call the faithful to prayer in many religions.

Tunes are often used as an identification mark. Programs on the radio and the TV are introduced with a signature tune; advertisements on these media are recognised by their tunes. Secret organisations use tunes which members may hum or whistle to identify and recognise members.

1.6.5 Body Language

Body movements indicate things about another person that may have great importance for creating communication or give you reasons to avoid it. We all have certain specific behavioural tendencies. That's not to say we're pigeonholed into being one thing or another. We are not locked into these tendencies-but more times than not, we tend to behave the same way again and again. Why? By default, we return to what we feel is safe and comfortable.

Often we ask ourselves, "Why did he say that?", "Why did he do that?", or "Who does he think he is?" These questions might be rephrased as, "Why did you say that?", "Why did you do that?" and "Who do you think you are?" Each of us is different. Fortunately we are predictably different and our differences make us simultaneously attractive and frustrating to others.

The secret of persuasion is to understand yourself and others. Then you can adapt effectively to the needs of the person and the situation. Information is power, but it's only powerful if you know how to obtain and use it.

David Golman, author of Emotional Intelligence, defined "EQ" as an ability to understand one's own feelings and to express empathy for the feelings of others. His studies showed that EQ is four times more likely than IQ to indicate your level of success. According to Golman, the communication skills responsible for EQ are:

1 Empathy & Graciousness

Since ancient times, humankind has attempted to read others and explain the reason for their differences. Credible personality models have been traced back as the writings of Hippocrates, Aristotle, and Chanakya for a comparison of the better-known personality profiles. The ability to influence others is dependent on the degree of willingness you and your partner wish to exercise in being co-operative and getting along. The greater your ability to adapt to your partner's behaviour and to communicate in his language, the more receptive he will be to you and the greater your chance of success will be. The key to influencing others lies in your ability to present your needs in terms of meeting their needs, and in wording your proposal in a way that is most receptive and understandable to them. In short, we want benefits spelled out for us in our own language. We want these benefits in a way that we can understand, so that we can put them to good use.

If you want to influence someone, you have to do the work of delivering your message in the receiver's behavioural language. You must design your presentations to meet his needs so he can immediately see the benefits.

2 Readiness and Enthusiasm

When people are ready to take action, they'll often sit forward in their seats or stand with their hands on their hips. They are anxious to get going. They will stand or sit in an erect position. They are alert, with wide, bright eyes. Their body motions are alive and animated. Their words can't keep up with their hands. When you see these signs, get going-because they're ready.

3 Frustration

Most of us are familiar with these signs. How many times a day do you see some of these gestures: hand-wringing, running fingers through hair, clenching hands or jaw, an exasperated sigh, or tension in the small muscles of the face? If you see these signs in others retreat before approaching with any request!

4 Superiority

People who feel superior to you often appear relaxed, with their hands clasped behind their heads or backs. The chin and head is often held high. They may lean back in their chairs, or lean their bodies against a wall, table or desk. When someone behaves this way it's important for you to control your emotions, apply your communication skills and focus on the issues on hand.

5 Boredom

Bored people tap their fingers or feet. They're often pre-occupied with personal grooming or other insignificant details, such as sharpening a pencil. They will also point their bodies to the door, and often check their watches. Often asking a question or stating your observation of their behaviours will involve them in the conversation.

6 Nervousness

Nervous people cover their mouths when they speak. Their voices are often high and may even break. Their speech is hesitant, and they use "ums" and "ahs" incessantly. They may clear their throats and wring their hands while looking down at their shoes. You may also see their facial muscles twitching as they shift back and forth on their feet.

It's important for you to create a safe environment for them to speak, to maintain rapport and to be patient and encouraging.

Body language is an important factor in oral communication. In face-to-face situations, an important message is communicated by a number of factors, like clothing, appearance, voice, posture, facial expressions, gestures and other body movements. Much of body language is involuntary or unconscious but it makes a powerful impact. Body language can make or mar a presentation. The study of body motion as related to speech is called kinesics.

7 Paralanguage

"Non-lexical" vocal communications may be considered a type of nonverbal communication, in its broadest sense, as it can suggest many emotional nuances. This category includes a number of sub-categories:

Inflection (rising, falling, flat...)
Pacing (rapid, slow, measured, changing...)
Intensity (loud, soft, breathy...)
Tone (nasal, operatic, growling, wheedling, whining...)
Pitch (high, medium, low, changes...)
Pauses (meaningful, disorganized, shy, hesitant...)

The voice has characteristics like tone, volume, and pitch. Tone is the quality of the voice. Volume is the loudness or softness, which is modified according to the number, of, persons addressed and the distance between speaker and listener; speaking too loudly for the situation may betray lack of self-command. Pitch is the high or low note of the scale; a high note is usually louder and heard at a longer distance than a low note; a high-pitched voice is often unpleasant, and suggests immaturity or emotional disturbance. The voice becomes high-pitched when a person is struck with fear.

Speed of speaking is another aspect of the voice. Rapid speech indicates excitement. But if we have control, we deliberately increase speed of speaking to tell an interesting story, and reduce speed to create suspense, and to explain a difficult idea. Other qualities like rhythm, clear pronunciation, and good accent, all have an effect on the listener.

Stress on a particular syllable or word can change the meaning and implication of the sentence. Try saying the sentence, "Were you there last night?" in different ways, putting stress on a different word each time, and note the difference in the meaning implied.

Just one word and a look can convey what might take several sentences; for example, an explosively uttered "What?" could mean, "What are you saying? Do you really mean that? I just can't believe what you're saying!"

These non-verbal aspects of the spoken word are known as paralanguage.

Vocalism or inflection constitutes a ninth form of nonverbal communication. As an example, take the sentence, "I love my children." That sentence is meaningless unless it is pronounced. The way that sentence is packaged vocally determines the signal that it gives to another person. For example, if the emphasis is on the first word, "I love my children," the implication is somebody else doesn't. If the emphasis is on the second word, "I love my children," a different implication is given; perhaps that some of their behavior gets on my nerves. If the emphasis is placed on the third word, "I love my children," the implication is that someone else's children do not receive the same affection. If the emphasis is placed on the final word, "I love my children," a fourth implication may be drawn, that is, that there are other people whom I do not love. So the way we carry our words vocally often determines the meaning that another person is likely to infer from our message.

8 Silence

Silence can be a very effective way of communication. Silence is not a negative absence of speech but a positive withdrawal or suspension of speech.

In a face-to-face situation, silence may indicate several things. It may be that the person is not sure what to say, or is so full of feeling as to be unable to speak. Silence can be used deliberately to convey certain feelings like anger or displeasure. Sympathy with someone who has suffered loss is often best expressed by keeping silent. Facial expression and posture may indicate the feeling behind the silence.

Silence can be very embarrassing if it is not possible to interpret it. It can be awkward in a group, when no one knows how to break it. On the telephone, it can cause much discomfort, as one cannot see the other and therefore has no clue from facial expressions as to the reason for the other's silence.

The terms "dead silence", "stony silence", "embarrassing silence", show that silence has a quality that communicates itself.

Short silences are very effective in giving emphasis to words. A pause before or after certain words make the words stand out from the rest. A skillfully placed pause has the power to make the listener more alert. In presentations, silence can be used effectively to emphasize a point; it is often far more effective than wild gestures or table-thumping.

9 Haptic Communication

Haptic communication is communicating by touch. This is used in a number of contexts and also has dangers for the unwary as touching for example where another person can in particular circumstances, be interpreted as assault. Touch is often intimate and can be used as an act of domination or friendship, depending on the context and who is touching who, how and when. Young children and old people use more touching than people in the middle years. Touch provides a direct contact with the other person. This varies greatly with the purpose and setting.

Touching is perhaps the most powerful nonverbal communication form. The skin is the body's largest organ, and through the skin we take in a variety of stimuli. We can communicate anger, interest, trust, tenderness, warmth, and a variety of other emotions very potently through touching. People differ, however, in their willingness to touch and be touched. Some people give out nonverbal body signals that say that they do not want to be touched, and there are other people who describe themselves and are described by others as "touchy feely." There are many taboos associated with this form of communication. Persons can learn about their own personalities and self concepts through exploring their reactions to touching and being touched.

10 Facial expression

Facial expression is an obvious communicative factor. A cheerful face or a gloomy face influences most people who see it. A happy or appreciative smile, a displeased frown, a look of surprise, and several other expressions of the face can convey, with or without words, the attitude and reaction of the communicants. Expressions accompany the speaker's words and also indicate the listener's reactions. An alert speaker can judge the listener's reaction by the facial expressions which act as a constant feedback. You can learn to use facial expressions for effect.

11 Eye contact

Eye contact is another form of nonverbal communication. We tend to size each other up in terms of trustworthiness through reactions to each other's eye contact. Try a little experiment with yourself. Remember the last time you were driving down the road and passed a hitch-hiker. The odds are very high that you did not look him in the eye if you passed him up. Con artists and salespeople understand the power of eye contact and use it to good advantage. Counselors understand that eye contact is a very powerful way of communicating understanding and acceptance. Speakers understand that eye contact is important in keeping an audience interested in one's subject.

Eye contact is a difficult, disconcerting communicative factor. The comfort level for eye contact is three seconds; if extended beyond that, it can amount to invasion of another's space. People who are aggressive try to fix others with a stare; if you are angry you might express it with extended eye contact. If you give full eye contact for too long together with an angry expression, the other person may describe the experience as "shooting darts at me."

A person who is lying usually blinks and avoids eye contact; unblinking eye contact could mean that the person is lying and watching to see your reaction. Persons with lack of self confidence often avoid eye contact.

For a person making an oral presentation it is important to create rapport with the audience with eye contact. Presenters make it a point to take in the whole audience with a sweep of the eye, making brief eye contact with as many as possible. The eyes, according to Leonardo da Vinci, are the "mirror to the soul."

Confident eye contact shows trustworthiness and truthfulness. Shifty eyes indicate aloofness and distrust.

12 Gestures

Do we expect other cultures to adopt our customs or are we willing to adopt theirs? This might translate to how business or even foreign relations are to be conducted. Do we compromise or force others peoples to deal only on our terms? We may not have time to hear a language, but taking time to learn the "signals" is a powerful communicator.

As the global village continues to shrink and cultures collide, it is essential for all of us to become more sensitive, more aware, and more observant to the myriad motions, gestures, and body language that surround us each day. And as many of us cross over cultural borders, it would be fitting for us to respect, learn, and understand more about the effective, yet powerful "silent language" of gestures.

The world is a giddy montage of vivid gestures- traffic police, street vendors, expressway drivers, teachers, children on playground, athletes with their exuberant hugging, clenched fists and "high fives." People all over the world use their hands, heads, and bodies to communicate expressively.

Without gestures, our world would be static and colorless. The social anthropologists Edward T. Hall claim 60 percent of all our communication is nonverbal. In that case, how can we possibly communicate with one another without gestures?

Gestures and body language communicate as effectively as words- maybe even more effectively. We use gestures daily, almost instinctively, from beckoning to a waiter, or punctuating a business presentation with visual signals to airport ground attendants guiding an airline pilot into the jet way or a parent using a whole dictionary of gestures to teach (or preach to) a child.

-Gestures are woven inextricably in to our social lives, but also that the "vocabulary" of gestures, can be at once informative and entertaining... but also dangerous. Gestures can be menacing (two drivers on a freeway), warm (an open-armed welcome), instructive (a police man giving road directions, or even sensuous.

Bear in mind that the following gestures are in general use, but there may always be exceptions. In recent years, Western and contemporary values and ideas have become more popular and has either influenced, altered, and even replaced, some of the more traditional gestures, understanding human behavior is tricky stuff. No two people behave in precisely the same way. Nor do people from the same culture all perform exactly the same gestures and body language uniformly. For almost any gestures there will probably be a minority within a given nationality who might say "Well, some might attach that meaning to it, but to me it means..." and then they will provide a different interpretation.

In the world of gestures, the best single piece of advice is to remember the two A's - "Ask" and be "aware." If you see a motion or gesture that is new or confusing, ask a local person what it signifies. Then, be aware of the many body signs and customs around you.

Gestures, the movement of arms and hands, are different from other body language in that they tend to have a far greater association with speech and language. Whilst the rest of the body indicates more general emotional state, gestures can have specific linguistic content.

Gestures have three phases: preparation, stroke and retraction. The real message is in the stroke, whilst the preparation and retraction elements consist of moving the arms to and from the rest position, to and from the start and end of the stroke. Our gestures often times tell something about us that we are not able or willing to communicate verbally. Here is a partial list of "open" and "closed" gestures—"open" are present when a person is ready and willing to communicate, "closed" are present when there may be something standing in the way of honest, complete communication. These gestures can be observed in spouse relationships, parent-child relationships, supervisor-worker relationships, worker-client relationships, and any other time that two people are communicating. Maybe you will discover that your body language has been "telling" on you!

13 Posture

Posturing is a form of nonverbal communication. How one postures the body when seated or standing constitutes a set of

no barriers stalling for time (light pipe, clean glasses, etc.) body positioned toward other, rocking, seating arrangement with contact, calm, use of facial movements, starting or eyes closed affirmative head nods, head lowered, eye contact, lack of eye patting, open palm tapping, rubbing palms together, hand wringing, Welcoming: handshake, folded arms, touching, cold shoulder, foot, shoulders squared, fidgeting, uncrossed legs, locked ankles, standing straight, moving away, feet apart, legs crossed, shaking back, relaxed, rigid, hands away from face, looking at floor, unbuckling jacket, peering over top of glasses, spontaneous eye contact, glancing at exit, smile frown, leaning forward, leaning back, relaxed, rigid, hands away from face, looking at floor, standing straight, moving away, feet apart, legs crossed, shaking foot, shoulders squared, fidgeting, uncrossed legs, locked ankles, Welcoming: handshake, folded arms, touching, cold shoulder, patting, open palm tapping, rubbing palms together, hand wringing, affirmative head nods, head lowered, eye contact, lack of eye contact, calm, use of facial movements, starting or eyes closed body positioned toward other, rocking, seating arrangement with no barriers stalling for time (light pipe, clean glasses, etc.)

potential signals that may communicate how one is experiencing his environment. A person who folds his arms and legs is often said to be defensive. It is sometimes observed that a person under severe psychological threat will assume the body position of a fetus. The seductive person opens his body to other people and postures himself so that his entire body is exposed to the other person.

Posture is the way we hold ourselves. Though difficult to interpret, it contributes much to communication. The way we hold our body, the way we stand or sit indicates something about our feelings and thoughts, attitudes and health. Sitting stiffly, may show tension; comfortably leaning back conveys a relaxed mood, eagerly leaning forward shows the listener's interest in the speaker. Posture can indicate disregard or disrespect for others who are present; polite and well-bred persons are usually careful of how they stand or sit in the presence of visitors and in formal situations. Graceful posture is a great asset in any business.

1.7. SEVEN CS OF COMMUNICATION

Seven C's are the seven most useful qualities of effective communication. They are called Seven C's because name of each of these qualities starts with a C, and they are seven in numbers, therefore they are called Seven C's. Although they are just seven small words starting with a letter C but their importance for effective business communication is same as the importance of seven seas for the world.

1.7.1 Completeness

Message Receiver- either listener or reader, desires complete information to their question. e.g. suppose you are working with multinational company who is engaging with engineering goods, like A.C. Now let say one of your major customer wants some technical information regarding "thermostat" (because he wants to convey the same to the end users). In this case you have to provide him complete information in a short span of time. If possible, provide him some extra information which he does not know, in this way you can maintain a good business relation with him, otherwise he may switch to another company.

Five W's: One way to make your message complete is to answer the five W's: WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY? The five question method is useful when you write requests, announcements, or other informative messages. For instance, to order (request) merchandise, make clear WHAT you want, WHEN u need it, WHERE it is to be sent.

1.7.2 Conciseness

Conciseness means "convey the message by using fewest words". "Conciseness is the prerequisite to effective business communication." Hence, a concise message saves the time and expenses for both the parties.

For achieving the conciseness you have to consider the following.

- Avoid wordy expression
- Include only relevant material
- Avoid unnecessary repetition.
- Avoid Wordy Expression

E.g. Wordy: - at this time. Instead of "at this time" you can just use only a concise word: - NOW, Always try to use "To the point Approach" in business scenario perspective.

Include only relevant information:

- Always try to provide only relevant information to the receiver of the message. Let's say one of your customers requested
- For clients of the company in reply you should provide simply list of clients at the panel of your company.
- No need to provide detailed business information about client at all.
- Observe the following suggestions to "Include only relevant information."
- Stick to the purpose of message Delete irrelevant words Avoid long introduction, unnecessary explanation etc. Get to the important point concisely.
- Avoid un-necessary Repetition: Sometimes repetition is necessary for focusing some special issue. If the same thing is said without two or three reasons, the messages become wordy and boring. That's why try to avoid Un-necessary repetition.

Some ways to eliminate unnecessary words: Use shorter name after you have mentioned the long once. E.g. Spectrum communications Private limited use spectrum. Use pronouns or initials E.g. Instead of world trade organization use WTO or You can use IT for Information Technology. (Keeping in views that receiver knows about these terms)

1.7.3 Consideration

Consideration means - To consider the receiver's interest/intention. It is very important in effective communication while writing a message you should always keep in mind your target group consideration is very important "C" among all the seven C's.

Three specific ways to indicate consideration: First, focus on "you" instead of "I" or "We", second, show audience benefit or interest of the receiver and third, emphasize positive, pleasant facts. Using "you" help you, but over use lead a negative reaction.

Always write a message in such a way how audience should be benefited from it.

We attitude: "I am delighted to announce that we will extend to make shopping more."

You attitude: "You will be able to shop in the evening with the extended hours." Readers may react positively when benefit are shown to them. Always try to address his/her need and want. Always show/write to reader..... what has been done so far as his/her query is concerned. And always avoid that his/her need and wants. Always avoid that has not been done so far.

1.7.4 Conciseness

It means that message should be specific instead of general. Misunderstanding of words creates problems for both parties (sender and receiver). When you talk to your client always use facts and figures instead of generic or irrelevant information.

To achieve the Conciseness: use specific facts and figures, choose image building words e.g General He is very intelligent student of class and stood first in the class. E.g. Nehra's GPA in B.Sc Electrical Engineering 2K3-I session was 3.95/4.0; he stood first in his class. Always write on a very solid ground. It should definitely create good image as well.

1.7.5 Clarity
Accuracy is a purpose of clarity. In effective business communication the message should be very much clear. So that reader can understand it easily. You should always choose precise words. Always choose familiar and easy words. Construct effective sentences and paragraphs.

In business communication always use precise words rather longer statements. If you have a choice between long words and shorter one, always use shorter one. You should try your level best to use familiar/easy to understand words so that your reader will quickly understand it.
Next familiar words
after
home
subsequent
domicile
for example
pay
remuneration
invoice
statement for payments

1.7.6 Courtesy

Knowing your audience allows you to use statements of courtesy; be aware of your message receiver. True courtesy involves being aware not only of the perspective of others, but also their feelings. Courtesy stems from a sincere you-attitude. It is not merely politeness with mechanical insertions of "please" and "Thank you". Although Applying socially accepted manners is a form of courtesy. Rather, it is politeness that grows out respect and concern for others. Courteous communication generates a special tone in their writing and speaking.

The following are suggestions for generating a courteous tone: Be sincerely tactful, thoughtful and appreciative. Use expressions that show respect for the others Choose nondiscriminatory expressions be sincerely Tactful, Thoughtful and Appreciative Though few people are intentionally abrupt or blunt, these negative traits are common cause of discourtesy. Avoid expression like those in the left hand column below; rephrase them as shown in the right-hand column.

Tactless, Blunt
More Tactful

Stupid letter; I can't understand

I should understand it, as there is no confusing word in this letter.
could you please explain it once again?

It's your fault, you did not properly Sometimes my wording is not precise; let me try again read my latest FAX.

Thoughtfulness and appreciation Writers who send cordial, courteous messages of deserved congratulations and appreciation (to a person inside & outside) help to build goodwill. The value of goodwill or public esteem for the firm may be worth thousands of dollars.

1.7.7 Correctness

At the core of correctness are the proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. However, message must be perfect grammatically and mechanically. The term correctness, as applied to business messages also mean three characteristics o Use the right level of language o Check the accuracy of figures, facts and words and maintain acceptable writing mechanics.

Formal writing is often associated with scholarly writing: doctoral dissertations, scholarly, legal documents, top-level government agreements and other material where formality is demanded. Informal writing is more characteristic of business writing. Here you use words that are short, well-known and conversational as in this comparison list:

| More Formal | Less Formal |
|-------------|-------------|
| Participate | Join |
| Endeavor | try |
| Ascertain | find out |
| Utilize | Use |
| Interrogate | question. |

Avoid substandard language. Using correct words, incorrect grammar, faulty pronunciation all suggest as inability to use good English. Some examples follow:

| Substandard | More Acceptable |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Ain't | isn't, aren't |
| Can't | hardly |
| Can | hardly |
| Aim to proving | aim to prove |
| Desirous to | desirous of |
| Stoled | stolen |

ORAL COMMUNICATION

Unit Structure

- 12.1 Objectives
- 12.2 Introduction: Oral Communication Skills
- 12.3 Importance of Oral Communication in Business
- 12.4 Face to Face Communication
- 12.5 Telephone Communication
- 12.6 Communication with Visitors
- 12.7 Listening
- 12.8 Summary
- 12.9 Exercise
- 12.10 Exercises for Discussion

12.1 OBJECTIVES

- To explain the importance of oral communication to business
- To identify and give examples of the objectives of oral communication
- To describe the similarities and differences between face-to-face oral communication and using the telephone
- To explain the techniques for communicating with visitors
- To identify and explain the techniques of effective listening

12.2 INTRODUCTION: ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

For successful communication, students require more than the formal ability to present well and a range of formulaic expressions. Successful communication is context dependent and therefore embedded in its particular discourse community (Bizzell, 1989).

Oral communication reflects the persistent and powerful role of language and communication in human society. As Halliday (1978, p. 169) explains, communication is more than merely an

exchange of words between parties; it is a "...sociological encounter" (Halliday, p. 139) and through exchange of meanings in the communication process, social reality is "created, maintained and modified" (Halliday, p. 169). Such a capacity of language is also evident in Austin's (1962) earlier work on speech act theory where, as cited by Clyne (1994, p. 2), language and thus communication is a "...instrument of action". Speech act theory, concerned with the communicative effect, that is, the function and effect of utterances, dissects an utterance into three components: the actual utterance (the location); the act performed by the utterance (the illocution); and the effect the act has on the hearer (the perlocution). Searle's (1969) work further defined speech acts as directives, imperatives, requests, and so on.

Communication is a dynamic interactive process that involves the effective transmission of facts, ideas, thoughts, feelings and values. It is not passive and does not just happen; we actively and consciously engage in communication in order to develop information and understanding required for effective group functioning. It is dynamic because it involves a variety of forces and activities interacting over time. The word process suggests that communication exists as a flow through a sequence or series of steps. The term process also indicates a condition of flux and change. The relationships of people engaged in communication continuously grow and develop.

Communication is an exchange of meaning and understanding. Meaning is central to communication. Communication is symbolic because it involves not only words but also symbols and gestures that accompany the spoken words. Communication is an interactive process. The two communication agents involved in the communication process are sender (S) and receiver (R). Both the communication agents exert a reciprocal influence on each other through interstimulation and response.

At its most basic level, oral communication is the spoken interaction between two or more people. The interaction is far more complex than it seems. Oral communication is composed of multiple elements which, when taken as a whole, result in the success or failure of the interaction. Not everyone is an effective communicator.

In order to function successfully academically and professionally, one needs to learn effective oral communication skills. For many, conversational speech comes naturally.

However, in more formal speech, effective communication skills are essential. A poorly conducted interview, sales

presentation, or legal argument could have ramifications that affect many more people than the speaker. By becoming an effective communicator one will be able to conduct himself in a variety of personal, professional, and academic environments with confidence.

Oral communication is a unique and learned rhetorical skill that requires understanding what to say and how to say it. Unlike conversational speech, speech in more formal environments does not come naturally. What should be learnt is how to critically think about how to present oneself as a speaker in all occasions and then how to function in a variety of speaking environments?

Oral communication can take many forms, ranging from informal conversation that occurs spontaneously and, in most cases, for which the content cannot be planned, to participation in meetings, which occurs in a structured environment, usually with a set agenda.

As a speaker there are several elements of oral communication of which one needs to be aware in order to learn how to use them to his advantage. Apart from the language used for communication, there are several others elements which the speaker should learn to communicate effectively. The Skills are eye contact, body language, style, understanding the audience, adapting to the audience, active and reflexive listening, politeness, precision, conciseness, etc. At tertiary level it is assumed that the learners know the basics of the language. At this level teaching speaking skills is irrelevant.

12.3 IMPORTANCE OF ORAL COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS

- Oral communication constitutes the bulk of all communication. Most authorities agree that people on the job, including secretaries, spend an average of about 75 percent of their work in jobs demanding well-developed oral communication skills.
- It establishes the procedures for accomplishing whatever needs to be done. People usually discuss problems and solutions before deciding on a course of action.
- Oral communication helps establish human relationships. Office conversations help people understand each other and make working together enjoyable.

12.3.1 Advantages of Oral Communication

Oral communication has several advantages over written communication for most day-to-day, routine transactions:

- Oral communication is faster: Two or more people talking can deliver a message, discuss an issue, reach an agreement, or ask a question and receive an answer much more quickly than they could using written communication.
- Oral communication permits immediate feedback: When the receiver does not understand a message, he or she can ask for clarification right away.
- Oral communication is usually more effective for conveying messages with emotional content: When people communicate orally, the message consists of more than the spoken words. A nonverbal message accompanies every oral communication. Facial expressions, body movements, gestures, tone of voice, rate of speech, and voice inflection all add meaning to the words actually spoken. These nonverbal components help the receiver interpret the emotional significance of the message.
- Oral communication helps establish human relationships: Through oral communication, people working together are able to develop team spirit and a sense of mutual responsibility. By communicating with each other orally, people are able to improve each other's morale.

12.3.2 Formal and Informal Speaking Situations

In general, oral communication directly related to organizational objectives tends to be formal. That related to establishing human relationships tends to be informal. Compare, for example, a job interview with a typical morning conversation between a secretary and supervisor. In the job interview, interviewer and interviewee communicate within a framework of well-established rules. The questioning-and-answer format of most interviews helps interviewer and interviewee achieve their objectives, but it affords little opportunity for establishing an interpersonal relationship. Because of the need to proceed carefully, interviewer and interviewee tend to be formal with each other. They select words carefully; they stick to the subject. They do not permit themselves to relax and simply enjoy each other's company.

The morning conversation between supervisor and secretary may also proceed along predictable lines, but, under normal circumstances, neither worries about the results of the

exchange or about what to say next. Business and personal matters are discussed interchangeably. In such an atmosphere, people can converse in a casual, comfortable way.

As a secretary, you will need to distinguish between formal and informal communication situations. To be formal when informality is called for is to be considered uncaring; to be informal when formality is required is to be considered unprofessional. This chapter discusses formal oral communication situations. Chapters 18 and 19 discuss human relations and interpersonal communication skills.

12.4 FACE TO FACE COMMUNICATION

Just as each written communication has a specific objective to achieve, oral communication also has specific objectives. These objectives fall into three separate categories: asking questions, giving information, and persuading.

12.4.1 Asking Questions

Much oral communication consists of asking questions and providing answers. Most questions asked in the office environment are informal. You will ask questions as they occur to you without worrying about how your listener might interpret them. For example, while arranging office furniture, you might ask or be asked, "Should we move the filing cabinet to the east wall?" Few people would look for hidden meanings in such questions, and questions of this sort rarely present problems.

Questions in formal communication situations, however, can cause difficulties. In formal situations, questions are often perceived as threatening. The person answering the questions may resent the other person for asking them. For example, you might be assigned the job of finding out and reporting on how office personnel perceive a new executive in the organization. To complete your assignment, you would need to ask a series of questions of the office workers. When you are faced with a formal communication situation in which you'll need to ask the other person questions, try to keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Ask questions rather than make statements: As obvious as this advice seems, too often people attempt to obtain information by making statements. Statements that require the other person to provide information are usually perceived as more threatening than a polite question requesting the same information. "Where did you grow up?" is less threatening than "Tell me a bit about yourself." Also, statements made in the hope of eliciting

information are often less specific than questions. "I would like to know about your job at Exxon" is less specific than, "What were your job duties at Exxon?"

- Ask essential questions only: Most people resent answering several questions in a row. Each new question appears more threatening than the last. When possible, keep the number of questions to a minimum. When you must ask several questions, take the time to explain why you want the information. Also, provide positive feedback after each question to reassure the other person. Be sure to ask the easy questions first. Questions that can be answered with short answers should come before difficult questions requiring complex answers.

- Avoid deliberately threatening questions: Questions that make the other person feel defensive will reduce both the amount and the quality of the information you will obtain. (See Chapter 19, pages 502-504, for specific examples of questions to ask and those to avoid.)

- Provide positive reinforcement for helpful answers: Let the other person know that she or he has been helpful. Thank the other person, and provide appropriate explanations of your need for the information.

12.4.2 Giving Information

As is true with asking questions, giving information rarely presents problems in informal situations. If you asked an informal question and the other person doesn't understand your response, the other person will say so and give you another opportunity to answer. In informal situations, speaker and "audience" agree to share the responsibility for effective communication. In formal situations, however, the responsibility for effective communication lies with the person for whom the communication is more important. Formal situations also require a person to speak for a longer time than is usually required by the questions and answers of informal situations.

When you have the responsibility for presenting information in a formal situation, your presentation will be more effective if you keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Be aware of the audience: Why should your listener—or listeners—be interested in the information you are presenting?

What does your audience know already about your topic? How much detail does your audience need to solve the problem?

Because people have a natural inclination to present information from their own point of view, emphasizing those things that are interesting to themselves, they sometimes tend to forget that the audience may not share their interests. Try to select and provide information that will be of most interest to the audience.

- Make specific points. Just as you are likely to obtain more and better information by asking specific questions, you are likely to be better understood if you make clear and specific points. When possible, make a list of the most important points before you begin trying to speak so that you will be sure to include everything you want to say. Avoid undermining your point of view with contradictory phrases ("I'm probably wrong, but . . ." or "It's probably not important, but . . .").

- Provide clear transitions from point to point; because much oral communication depends on chronological or spatial relationships, listeners need to know what those relationships are. Use transitional words and phrases to clarify the relationships between your points. The following words and phrases can help orient a listener:

first, second, third
next, thus, however
then, later
in two weeks, two weeks ago
turn right at the second light
after completing step two
a small town near Indianapolis
before turning off the machine

12.4.3 Persuading

Most of us do some persuading every day. In our daily conversations, we frequently need to convince others that our point of view is correct or persuade them to do something they wouldn't ordinarily do. As a rule, the fact that we want them to think or do something is not enough.

To persuade someone, you have to convince him or her that doing as you suggest will be to her or his benefit as well as your own. As is true for asking questions and giving information, the

listener's point of view is important. That is, what does the listener currently believe? What is the listener currently doing in place of the action you would like the listener to perform? How will the listener benefit from believing what you say or from doing as you ask?

Concentrate on those beliefs and actions related to the topic for persuasion. You won't, for example, need to know the religious beliefs of the secretarial personnel in your organization to persuade them to change their procedures for records management.

When you wish to persuade, find out as much as you can about your listener's current beliefs, actions, and perceived benefits before you attempt to influence his or her opinion or course of action. In some cases you may be able to learn all you need to know by asking some informal questions of a few members of the group you wish to persuade. In other cases, you may need to distribute a questionnaire to group members to discover their attitudes. In still other cases, you may have to infer their attitudes based on what you do know about them. However you learn what you can about your audience's attitudes and current actions, that knowledge gives you the starting point for Your persuasive Message.

Think of persuading as a journey; you wish to lead your audience from where they are now to where you wish them to be. You are responsible for leading them, merely describing the destination is not enough. Some of your listeners may move quickly from one point to the next; so may not move at all. But unless you make the trip with them, beginning at a point they are ready to accept and moving carefully from point to point at a pace they are willing to accept, none of them will reach the destination you desire.

In asking for and providing information, you have the right to expect the other person to cooperate in the communication process. Most people will be as helpful as they can be. In a persuasive situation, however, the person who wishes to persuade must assume full responsibility for the success or failure of the communication. The other person under no obligation is to be persuaded. In fact, the other person may feel obligated to resist being persuaded. When you communicate to persuade, you'll need to overcome the other person's natural inclination to resist.

Persuading orally requires many of the same techniques written persuasion (see pages 224-226). When the situation is informal, you'll omit many of the details you would need to persuade in a formal situation. It's easier, for example, to persuade a friend to join you for lunch than it is to persuade an executive to invest in a new piece of office equipment. Because the investment is small and the benefit is obvious, your friend should be easy to

persuade. The investment for the executive, however, is larger, and more risk is involved. To persuade the executive, you would need to provide specific details about the benefits and prove that those benefits would be realized.

12.5 TELEPHONE COMMUNICATION

Talking on the telephone is not the same as talking with someone face to face. While the telephone is an extremely useful device for bringing two or more people together, some of the communication is lost since nonverbal behavior cannot be observed. In face-to-face situations, body language and facial expressions help people interpret each other's messages. In telephone conversations, the words themselves and the tone of voice must do all the work.

12.5.1 Using the Phone

Because most people have grown up with telephones, they tend to think of themselves as experts in their use. And, to a great extent, techniques learned through trial and error are correct. Proper business use of a telephone is not all that different from proper personal use. Identifying yourself clearly and distinctly, being polite, and being sensitive to the other person's needs are important regardless of whether the call is for personal or business reasons.

In business, the telephone serves as a public relations agent for your organization. Callers may form their entire impression of your organization based on their conversations with you on the telephone. Your voice, manners, and discretion should all indicate that you and your company will make good business associates.

Your voice should show that you are alert, pleasant, and natural. Use your normal speaking range. Avoid speaking too loudly or too softly. Speak at a moderate rate, neither too fast nor too slow, and speak distinctly. In face-to-face communication, people watch each other's eyes and mouths to supplement the oral messages. The added communications elements help clarify words that might otherwise be misunderstood. In a telephone conversation, each word must be clear so it can be understood without the additional visual cues.

Manners The common courtesies of please and thank you are even more important in telephone conversations than they are in person. In face-to-face situations, your smile may substitute for a thank you, and the other person will still understand your message. Over the telephone, however, the only way the other person will know that you appreciate her or his business is by stating your appreciation explicitly.

Make sure that you know the other person's name. If you miss it the first time, ask him or her to repeat it-and to spell it, if necessary. Write it down, and use it in the conversation from time to time.

Give the person to whom you are talking your full attention. Avoid sounding hurried. You should give the caller the feeling that she or he is your most important business at the moment. When the other person talks, you must listen carefully. When you talk, be as pleasant and as cheerful as possible. Put a smile in your voice.

Avoid side comments and conversations with others while a person is waiting on the line. If you must leave the line to obtain information or to handle other business, give the other person the option of holding or having you return the call. Use the hold button if your telephone has one. If your telephone does not have a hold button, lay the receiver down gently. Remember that if the line is "open," the other person will be able to hear much of what you say even though you may not be next to the telephone. Return to the phone promptly. If you need to be away from the phone for more than a few minutes, tell the other person that you will call back as soon as possible.

Discretion Remember that every time you talk on the telephone, you represent the company to the person on the other end of the line. Your telephone manners and behavior will form an image of the entire organization in the other person's mind. The image you should give is of efficiency and helpfulness. Avoid the impression that your organization is run in a haphazard fashion. Compare, for example, the different impressions that result from the following responses

"I'm sorry, but I can't find Mr. Milton anywhere. I can't imagine where he could be."
"I'm sorry, but Mr. Milton has gone home for the day."
"Mr. Milton is not in his office at the moment. May I take a message?"

Alone with using discretion about conveying the right company image, be sure to use discretion in discussing sensitive information. The telephone may put you into a sense of privacy and confidentiality, but private matters should normally be reserved for face-to-face conversations.

12.5.2 Receiving Calls

When your telephone rings, answer it promptly. Try to answer on the first ring. Your promptness shows your caller that you take her or his call seriously, and helps establish your reputation for efficiency.

Personalize the call by identifying yourself. You may answer with your name rather than the customary "hello" used to answer a home telephone. If you share a telephone line with others in your department, give the department name as well:

"Personnel Department, Janice Churay."
"Credit Office, Michelle speaking."
If you answer the telephone for someone else, give the name of the other person as well as your own:

"Ms. Steven's office, Ted is speaking."

In addition to observing good manners, try to be as helpful as possible. Handle the call yourself if you can. When it is necessary to transfer a call, explain why the transfer is necessary and make sure that the person calling wants to be transferred. If the person would rather have someone return the call, make the proper arrangements to have the appropriate person call with the correct information.

Be prepared to take accurate messages. Whether the call is for you or for someone else, you'll need to keep a record of the call until all business associated with it is complete. Record the date, time, name of the person calling, the name of the company represented, the other person's telephone number, and the purpose of the call. Most companies provide forms similar to that shown in Figure 10.1 for recording messages for someone else in your office. When you are taking notes for yourself, use a clean 8 1/2 x 11 inch piece of paper to keep an accurate record of the conversation. File it, or use it to prepare any necessary follow-up correspondence.

12.5.3 Placing Calls

Before you place a telephone call, prepare. Make sure that you have the correct number, including area code, number, and extension number. Use the telephone directory-when necessary, and follow the correct procedures for placing local and long-distance calls. Have your notepad and pen handy. Be prepared to take notes covering the important aspects of the conversation.

Remember that unless you have been specifically invited to call at a particular meeting or other activity, be prepared to have to call back or to wait for your party to return your call. Also, remember time differences when placing long-distance calls. Most telephone directories contain a map showing the four time zones in the continental United States so that you can make sure that you are calling at a convenient time. If your company does business in Europe or Asia, you will need to be familiar with appropriate calling times for those in other countries as well.

12.6 COMMUNICATION WITH VISITORS

Most secretarial positions require communicating with visitors to the organization. Whether one is working as a receptionist, whose chief responsibility is to greet visitors, or as an administrative assistant, who may see visitors on regular basis only, communicating with visitors is an important public relations function. Visitors will form their impression of your organization based on your appearance and the way you treat them.

Ideally, visitors should be greeted by a receptionist in a specially designed receiving area. The receptionist has the responsibility of checking credentials (if appropriate) and ensuring that the visitor is directed to the appropriate person or office. Visitors with appointments should not have to wait long before seeing the person they are scheduled to see. Waiting makes most people feel uncomfortable and resentful. If an emergency has occurred, the visitor should be told what has happened and how long the wait is likely to be. The appointment should be rescheduled if the visitor prefers to return rather than wait.

Visitors without appointments should be treated courteously and according to individual policies. That is, some supervisors maintain an "open door" policy and will see people as they arrive. Others prefer to see only those who have scheduled appointments in advance. Visitors without appointments should recognize that they are likely to have to wait longer than they would have if they had made appointments.

Whether the visitor is scheduled or unscheduled, the secretary or receptionist is responsible for making the guest feel welcome, much as you would try to make a guest feel welcome in your home. You should show the visitor where to hang her or his coat, provide coffee when appropriate, and tell the visitor how long the wait will be. Some visitors may prefer to leave messages than to wait, and you should be prepared to take the message and to ensure that it reaches the appropriate person. Once you have made the visitor comfortable, you should return to your regular office work.

You should make an effort to learn the names and faces of regular visitors and to develop an intuitive understanding of which people various supervisors would prefer to see (even when they don't have appointments) and which they would prefer to avoid seeing. Regular visitors will appreciate being remembered.

Unscheduled visitors who are impatient about having to wait and those your supervisor would prefer not to see need to be handled firmly but politely. When possible, make an appointment

for these individuals at a time your supervisor would be willing to see them. For others, you may need to discuss an appointment with you, supervisor before informing them. Promise to ask your supervisor and to call with information about an appointment as soon as you

Some organizations and offices require receptionists and secretaries to keep a record of visitors either for reasons of security or for billing purposes. Many manufacturing firms, for example, are in the process of developing products or processes that should remain confidential. Visitors to those plants will need to be screened. Additionally, such visitors may require temporary identification cards and perhaps even a full-time escort while they are on the premises. Doctors, lawyers, and many consultants also require a record of visitors so that they can keep accurate time logs for billing purposes.

Secretaries have the responsibility of introducing the visitor to the superior. In general, when you are introducing two people, you should name the person of a higher rank first, then the person first:

"Mr. Important, may I introduce Mr. Less Important."

The main exception to this rule is that when you are introducing a woman and a man, the woman should be named first, regardless of rank or age.

"Ms. Smith, may I present Mr. Jones."

The table below provides the basic rules for introductions:

| Introduction | First Name |
|--|-----------------------|
| Distinguished visitor and Supervisor | Distinguished visitor |
| Official (political or religious) and Supervisor | Official |
| Woman and man | Woman |
| Older person and younger person | Older person |
| Individual and group | Individual |

12.7 LISTENING

Oral communication requires more than speaking. Listening is actually far more important for effective oral communication than speaking is. But most people do not listen very efficiently in spite of the great amount of time they spend listening. Unlike hearing, which is a passive process, listening is an active process. You hear words, but you listen for meaning. Whether the communication situation is a face-to-face conversation, a small group discussion,

or a public lecture, effective listening requires concentration. To be able to listen effectively, you will need to overcome any barriers to the listening process and to develop specific techniques for listening efficiently.

12.7.1 Barriers to Effective Listening

Anything that interferes with the ability to listen is a barrier. While not all barriers to effective listening can be controlled, you can overcome many by becoming aware of them and by working to compensate for the difficulties. Barriers can be either internal (caused by your attitudes or state of being) or external (caused by factors often beyond your control). The following barriers are the most common:

| Internal Barriers | External Barriers |
|---|---|
| Assumptions Cultural difference Emotions Prejudices Semantics Social differences | Distractions (e.g., accents, interruptions, Attitudes volume changes) Hearing loss Physical condition (e.g., fatigue, hunger) |

As you can see, you might be faced with the problem of overcoming several barriers in anyone listening situation. For example, in a small group discussion you would need to listen very carefully to a person from different social group who speaks with an accent. Furthermore, if that Pearson represents a radically different viewpoint from your own, and you both hungry and tired while the meeting is taking place, and the meeting room is noisy, you will have to work very hard to ensure that you receive the message the other person intends to send. In such situations, it is easy to give in to prejudices and assume you understand the other person, when actually you don't.

12.7.2 Techniques for Effective Listening

Before you can listen effectively, you must want to know what the other person is saying badly enough to expend the energy required to listen. Effective listening is usually an eight-step process that begins before the listening situation occurs and continues after the situation has concluded. These steps are preparation, concentration, summarization, anticipation, exploration, clarification, note taking, and evaluation.

Preparation The amount of preparation you need to do to listen effectively naturally varies from situation to situation. Informal

face-to-face conversations, for example, may not require preparation beyond your knowing that it's important to listen carefully. A formal, public lecture, on the other hand, may require that you prelisting by reading about the subject so that you will be familiar with basic concepts and the terminology the speaker will use. Preparation also includes considering any barriers that might interfere with the listening process and, as far as possible, eliminating or minimizing them.

Concentration Most people would rather talk than listen to somebody else. Too often, instead of listening to what the other person is saying, people are busy thinking about what they are going to say just as soon as they can get a word in edgewise. The most important aspect of effective listening is paying attention to what the speaker is actually saying. Whenever you are involved in an important listening situation, identify the central subject matter and the speaker's organizational pattern. Formal speeches are usually arranged either inductively (specific facts followed by conclusions) or deductively (generalizations supported by specific facts). Informal conversations and discussions usually proceed by association (idea to related idea) or in chronological order.

As an aid to concentration, identify each point as evidence (specific facts) or conclusions (generalizations or inferences). Focus on the message, not the speaker. Remind yourself from time to time that if you truly understand the other person, you'll be in a better position to reply effectively.

12.7.2.1 Summarization

To understand what someone else has said, we need to be able to grasp the message in its entirety. As the speaker talks assign one or two key words to each main point. Use the key words to help you review what the speaker has said. In some listening situations, it may be worthwhile to restate the message in your own words so that the speaker can evaluate how much of her or his message you have understood.

12.7.2.2 Anticipation

During a speaker's pause in presentation, ask yourself what the speaker is likely to say next. Whether you guess correctly or not, this will help you concentrate on the message as it is delivered. Because we can think much faster than others can talk, we need to use that extra speed to help us focus on and remember the message. Summarization and anticipation are two methods of putting that extra speed to practical use.

12.7.2.3 Exploration

Because nobody communicates, perfectly, the important aspects of a message are sometimes distorted, concealed, or

omitted completely from a message. You may need to explore both what has been said and what has not been said to uncover the real meaning of a message. This is especially true when the message is an emotional one. People find it difficult to acknowledge their feelings, especially when they feel threatened or fearful. In such a situation, you need to listen between the lines to discover the meaning behind the message. Listen for emotionally charged words that indicate an absence of facts to support the conclusion the speaker wants you to draw. Ask yourself how you feel about the subject being discussed. What do you know about it already? Do you agree or disagree with the speaker? In what way do your feelings and previous knowledge of the subject influence your reaction to the speaker? Do you know of additional facts that either support or contradict the speaker? Does the speaker have a valid point in spite of a poor presentation?

Clarification when you have the opportunity to ask questions to clarify what the speaker means, do so. One of the best ways to see whether you have understood the message is to summarize what you think the other person has said and ask him or her whether you have summarized accurately and fairly. This technique especially useful when differences of opinion are strong and emotions may interfere with effective listening. In less emotionally charged situations, asking questions is useful to ensure that you have understood the speaker's language. You can often overcome a semantic barrier by asking a speaker to explain what she or he means by a particular word or phrase.

12.7.2.4 Note Taking

When you need to remember the message for any length of time, take notes. As you recall, one of the important advantages of a written message is that it provides a permanent record. Oral messages are distorted rather quickly by time. If it is important for you to have an accurate record of the message, listen carefully for main points and supporting evidence. And write them down. In most situations, it will not be possible for you to take down every word a speaker utters and at the same time listen carefully to the content of the message. Notes should be taken. Sparingly, using the key words you've selected for your summary. As soon after the discussion or speech as possible, review your notes and prepare more complete summary. If you require a complete transcript, use a tape recorder.

12.7.2.5 Evaluation

An accurate, fair evaluation of the message is possible only after

1. You've heard the speech or discussion in its entirety.
2. You've had a chance to question the speaker about points needing clarification.

3. You've made sure that barriers have not distorted your perception of the message.

Thus, before you can assess the usefulness of the material or make a sensible reply, you need to ensure that you've understood the message and the speaker's intent. In your evaluation, ask yourself whether you agree or disagree and what evidence supports the speaker's point of view. What evidence counters the speaker's point of view? How can you benefit from agreeing with the speaker? Will the benefits that might result outweigh the costs? Affair and thorough evaluation will help you make the best response possible.

12.8 SUMMARY

Oral communication constitutes the bulk of all communication and is important to business for two reasons. First, oral communication helps establish procedures for meeting objectives. Second, oral communication helps establish human relationships. The advantages of oral communication are that it is faster than written communication, permits immediate feedback, is more effective for conveying messages with emotional content, and helps establish human relationships. Oral communications should be organized to achieve the specific objectives of asking questions, giving information, and persuading.

Talking on the telephone is not the same as talking with someone face to face. Face-to-face communication supplements the spoken word with a wide variety, of nonverbal cues that help the listener understand the speaker. In a telephone conversation, each word must be understood without the addition of visual cues, so the speaker must be careful to speak distinctly and at a moderate rate. Telephone use requires good manners and discretion so that the listener will not draw the wrong conclusion or overhear remarks intended for others.

Listening is just as important to effective oral communication as speaking. Listening, your source of information is an active mental process. To listen effectively, you need to be aware of and overcome internal and external barriers you may have and practice the techniques of effective listening. These techniques include preparation, concentration, summarization, anticipation, exploration, clarification, note taking, and evaluation.

Inaccuracies in language are usually the result of one or a combination of several causes. A word may be an incomplete representation of an idea. It may try to let a part represent the whole: "contemporary" for "modern," "house" for "building," "truth" for "fact," or "to chew" for "to eat." Or a word may be a generalization, which is the reverse of the above. It may try to let the whole represent a part: "animal" for "horse," "face" for "eyes," "flowers" for "roses." Or it may be an exaggeration or the opposite: "many" for "some," "none" for "a few," "beautiful" for "pretty," "to rush" for "to hurry." Or, it may be simply wrong, for one reason or another: "lie" for "lay," "drink" for "swallow," "volume" for "book," or "hope" for "faith." Whatever the cause, an inaccurate word does not faithfully represent the idea behind it. Some words, of course, because they are relatively concrete or quantitative, seem to be more capable of being used accurately than others. The words "seven" and "carbon" seem to have a greater potential accuracy than "warm" or "truth." (And yet, when "warm" and "truth" are rightly used, they may be considerably more accurate than "seven" or "carbon" wrongly used.) It is certainly true that some words are inherently more accurate than others. That's a great virtue, as far as accuracy is concerned; but such words are likely to be colorless.

Try to use words in the right way. Use them accurately. Don't say "people" if your idea is the people who have a right to vote; say "electorate." Or if you are trying to convey the idea of those people who actually do vote, not just the ones who have the vote, say "voters" or, better yet, "the people who voted." Try to distinguish, if you can, between the color of the rug and the color in the rug. Accuracy of language will go far to make your communication effective.

English

VIVIDNESS

When you're looking for the right word, look also for the vivid word. Accuracy without vividness usually produces pretty dull writing or speaking. Old-fashioned bombastic oratory and modern flamboyant advertising have tended to

run vividness into the ground. We have come to think that vividness in language is insincere or, at least, bad taste. It's certainly true that bright and colorful language can be over-used: unrelieved bright colors become as uninteresting as dull ones; intense lights actually weaken vision. But, discreetly used, vivid language is still an effective aid to communication. Vivid words have three distinct virtues, if they are the right words in the right places: they catch and hold attention; they are remembered; and they make people see, and hear, and feel the idea they're communicating.

If a man is unusually tall, call him a giant. Metaphors are almost always vivid. Or, better yet, make your readers or listeners *feel* his height by suggesting the strain in their neck muscles as they look up at him. If you think proposed legislation is bad, don't merely call it deplorable; call it a pocket-picking bill, a war-breeding bill, or legislation to embalm and bury democratic principles. Language of this sort not only arouses attention, but it also describes your feelings accurately: it is clear that you feel that the bill will rob the public without its knowledge, or will lead us to war, or will inhibit free democratic action.

One of the simplest ways to assure vividness in language is to avoid trite words and phrases and clichés. They were good once, very good. They were so good that people used them over and over again until they ceased to carry much meaning. That's why they're objectionable now. You know the kind of words: neat as a pin, silent as the tomb, flaming youth, bone of contention, looking through rose-colored glasses, trials and tribulations, bundle of nerves, drug-store cowboy, and a hundred others. Because readers and listeners don't even notice these phrases (except to be annoyed by them sometimes) they have practically no vividness. Good communication uses language as a means to an end. The end, as we know, is the transference of an idea from one mind to another. To assure that the transference is complete and that the idea which arrives in the mind of the reader or listener is the same as the one which the communicator had, words must be accurate and they ought to be vivid.

But remember, the purpose of accuracy is to represent the original idea faithfully—not simply to tell a part-truth. Metaphors, which are often untrue, literally, are vivid and are usually accurate meaning-carriers.

ORGANIZATION

Putting words in the right order is as important to effective communication as finding the right word. There are three well-known, though often forgotten, characteristics of any well-ordered communication. They are unity, emphasis, and coherence.

These characteristics should be present in all units of communication, from a single sentence to a paragraph to a section or chapter to a whole—whether twenty or 200,000 words. Of course, written communication is likely to be more perfectly unified, coherent, and emphatic than spoken, because the writer has more time and opportunity to think, plan, write, and revise than the speaker has. Nevertheless, really good oral communication has a generous share of unity, emphasis, and coherence.

These three qualities are probably not as distinct and unrelated as we sometimes think they are. They are separable, for purposes of study, but in practical writing and speaking they are intricately interwoven.

UNITY

Unity is singleness of purpose and execution. It is doing only one thing at a time. "Unity" means "oneness." A sentence or a whole book has unity when it discusses only one thing, when it sticks to the subject, when it stays on the track, when everything which it says contributes to the one thing it's talking about. Examples, illustrations, comparisons, contrasts, background details, subdivisions, causes, results—all these are permissible and often desirable; but they must be clearly and reasonably related to the subject. The whole, whether a large or small unit, must be a *single* thing.

If, for example, you are trying to describe Chicago, you

shouldn't also describe St. Louis or bog down in a tale of the late Al Capone. When you describe Chicago, you may introduce St. Louis or a number of other cities for comparison. Anything which will throw light on Chicago is legitimate. But talk about *Chicago*. While Al Capone is an interesting example of the gangster era which brought so much notoriety to Chicago, the gangster era is only one example of one aspect of Chicago. Don't let an illustration of a single quality, however interesting, defeat your purpose, which is to describe Chicago. If, on the other hand, your subject is "Midwestern Cities," or "Crime in Chicago," then St. Louis, Cleveland, Minneapolis, and other cities are certainly co-ordinate with Chicago, and you can use Al Capone as a prime example of Chicago crime. Whether or not a discussion has unity depends largely on the exact limiting of the subject being discussed.

In a discussion of twentieth-century democracy, you shouldn't try to include, co-ordinately, the democracy of classical Athens or the operations of modern labor unions. Athens and the labor unions may enter into the discussion, but only as subordinate elements. If you have time to include backgrounds in your discussion, Athens will certainly be useful. But it is, and must be kept, a subordinate factor in a discussion of twentieth-century democracy. It might be co-ordinate in a paper or talk on "Democratic Systems." And whereas the labor unions are an expression of twentieth-century democracy, they are only one of many expressions and they should not dominate the discussion. Nor should freedom of the press, race prejudice, or mass education. Each of these subjects is interesting in itself and may be an aspect of twentieth-century democracy or even democratic systems; but it is only one aspect. In a full discussion of contemporary democracy, each of these would probably be included as subordinate parts but not as co-ordinate wholes. Unity demands singleness of purpose and execution.

Here are two short paragraphs: one has unity and the other hasn't. Look them over and decide which is which. When

you have selected the one lacking unity, try to decide what is wrong with it. What would you do to improve it?

1. George Washington is America's great "first." He was, as has so often been said, "First in War, first in Peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." Jefferson and Lincoln were great presidents, too; and like Washington they had their greatness thrust upon them by the problems of the times in which they lived. Washington was not only our first President; he was also our first scientific farmer. At Mt. Vernon, his plantation across the river, in Virginia, where he lived both before and after his political and military experiences, he experimented with agricultural. He was a practical agronomist. A full century before agricultural colleges, he planted seeds in different kinds of soils and tabulated the results. Scientifically, he used controls in order to be sure that his experiments were sound. He kept a record of rainfall, winds, and temperature, and he studied the growth of his crops under different conditions. In his "Diary," Washington noted everything: the weather, political events, guests at Mt. Vernon, and even the health of his slaves. He took great interest in everything about Mt. Vernon. There were larger farms, during the revolutionary days, but there were none more scientifically managed.
2. New York City interests me because of its variety. Look at the buildings, for instance. The tallest building in the world is in New York. Maybe the shortest isn't there, but some mighty short ones are. There's the very moderne Museum of Modern Art and the pseudo-classical Metropolitan, a most up-to-the-minute movie theater and an old Dutch church from the New Amsterdam days. Around the corner from a spick-and-span Fifth Avenue shop is a dinky second hand store. There's an apartment building housing over a thousand people, and across the street from it is a mansion housing a lonely old man. There are facades of concrete, of stainless steel and aluminum, of glass, of brown stone, of white clapboards, of plastic, and of papier mâché. There are buildings dedicated to truth and beauty and goodness, and buildings devoted to lies and ugliness and evil. There are all kinds of buildings in New York.

You'll find no specific tricks which will assure unity; there are only two suggestions.

1. See to it that everything you write or say on any subject is clearly, even obviously, related to that subject.

2. See to it that everything which is a minor part of the subject, in its narrowest sense, is subordinated to the subject in a logical relationship which is apparent.
- In short, don't try to talk about more than one thing at a time.
- Much of what has been said about unity has to do with emphasis. The two qualities are tightly interrelated. A writer or spoken presentation of an idea will not have unity if it lacks emphasis, and it will not, in all likelihood, have emphasis if it lacks unity. Unity is concerned with the singleness of all the parts. Emphasis is concerned with the relationship of those parts.

EMPHASIS

Most of the subjects about which we write or speak are composed of several possible parts. Although the parts are related to each other and are subordinated to the whole, we usually find that one (or two or three) of them is more important than the others. The things that determine which of the parts is the important one are the speaker's or writer's point of view and immediate purpose. Is he *pro* or *con*? Is he impartial? Is he trying to convince, or entertain, or inform? Is the idea which he is communicating a whole or is it a part of a larger unit? If it's the latter, the purpose of the part is related to the purpose of the whole. In the light of the communicator's point of view and purpose, what is the important aspect of the subject? The answers to these questions determine where the emphasis will fall.

Emphasis is high-lighting the important part of an idea and showing its relation to the whole. Emphasis involves, then, two things: placing stress on the dominant part, and showing the relation of the dominant part to the other parts and to the whole.

Suppose, for a moment, that a speaker is discussing the American Red Cross. There are dozens, probably hundreds, of things that might be said about this organization. Each of these things is undoubtedly interesting and possibly im-

portant, but, short of a several-volume study, they can't all be considered. The speaker's point of view and his purpose will determine which of the many aspects he'll emphasize. If he's trying to raise money for the Red Cross, he'll probably emphasize its need for financial support. With facts and figures, he'll talk about all the good work the Red Cross has done; he'll give specific examples; he'll point out the necessity for continuing the good work; he might even tell something of the organization's history; he'll probably stress operating costs. He may be very subtle and make the members of his audience feel that it is important to each of them individually that they contribute. But above all and underlying all will be the basic idea that the Red Cross needs money. The heroic deeds, the anecdotes, the history, and the statistics will all be subordinate to and will contribute to the emphatic idea.

What if our speaker were addressing a meeting celebrating the anniversary of the founding of the Red Cross? How would the emphasis in this talk differ from that in the money-raising talk? What if he were talking about the Red Cross to a group of war veterans? Or to a group of first-aid students? Or to a celebration commemorating the birthday of Clara Barton? The particular slant given the subject, the accent given to one or another part of the whole picture, the direction of the reader's or listener's attention, the way in which the important part of the idea is high-lighted and its relation to the other parts is shown—the emphasis of the composition—each is determined by the particular point of view and purpose of the communicator.

There are several well-known and dependable devices for securing emphasis. Any good composition and rhetoric book or freshman English handbook will give you numerous rules and suggestions for writing emphatically. This advice will apply to speaking, too. A few general suggestions for securing emphasis will serve our immediate needs.

1. Place the important part of a compound-idea at the beginning or end.

2. Subordinate the less important ideas by carefully chosen conjunctions and other transitional elements.
3. Arrange ideas so that they build up to a climax, and put the important idea at the apex.
4. Repeat the most important or significant idea.
5. In the important idea, use active rather than passive verbs and concrete rather than abstract nouns.

With obvious modifications, these suggestions are applicable to all units of communication—sentences, paragraphs, sections, and wholes. (If you want further guidance in emphasis, consult your own English text or one of the books recommended at the end of this chapter.)

COHERENCE

Coherence is evident interrelationship of ideas and logical transition from one idea to the next. Obviously, coherence overlaps emphasis, which is also concerned with the interrelationship of ideas. The new element is *transition*. Coherence in writing or speaking is simply proceeding from one thing to another in a logical, clear, and self-explanatory manner. A sentence or paragraph or larger unit is coherent when the arrangement of ideas (or the arrangement of the parts of an idea) seems to be essentially right, even inevitable. When your ideas jump around in a confused and meaningless way, you lack coherence. When they proceed from one to the next in such a way that the second seems to be the natural sequel to the first, you have coherence. You know what we mean when we say of a flabby and meandering speaker, "He's incoherent."

Here is a paragraph with obvious incoherence.

- (1) There are many short-sighted prophets who doubt that the modern trends in painting will survive. (2) They further contend that most of the people, simple and honest and realistic folks who like simple and honest and realistic pictures, will not be talked into something they do not like. (3) Therefore, say these restless skeptics, modern non-objective painting will soon waste away and die. (4) Most Americans, for instance, still buy drug-

store prints of the Old Masters and cling fondly to calendar paintings—despite the salesmanship of art-dealers, lecturers, and schools. (5) These doubters contend that the *people*, who ultimately support art, want likable paintings of recognizable objects.

How would you rearrange these sentences so as to make the paragraph coherent? What are the words and phrases that contribute coherence to the rearranged paragraph?

There are two general ways to secure coherence. Ideas may be actually linked together, or they may be arranged in some logical order.

Here are the two principal ways you can achieve coherence by the link method.

1. Use linking adverbs and conjunctions such as *because, consequently, for example, however, nevertheless, secondly, therefore*.

2. Repeat, in the second idea, a key word or phrase used in the first.

Here are the standard techniques for achieving coherence by the logical-order method; they are based on a half-dozen natural sequences.

1. From least important to most important.
2. From cause to effect (or the reverse).
3. From part to whole (or the reverse).
4. From beginning to end (or the reverse).
5. From known to unknown (or the reverse).
6. A combination of these.

Any good standard composition book will give you numerous examples of each of these methods.

There's nothing new or different about unity, emphasis, or coherence. All effective communication has these qualities. You've been dealing with them for years whenever you wrote or said anything that hung together, that said something definite, that made sense. The key to unity, emphasis, and coherence is clear thinking, which is the key to effective communication.

EXERCISES

(A)

1. Turn to the Appendix and read the student talk "Assignment: To Build a Bridge" on page 267 and also Whitman's "I Hear America Singing" on page 228. Analyze these selections from the point of view of language. Look for accuracy and vividness. Pick out five or six specific examples of language which you like and the same number of examples of language which you don't like. In a very brief oral report, tell the class why you like or dislike these examples.
2. Below are some sentences which can be put together into a reasonably good paragraph about mask-making. They are now out of order. In addition, there are some sentences which do not belong in the paragraph at all. Read the sixteen sentences carefully. After you have eliminated those which destroy the unity, rearrange the remaining ones. With unity, emphasis, and coherence in mind, make a logical expository paragraph out of these sentences. (It will not be necessary to rewrite any of them.)

1. There are several distinct steps in the process of making a papier-mâché mask. (This is the opening sentence of the paragraph.)
2. After the model has been greased with a thin coat of Vaseline, the entire surface should be covered with strips of dry paper laid on so that they touch each other but do not overlap.
3. The preliminary step, obviously, is to make a clay model on which the mask will be constructed.
4. These sticky strips should overlap about one-third of an inch.
5. It is best to wait for each layer to dry completely before putting on the next one.
6. The first step in the actual mask-making process is to provide yourself with the materials: about 100 strips of paper-towel, each one an inch wide and 8-10 inches long; and a bowl of medium-heavy glue.
7. The papier-mâché mask can be used in plays, at costume parties, or simply as interesting decoration.

8. Then, one by one, strips of paper, dipped in the glue and pressed free of excess glue, are laid on top of this dry surface.
9. (Regular office glue which has been slightly diluted with warm water will do very well.)
10. Many other interesting and useful objects can also be made from papier-mâché.
11. Be sure that the top, dry layer is smooth and tight.
12. Three or four layers are put on in this way, each layer of strips running in a different direction.
13. Finally, paint the mask with water-color, enamel, or even theatrical grease-paint.
14. Consequently, plenty of time, at least three days, should be allowed for the whole process.
15. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* has a useful and beautifully illustrated article on masks.
16. When the last layer of glue-soaked paper is partially dry, but still sticky, strips of dry paper or, better yet, muslin are very carefully applied, not overlapping, but touching each other.

(B)

Make a note of the inaccurate or colorless words and phrases which you hear during a day. Listen carefully during meals, in dormitories and fraternity houses, and in classes. List these words and phrases and then write a brief comment about each. Tell how it was used, why it was bad, and how you think it could be improved or what you would substitute for it.

(C)

Below are three compositions by college freshmen. In each case much of the weakness lies in the student's failure to consider unity, emphasis, and coherence. Study each of these paragraphs and try to determine where it has gone wrong. Then rewrite a couple of the paragraphs. Use the same ideas, the same material; but be sure you improve the paragraph in respect to unity, emphasis, and coherence. Finally, at your instructor's request, read one of your revised paragraphs aloud to the class. In your oral reading, try to

indicate the improvements you have made, by stressing certain words and grouping together the parts of important ideas. (These are actual, uncorrected, and unedited freshman paragraphs.)

"The Need for a College Education"

The need for a college education becomes increasingly greater as years go by and civilization becomes more advanced. Some years back, High School would have provided a sufficient background for work in any field we could choose. There is much more knowledge available to us today than ever before. A college education is a requisite to be able to attain any good position. In the United States thousands of veterans are now receiving a college education financed by the government. A great percentage of these men would otherwise have been obliged to content themselves with what education they already had. This opportunity has done a great deal toward the raising of our country's standards of education. Civilization is no longer satisfied with mediocrity, perfection is demanded and in order to do our best to attain this perfection we must seek the highest degree of learning available to us.

"As the Twig Is Bent"

As the twig is bent so the tree will grow. I don't believe that any better philosophy than this can be found. Suppose we analyze its meaning. Let us say that as a person thinks and acts as a child, so will he act as an adult. This is to say that a person who forms bad habits in childhood and adolescence is very likely to carry these habits with him as he advances through life. At first these habits are only slight bends in the person's character, but as life proceeds, these habits or bends become worse, sometimes to the extent that a person's life is wholly destroyed. At this point we might consider the brighter side in saying that as a youngster forms good habits so will he follow these habits in maturity. It's a sad fact that too many individuals neglect to follow the straight and narrow. As we all know, the chain is no stronger than its weakest link. We know this fact to have a devastating effect upon society. Suppose we consider society as the chain and the people as its links. As the people grow so will the society grow. Subsequently we arrive at previously mentioned devastation. Society must suffer along with its subjects. Consequently we see that not only do people with bad habits suffer, but also does the society of which these people are a part.

Now it's a sorry situation that not all men are born perfect in mind or in ideal situations and environments. From this fact it's a very obvious deduction that society will suffer eternally, at least to some extent. However, the extent to which it will suffer can be greatly lessened and in my estimation must be lessened. The corrective measures are left more or less primarily up to the maladjusted person. That is, the person having in his possession poor habits. Yet this person cannot do it entirely alone. He must have outside help, the main sources being his family, his church, and his environment as a whole. In our present society this is a big order and calls for a universal co-operation. If this is not done the end can be quite clearly seen, but if it is done it will ultimately lead to a higher and more stable society, something which is a very necessary factor in world preservation.

"The Effect of Athletics on the Athlete"

Athletics are generally accepted by everyone as being valuable. Their effect for the most part is also good. Unfortunately, however, there are cases where the effect of athletics on the athlete are bad. Sometimes the fact that a man or woman has excelled in a sport makes that person conceited. This is certainly not the purpose of athletics. In my opinion, athletics are for the purpose of developing the body, both physically and mentally. This they do. Not only does an athlete acquire a strong healthy body, but he learns to think quickly. Furthermore, he learns the importance of teamwork. The main thing in an athletic contest is playing the game fairly and squarely and to the best of one's ability. Winning the game is not what counts. Of course, every team and every athlete wants to win, but by losing they learn sportsmanship. If athletics do not learn sportsmanship, then athletics are not worth while. It is the job of a coach to impress in the minds of his players that the game is the thing and not the victory. There are some more bad effects of athletics on the athlete that should be mentioned. It is possible for an athlete to overdo it in such sports as basketball and track and a bad heart is the result. And then there have been cases where football players were seriously injured, but these are not frequent occurrences.

(D)

Hodges, John C., *Harbrace College Handbook*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., 1946. (The section on "Diction," pages 180-247, and the section on "Effectiveness in the Sentence," pages 248-296, are very good.)

Perrin, Porter C., *Writer's Guide and Index to English*. New York: Scott, Foresman & Company, 1942. (Chapters III-VI, on paragraphs and sentences, offer some sound advice.) Roberts, Charles W., Jesse W. Harris, Walter G. Johnson, *Handbook of English*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1944. (The following sections are very useful: "The Sentence: Unity, Coherence, and Emphasis," pages 114-153; "The Whole Composition," pages 168-187; "Diction," pages 64-97. The examples are perhaps better than the explanations.) Tresidder, Argus, Leland Schubert, Charles W. Jones, *Writing and Speaking*. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1943. (Chap. V, "Developing the Idea," has helpful illustrations.) Woolley, Edwin C., and Franklin W. Scott, *College Handbook of Composition*. Boston: D. C. Heath & Company, 1944. (The section on "The Word," pages 3-49, the one on "The Sentence," pages 50-103, and the one on "The Paragraph," pages 109-124, offer some good suggestions. This book is useful although it's not easy reading.)

Almost any other freshman handbook or composition book will have some valuable suggestions for language and organization.

Unit II

BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

Unit Structure

- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Barriers to Communication
 - 2.2.1 Concept of barriers to communication
- 2.3 Nature of Barriers
 - 2.3.1. Verbal Communication Barriers
 - 2.3.2. Nonverbal Communication Barriers
 - 2.3.3. Para-verbal communication Barriers
 - 2.3.4. Barriers of Inconsistency
 - 2.3.5. Listening Barriers
 - 2.3.6. Barriers at Communication Process
 - 2.3.7 Transmitting Barriers
 - 2.3.8 Decoding Barriers
 - 2.3.9 General Barriers to Communication
 - 2.3.10 Semantic Barriers
 - 2.3.11 Linguistic or Language Barriers
 - 2.3.12 Psychological Barriers
 - 2.3.13 Interpersonal Barriers
- 2.4. Space/Time Distance barriers
- 2.5 Gender barriers
- 2.6 How to overcome the barriers to communication?
 - 2.6.1 To Overcome Listening Barriers
 - 2.6.2 To Overcome Perception Related Barriers
 - 2.6.3 To Overcome Verbal Communication Barriers
 - 2.6.4 Facilitating Communication
- 2.8 How to achieve effective communication?
- 2.9 Summary
- 2.10 Exercise

2.1 OBJECTIVES

- To find out the possible barriers to communication
- To chalk out the strategies to overcome the barriers

2.2 BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

Despite the importance of understanding others, the quality of communication is generally poor in most organizations. Research suggests that misunderstandings are the rule, rather than the exception.

When people are under stress, they are more apt to inject communication barriers into their conversation. These barriers can exist on a daily basis as we may work with people who have different opinions, values, beliefs, and needs than our own. Our ability to exchange ideas with others, understand other's perspectives, solve problems and successfully utilise the steps and processes presented in this chapter will depend significantly on how effectively we are able to communicate with others.

2.2.1 Concept of barriers to communication

Most of those communication barriers despite of their origins may be, in fact, explained by difference in perception. Our mind organises and processes all received information accordingly to specific rules determined by our genetic matrix, our life experience and resulting personality. It creates a mental map that represents our perception of reality.

In no case are the perceptions of different persons identical. The mental images of the same event, different persons may have, are different as the perception of each of them is unique accordingly to their personality.

While communicating we are choosing details that are important for us. This is called selective perception. Using it, we are trying to send our message as relevant as we can. However we shouldn't forget that our perception remains always personal. When receiving message we try to fit given information in our existing mental pattern. If something doesn't fit we tend to distort information rather than modify the pattern.

To control communication and correct eventual errors we are providing feedback, which is the most important tool to determine by sender, whether or not the message has been received as intended. The methods and channels for feedback may be different. We may give feedback by repeating received information or asking additional questions in order to clarify the meaning, or by giving signs of the state of our understanding by nodding, smiling, producing specific sounds, etc.

2.3 NATURE OF BARRIERS

2.3.1 Verbal Communication Barriers

The act of communicating involves verbal, nonverbal, and paraverbal components. The verbal component refers to the content of our message, the choice and arrangement of our words. The nonverbal component refers to the message we send through our body language. The para-verbal component refers to how we say what we say - the tone, pacing and volume of our voices.

Our use of language has tremendous power in the type of atmosphere that is created at the problem-solving table. Words that are critical, blaming, judgmental or accusatory tend to create a resistant and defensive mindset that is not conducive to productive problem solving. On the other hand, we can choose words that normalize the issues and problems and reduce resistance. Phrases such as "in some districts, people may . . .", "it is not uncommon for . . ." and "for some folks in similar situations" are examples of this.

Sending effective messages requires that we state our point of view as briefly and succinctly as possible. Listening to a rambling, unorganized speaker is tedious and discouraging - why continue to listen when there is no interchange? Lengthy dissertations and circuitous explanations are confusing to the listener and the message loses its concreteness, relevance, and impact. This is your opportunity to help the listener understand YOUR perspective and point of view. Choose your words with the intent of making your message as clear as possible, avoiding jargon and unnecessary, tangential information.

2.3.2 Nonverbal Communication Barriers

The power of nonverbal communication cannot be underestimated. In his book, *Silent Messages*, Professor Albert

2.3.2.1 Facial Expression

The face is perhaps the most important conveyor of emotional information. A face can show enthusiasm, energy, and approval, express confusion or boredom, and scowl with displeasure. The eyes are particularly expressive in telegraphing joy, sadness, anger, or confusion.

2.3.2.2 Postures and Gestures

Our body postures can create a feeling of warm openness or cold rejection. For example, when someone faces us, sitting quietly with hands loosely folded in the lap, a feeling of anticipation and interest is created. A posture of arms crossed on the chest portrays a feeling of inflexibility. The action of gathering up one's materials and reaching for a purse signals a desire to end the conversation.

2.3.3. Para-verbal communication Barriers

Para-verbal communication refers to the messages that we transmit through the tone, pitch, and pacing of our voices. It is how we say something, not what we say. Professor Mehrabian states that the para-verbal message accounts for approximately 38% of what is communicated to someone. A sentence can convey entirely different meanings depending on the emphasis on words and the tone of voice. For example, the statement, "I didn't say you were stupid" has six different meanings, depending on which word is emphasized.

2.3.4. Barriers of Inconsistency

In all of our communications we want to strive to send consistent verbal, para-verbal and nonverbal messages. When our messages are inconsistent, the listener may become confused. Inconsistency can also create a lack of trust and undermine the chance to build a good working relationship.

When a person sends a message with conflicting verbal, para-verbal and nonverbal information, the nonverbal information tends to be believed. Consider the example of someone, through a clenched jaw, hard eyes, and steely voice, telling you, they are not

mad. Which are you likely to believe? What you see or what you hear?

2.3.5. Listening Barriers

"Listening in dialogue is listening more to meaning than to words . . . In true listening, we reach behind the words, see through them, to find the person who is being revealed. Listening is a search to find the treasure of the true person as revealed verbally and nonverbally. There is the semantic problem, of course. The words bear a different connotation for you than they do for me. Consequently, I can never tell you what you said, but only what I heard. I will have to rephrase what you have said, and check it out with you to make sure that what left your mind and heart arrived in my mind and heart intact and without distortion." - John Powell, theologian

The key to receiving messages effectively is listening. Listening is a combination of hearing what another person says and psychological involvement with the person who is talking. Listening requires more than hearing words. It requires a desire to understand another human being, an attitude of respect and acceptance, and a willingness to open one's mind to try and see things from another's point of view.

Listening requires a high level of concentration and energy. It demands that we set aside our own thoughts and agenda, put ourselves in another's shoes and try to see the world through that person's eyes. True listening requires that we suspend judgment, evaluation, and approval in an attempt to understand another in a frame of reference, emotions, and attitudes. Listening to understand is, indeed, a difficult task!

Often, people worry that if they listen attentively and patiently to a person who is saying something they disagree with, they are inadvertently sending a message of agreement. When we listen effectively we gain information that is valuable to understanding the problem as the other person sees it. We gain a greater understanding of the other person's perception. After all, the truth is subjective and a matter of perception. When we have a deeper understanding of another's perception, whether we agree with it or not, we hold the key to understanding that person's motivation, attitude, and behavior. We have a deeper understanding of the problem and the potential paths for reaching agreement. Learning

to be an effective listener is a difficult task for many people. However, the specific skills of effective listening behavior can be learned. It is our ultimate goal to integrate these skills into a sensitive and unified way of listening.

2.3.6. Barriers at Communication Process

Encoding Barriers: The process of selecting and organizing symbols to represent a message requires skill and knowledge. Obstacles listed below can interfere with an effective message.

2.3.6.1. Lack of Sensitivity to Receiver

A breakdown in communication may result when a message is not adapted to its receiver. Recognizing the receiver's needs, status, knowledge of the subject, and language skills assists the sender in preparing a successful message. If a customer is angry, for example, an effective response may be just to listen to the person vent for awhile.

2.3.6.2. Lack of Basic Communication Skills

The receiver is less likely to understand the message if the sender has trouble choosing the precise words needed and arranging those words in a grammatically-correct sentence.

2.3.6.3. Insufficient Knowledge of the Subject

If the sender lacks specific information about something, the receiver will likely receive an unclear or mixed message. Have you shopped for an item such as a computer, and experienced how some salespeople can explain complicated terms and ideas in a simple way? Others cannot.

2.3.6.4. Information Overload

If you receive a message with too much information, you may tend to put up a barrier because the amount of information is coming so fast that you may have difficulty comfortably interpreting that information. If you are selling an item with twenty-five terrific features, pick two or three important features to emphasize instead of overwhelming your receiver (ho-hum) with an information avalanche.

2.3.6.5 Emotional Interference

An emotional individual may not be able to communicate well. If someone is angry, hostile, resentful, joyful, or fearful, that person may be too preoccupied with emotions to receive the

intended message. If you don't like someone, for example, you may have trouble "hearing" them.

2.3.7 Transmitting Barriers

Things that get in the way of message transmission are sometimes called "noise." Communication may be difficult because of noise and some of these problems:

2.3.7.1 Physical Distractions

A bad cellular phone line or a noisy restaurant can destroy communication. If an E-mail message or letter is not formatted properly, or if it contains grammatical and spelling errors, the receiver may not be able to concentrate on the message because the physical appearance of the letter or E-mail is sloppy and unprofessional.

2.3.7.2. Conflicting Messages

Messages that cause a conflict in perception for the receiver may result in incomplete communication. For example, if a person constantly uses jargon or slang to communicate with someone from another country who has never heard such expressions, mixed messages are sure to result. Another example of conflicting messages might be if a supervisor requests a report immediately without giving the report writer enough time to gather the proper information. Does the report writer emphasize speed in writing the report, or accuracy in gathering the data?

2.3.7.3. Channel Barriers

If the sender chooses an inappropriate channel of communication, communication may cease. Detailed instructions presented over the telephone, for example, may be frustrating for both communicators. If you are on a computer technical support help line discussing a problem, it would be helpful for you to be sitting in front of a computer, as opposed to taking notes from the support staff and then returning to your computer station.

2.3.7.4. Long Communication Chain

The longer the communication chain the greater the chance for error. If a message is passed through too many receivers, the message often becomes distorted. If a person starts a message at one end of a communication chain of ten people, for example, the message that eventually returns is usually liberally altered.

2.3.8 Decoding Barriers

The communication cycle may break down at the receiving end for some of these reasons:

2.3.8.1. Lack of Interest

If a message reaches a reader who is not interested in the message, the reader may read the message hurriedly or listen to the message carelessly. Miscommunication may result in both cases.

2.3.8.2. Lack of Knowledge

If a receiver is unable to understand a message filled with technical information, communication will break down. Unless a computer user knows something about the Windows environment, for example, the user may have difficulty organizing files if given technical instructions.

2.3.8.3. Lack of Communication Skills

Those who have weak reading and listening skills makes ineffective receivers. On the other hand, those who have a good professional vocabulary and who concentrate on listening, have less trouble hearing and interpreting good communication. Many people tune out who is talking and mentally rehearse what they are going to say in return.

2.3.8.4. Emotional Distractions

If emotions interfere with the creation and transmission of a message, they can also disrupt reception. If you receive a report from your supervisor regarding proposed changes in work procedures and you do not particularly like your supervisor, you may have trouble even reading the report objectively. You may read, not objectively, but to find fault. You may misinterpret words and read negative impressions between the lines. Consequently, you are likely to misunderstand part or all of the report.

2.3.8.5. Physical Distractions

If a receiver of a communication works in an area with bright lights, glare on computer screens, loud noises, excessively hot or cold work spaces, or physical ailments, that receiver will probably experience communication breakdowns on a regular basis.

2.3.9 General Barriers to Communication

2.3.9.1. Physical Barriers

These are obstacles that prevent a message from reaching the intended recipient. Some can be controlled by the management; some cannot be controlled because they are in the environment.

2.3.9.1.1 Defects in the medium

Defects in the instruments used for transmitting message are external and usually not within the control of the parties engaged in communication. The telephone, cell phone signals, the postal system, the courier services, or electronic media may fail.

A partial failure of the mechanical equipment is more dangerous than a complete failure, because a partial failure carries an incomplete or distorted message, which might cause miscommunication resulting into unwanted actions. The only way to overcome this barrier is to postpone the communication or use an alternative medium.

2.3.9.1.2 Noise

Noise is any disturbance which occurs in the transmission process. In face-to-face communication without a microphone, the air may be disturbed by noise in the environment such as traffic, factory work, or people talking. Organisations which can afford sound-proof rooms can overcome this barrier to some extent. In a factory, oral communication is very difficult because of the noise of the machines.

2.3.9.1.3 Defects in the Organisational Communication System

Within the organisation, the movement of papers and of information gets held up by the system itself. A great deal of loss of information occurs as a message moves from senior management to lower levels. If a message passes down through many levels of authority, there may be much distortion in the message. The chances of such distortion are lower in a flat organisation with few levels of hierarchy.

Loss or distortion of information as it moves downward may be caused by misinterpretation, misunderstanding, and ignorance of messages.

Research has shown that many employees at the lowest level receive only 20 per cent of the information that they should get. Too much dependence on written communication is one of the reasons for this. Circulars, bulletins, notices and even letters are not read carefully. Many employees are unable to read and understand long messages. Even better educated employees at higher levels do not always give proper attention to all written communication. Oral communication has to be used to supplement written communication when the message is important.

Loss of information also occurs as messages move from subordinates to higher levels of authority. Messages are filtered at every level. There may be deliberate suppression of information out of self-interest and jealousy; a supervisor may suppress or change a good suggestion from a subordinate so as to take the credit personally; a senior officer may prevent information about discontent in the department from reaching the manager because it reflects on his/her human relations skills. The resulting information gap can be harmful if the upper level of management does not find out the true state of affairs until it is too late.

The system of routine reports and the system of sending copies of documents for information is meant to ensure that information is conveyed to the concerned persons, but some information may still not reach some persons.

2.3.9.1.4 Hearing Problems

For some people, poor listening results from actual hearing deficiencies. Once recognized, they can usually be treated. An undetected hearing loss may cause employees to get annoyed about the boss ignoring them or cause a supervisor to get angry when her instructions are bungled. Other people may have auditory processing difficulties, such as auditory discrimination, sequencing, or memory, which create the appearance of not listening or paying attention to what is said but are actually the result of physiological involvement, not intentional disregard.

2.3.10 Semantic Barriers

The semantic barriers are obstruction caused in the process of understanding a message during the process of encoding or decoding it into words and ideas. The linguistic capacity of the sender and receiver may have some limitations, or the symbols used may be ambiguous. Symbols may have several meanings of

the symbol according to his preconceived notion and misunderstand the communication. For this purpose a meaningful distinction should be made between inferences and facts. Inferences are meaning taken out of the context of the communication and all the times cannot be avoided in communication provide inference can give wrong signal, one should be aware of them and analyse them carefully. In case of any doubt, more feedback may be sought.

Symbols may be classified as language, picture, or action

2.3.10.1 Interpretation of words

Most of the communication is carried through words, whether spoken or written. But words are capable of communication a variety of meaning. It is quite possible that the receiver of a message does not assign the same meaning to a word as the transmitter had intended. This may lead to miscommunication. Murphy and Peck in their book effective Business Communication mention that in an abridged dictionary, the little word 'run' has 71 meanings as verb, another 35 as a noun, and 4 more as an adjective. If this word occurs in a message, the receiver is at liberty to interpret in any of the 110 senses, but if the communication is to be perfect, he must assign to it the same meaning as existed in the senders mind when he used it.

2.3.10.2 Bypassed Instructions

Bypassing is said to have occurred if the sender and the receiver of the message attribute different meanings to the same word or use different words for the same meaning.

2.3.10.3 Denotations and Connotations

Word has different meaning and it can be categorised as connotative and denotative. The literal meaning of the word is called its denotative meaning. It just informs and names object without indicating any positive or negative qualities. Words like table book accounts meeting are denotative. In contrast, connotative meanings arouse qualitative judgments and personal reaction. Honest components cheap sincere etc. are connotative words.

2.3.11 Linguistic or Language Barriers

In written or verbal communication words used are important. A word used in the communication may have several

meanings. In face to communication, it is easy to seek clarification of words used, if any doubt is encountered. In case of doubt feedback is required. Many words which we use informally may be taken literally in other context, i.e. non friendly situations, or in written communication. Thus effective communication is idea centered rather than word centered. The communication may be decoded correctly by the receiver only if the context is known to him otherwise, it may be incorrectly interpreted. Without context, language is just like an eyegore that irritates our senses and interferences with our perceptions.

Although we know there are so many different ways of communication between living beings, spoken and written language is the most common way and the basic tool used for communication between human beings. As a result of the geographic dispersion of the origin of people, each one of them has developed its own linguistic code, which later on became an obstacle when they started to move beyond their boundaries seeking integration with other people. The differences between the various linguistic codes, in terms of spoken language as well as written representation, configure a barrier for communication and integration of people from different regions.

Challenging these barriers, it is noticeable an ever more intense movement towards integration. The huge technological progress reached by the human being, especially in air transport and in telecommunications, has accelerated the globalisation process and it is turning more and more frequent the interaction between representatives of different people and different cultures.

The barrier of linguistic differences has an important impact on the efficiency of cultural, scientific, technological and commercial interchange; that is why it has grown so dramatically the demand for learning foreign languages. Otherwise, the great potential of information technology started to be exploited in order to help people to overcome the barrier of linguistic differences and a number of automatic translation tools have come out.

However, the Internet revolution over the last decade of the 20th Century has created a new paradigm in the process of global communication, which gained a new dimension in terms of speed and reach. And what can be realised is that the need of efficiency in Internet communication has maximised the problem of linguistic

barriers, leading to research efforts from the scientific world seeking new solutions to overcome those barriers.

2.3.12 . Psychological Barriers

2.3.12 .1 Attitudinal Barriers

Preoccupation business and personal concerns can make it difficult to keep your mind on the subject at hand. Even when one's current conversation is important, other unfinished business can divert your attention: the call to an angry customer, the questions that boss ask about employee's schedule delays, the new supplier heard about and -want to interview, and the problems one have with the baby-sitter or the auto mechanic. Some preoccupation is inescapable, but keeping your focus on the speaker as much as possible will have benefits for you, the other person, and your relationship.

2.3.12 .2 Egocentrism

One common reason for poor communication is the belief—usually mistaken—that our own ideas are more important or valuable than those of others. Besides preventing one from learning useful new information, this egocentric attitude is likely to alienate the very people with whom you need to work. Self-centered communicators are rated lower on social attractiveness than communicators who are open to others' ideas. While a certain amount of self-promotion can be helpful in career advancement, advancing one's own ideas at the expense of others' can cause one to slip down a rung or two as you climb the career ladder. As an old saying puts it, "Nobody ever communicated themselves out of a job."

2.3.12 .3 Fear of Appearing Ignorant

Some businesspeople think asking for clarification is a sign of ignorance. Rather than seek clarification, they pretend to understand others—often with unfortunate consequences

2.3.12 .4 Faulty Assumptions

Some of the biggest obstacles to communication don't involve physiological or environmental problems. Instead, they come from inaccurate and unproductive assumptions.

2.3.12.4.1 Assuming that Effective Communication Is the Sender's Responsibility

Management expert Peter Drucker recognized that communication depends on the receiver as well as the sender when he wrote: "It is the recipient who communicates. The so-called communicator, the person who emits the communication, does not communicate. He utters unless there is someone who hears ... there is only noise."

As Drucker suggests, even the most thoughtful, well-expressed idea is wasted if the intended receiver fails to listen. The clearest instructions won't prevent mistakes if the employee receiving them is thinking about something else, and the best of products will never be made if the client or the manager isn't paying attention to the presentation. Both the speaker and the listener share the burden of reaching an understanding.

2.3.12.4.2 Assuming That Listening Is Passive

Some communicators mistakenly assume that listening is basically a passive activity in which the receiver is a sponge, quietly absorbing the speaker's thoughts. In fact, good listening can be hard work. Sometimes you have to speak while listening to ask questions or paraphrase the sender's ideas, making sure you have understood them. Even when you remain silent, silence should not be mistaken for passivity

2.3.12.4.3 Assuming That Talking Has More Advantages than Listening

At first glance, it seems that speakers control things while listeners are the followers. Our society seems to correlate communication with weakness, passivity, and lack of authority or power. The people who do the talking are the ones who capture everyone's attention, so it is easy to understand how talking can be viewed as the pathway to success.

Despite the value of talking, savvy businesspeople understand that communication is equally important, especially in a fast-moving, high-tech age.

2.3.13 Interpersonal Barriers

How we perceive communication is affected by the past experience with the individual. Perception is also affected by the organizational relationship two people have. For example,

communication from a superior may be perceived differently than that from a subordinate or peer.

There are number of interpersonal and intrapersonal barriers that help to explain why the message that is received is often different than what the sender intended:

2.3.13.1. Filtering

The sender manipulates information when s/he wants it to be seen more favorably by the receiver. For example, when a manager tells his boss what he feels his boss wants to hear, he is filtering information.

2.3.13.2. Selective Perception

The receivers in the communication process selectively see and hear based on their needs, motivations, experience, background, and other personal characteristics. Receivers also project their interests and expectations into communications as they interpret them. We don't see reality; rather, we interpret what we see and call it reality.

2.3.13.3. Information Overload

Research indicates that most of us have difficulty working with more than about seven pieces of information. When the information we have to work with exceeds our processing capacity, the result is Information Overload. The demands of keeping up with e-mail, phone calls, faxes, meetings, and professional reading create an onslaught of data that is nearly impossible to process and assimilate so we tend to select out, ignore, pass over or forget information. Or we may put off further processing until the overload situation is over. Regardless, the result is lost information and less effective communication.

2.3.13.4. Defensiveness

When people feel that they're being threatened, they tend to react in ways that reduce their ability to achieve mutual understanding. That is, they become defensive - engaging in behaviors such as verbally attacking others, making sarcastic remarks, being overly judgmental, and questioning others' motives. So when individuals interpret another's message as threatening, they often respond in ways that hinder effective communication.

2.3.13.5. Emotional barriers

One of the chief barriers to open and free communications is the emotional barrier. It is comprised mainly of fear, mistrust and suspicion. The roots of our emotional mistrust of others lie in our childhood and infancy when we were taught to be careful what we said to others. "Mind your P's and Q's"; "Don't speak until you're spoken to"; "Children should be seen and not heard". As a result many people hold back from communicating their thoughts and feelings to others.

They feel vulnerable. While some caution may be wise in certain relationships, excessive fear of what others might think of us can stunt our development as effective communicators and our ability to form meaningful relationships.

2.4. Space/Time Distance barriers

It is evident that physical distance requires special communication tools to make communication happen. The same is required within distance in time. There are many tools created in order to deal with physical distance. They are subject of interest of telecommunication companies, postal and other delivery services.

Distance in time poses more difficulties as we can communicate only in real time and forward in time. That is evident that we cannot do it back in time. The fact that we can communicate forward in time and that we do not want unnecessary communication encourage us to create different structures, which process, filter and eliminate sent information. The question whether they are effective is a separate question. It seems that mostly not!

Postal service, internet e-mail, telephone service are all targeted by the people who want to communicate with us in their interest, not necessary ours. This type of information is called spam. Ho much time we have to spend trying to separate what is important for us from what is unwanted? How to distinguish what to accept and what to reject without knowing the content? The situation is getting worst continuously. We are still very lucky that our mobiles do not deliver too much spam but it might be a matter of time they'll do.

There are a lot of structures typical for business that can create barriers to communication. More intermediates, more secretaries, and our communication channel become very long and

narrow. That looks good if it comes to spam, but in reality it may create situation when original information has no chance to go through. History of civilization knows many examples of governors who have been given relevant information only and exclusively just before they have been abolished. Business is a sensitive matter and its stagnation, dissolution or progress depends of communication so special attention to this matter should be paid.

The problem with structures delivering and processing information, no matter necessary or not, is that they are usually happy with what they are dealing with, no matter what it is.

They make intensive effort to justify their existence and have immense tendency to grow. They often overtake as many communication channels as they can, creating structures, nobody can avoid or ignore. In fact they are usually authors of new formal communication rules and rituals created in their interest. As a result, communication channels are less and less direct and instant communication becomes impossible. Let's name and analyse some problems they create.

2.5 GENDER BARRIERS

There are distinct differences between the speech patterns in a man and those in a woman. A woman speaks between 22,000 and 25,000 words a day whereas a man speaks between 7,000 and 10,000. In childhood, girls speak earlier than boys and at the age of three, have a vocabulary twice that of boys.

The reason for this lies in the wiring of a man's and woman's brains. When a man talks, his speech is located in the left side of the brain but in no specific area. When a woman talks, the speech is located in both hemispheres and in two specific locations.

This means that a man talks in a linear, logical and compartmentalised way, features of left-brain thinking; whereas a woman talks more freely mixing logic and emotion, features of both sides of the brain. It also explains why women talk for much longer than men each day.

2.6 HOW TO OVERCOME THE BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION?

2.6.1 To Overcome Listening Barriers

2.6.1.1 Stop

Focus on the other person, their thoughts and feelings. Consciously focus on quieting your own internal commentary, and step away from your own concerns to think about those of the speaker. Give your full attention to the speaker.

2.6.1.2 Look

Pay attention to non-verbal messages, without letting yourself be distracted. Notice body language and non-verbal cues to allow for a richer understanding of the speaker's point. However, avoid getting distracted from the verbal message.

2.6.1.3 Listen

Listen for the essence of the speaker's thoughts: details, major ideas and their meanings. Seek an overall understanding of what the speaker is trying to communicate, rather than reacting to the individual words or terms that they use to express themselves.

2.6.1.4 Be empathetic

Imagine how you would feel in their circumstances. Be empathetic to the feelings of the speaker, while maintaining a calm centre within yourself. You need not be drawn into all of their problems or issues, as long as you acknowledge what they are experiencing.

2.6.1.5 Ask questions

Use questions to clarify your understanding, as well as to demonstrate interest in what is being said.

2.6.2 To Overcome Perception Related Barriers

2.6.2.1 Analyse your own perceptions

Question your perceptions, and think about how they are formed. Check in with others around you regularly, and be aware of assumptions that you are making. Seek additional information and observations. You may just need to ask people if your perceptions are accurate.

2.6.2.2 Observe carefully and attentively

Look for detail, but keep the bigger picture in mind. For instance, it is important not to ignore or gloss-over the details of a situation or the subtle aspects of a person. However, it is important to see any one moment as part of a larger context. People have lives outside of work, for example, and any small part of a project ultimately is linked to a system much larger than itself.

2.6.2.3 Interpret consciously

Recognize the meanings you attach to what you perceive, and know that not everyone will attach the same meanings to the same things or situations. Ask yourself why you associate those meanings with what you do.

2.6.2.4 Work on improving your perception

Increase your awareness of barriers to perception, and which ones you tend towards. Check in with yourself regularly. Seek honest, constructive feedback from others regarding their perceptions of you as a means of increasing your self awareness.

2.6.2.5 Focus on others

Develop your ability to focus on other people, and understand them better by trying to gather knowledge about them, listening to them actively, and imagining how you would feel in their situation.

2.6.3 To Overcome Verbal Communication Barriers

2.6.3.1 Focus on what you know

Describe your own feelings rather than evaluating others. Express yourself in terms of information, observations, and specific issues, rather than making assumptions about other people or situations.

2.6.3.2 Focus on the issue, not the person

Try not to take everything personally, and similarly, express your own needs and opinions in terms of the job at hand. Solve problems rather than attempt to control others. For example, rather than criticizing a co-worker's personality, express your concerns in terms of how to get the job done more smoothly in the future.

2.6.3.3 Be genuine rather than manipulative

Be yourself, honestly and openly. Be honest with yourself, and focus on working well with the people around you, and acting with integrity.

2.6.3.4 Empathize rather than remain detached

Although professional relationships entail some boundaries when it comes to interaction with colleagues, it is important to demonstrate sensitivity, and to really care about the people you work with. If you don't care about them, it will be difficult for them to care about you when it comes to working together.

2.6.3.5 Be flexible towards others

Allow for other points of view, and be open to other ways of doing things. Diversity brings creativity and innovation.

2.6.3.6 Value yourself and your own experiences

Be firm about your own rights and needs. Undervaluing yourself encourages others to undervalue you, too. Offer your ideas and expect to be treated well.

2.6.3.7 Present yourself as an equal rather than a superior

Even when you are in a position of authority, focus on what you and the other person each have to offer and contribute to the job or issue.

2.6.3.7 Use confirming responses

Respond to other in ways that acknowledge their experiences. Thank them for their input. Confirm their right to their feelings, even if you disagree. Ask questions, express positive feeling, and provide positive feedback when you can.

2.6.3.8 Be consistent between verbal and non-verbal cues

Non-verbal cues tend to be more convincing than verbal messages. For example, if you are expressing a serious concern to someone, do not grin broadly while discussing it or the listener may not know whether to take you seriously or not.

2.6.4 Facilitating Communication

In addition to removal of specific barriers to communication, the following general guidelines may also facilitate communication.

1. Have a positive attitude about communication. Defensiveness interferes with communication.
2. Work at improving communication skills. It takes knowledge and work. The communication model and discussion of barriers to communication provide the necessary knowledge. This increased awareness of the potential for improving communication is the first step to better communication.
3. Include communication as a skill to be evaluated along with all the other skills in each person's job description. Help other people improve their communication skills by helping them understand their communication problems.
4. Make communication goal oriented. Relational goals come first and pave the way for other goals. When the sender and receiver have a good relationship, they are much more likely to accomplish their communication goals.
5. Approach communication as a creative process rather than simply part of the chore of working with people. Experiment with communication alternatives. What works with one person may not work well with another person. Vary channels, listening techniques, and feedback techniques.
6. Accept the reality of miscommunication. The best communicators fail to have perfect communication. They accept miscommunication and work to minimize its negative impacts.

2.7 HOW TO ACHIEVE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION?

Effectual communication engages the choice of the best communications channel, the technical know-how to use the channel, the presentation of information to the target audience, and the skill to understand responses received from others. Self development, interpersonal skills, mutual understanding, mutual cooperation and trust is also important to set a complete channel of most effective and winning communication skills.

There are mainly three types of communication skills, expressive skills, listening skills and skills for managing the overall process of communication. The basic fundamental of all these types of communication is emotional skills.

Expressive skills are required to convey message to others through words, facial expressions and body language. Listening

skills are skills that are used to obtain messages or information from others. These help to clearly understand what a person feels and thinks about you or understand the other person closely. Skills for managing the overall process of communication help to recognize the required information and develop a strong hold on the existing rules of communication and interaction.

Effective communication skills may seem like a simple thing to master. However, if you don't realize that effective communication skills involve more than just what you say, you probably confuse people all the time. Try the following steps that can help you sharpen your communication skills.

Straight to the point

The speaker needs to be as direct as possible, within the limits of good manners. Beating around the bush confuses people and makes them lose interest in what you're saying.

2.7.1 Manners Matters

The manners of the speaker depend on his cultural, social as well as professional background. The effective communication begins with the manners like greetings, politeness, smile and rational in listening. For instance, being polite is a much better way to put a person at ease than being rude. A person, who feels open and at ease, is much more likely to be receptive to what you have to say.

2.7.2 First Person

Use the word "I." When you use the word "I," you're letting people know that what you're saying is only according to your personal understanding, not a blanket fact. This can help keep people from feeling targeted and attacked. There's a difference between telling someone "You're ignoring me" and "I feel like you are ignoring me."

2.7.3 Positive Attitudes

Being optimistic helps anybody to look into the matters with expectations and help in making a good beginning. Therefore, emphasize the positive thinking and attitude. Regardless, if you're conducting a budget meeting or trying to get a peon to do the dishes, you need to keep the tone positive. This can help keep people willing to listen to what you have to say and prevent them from feeling defensive.

2.7.4 Understanding

The effective communication is said to be achieved only on understanding the sent message. A perfect understanding is possible when receiver receives the message without distortion, prejudices, in the desired medium and in perfect content. So, you have to listen to understand. Actively listening or reading to the message can do wonders for your overall ability to communicate. The same goes for written and non-verbal communication.

2.7.5 Spice up Message

A communication without the body language and the figurative speech is lame and ineffective. Make your communications interesting. If you're communicating verbally, use different inflections and pauses to make the dialogue interesting. Use body language to help emphasize your words. If you're communicating through writing, always use proper punctuation to help dramatize certain points and create character in the text.

2.7.6 Visual cues

Use visual elements to help explain your communication. If you're speaking or writing, try using pictures, graphs and other visual aids. This helps engage people's senses and leads to greater depth of understanding.

2.7.7 Clarity

Avoid confusing and ambiguous language. Avoid using vocabulary that people won't know or general terms that will leave people confused. It's also best to avoid words that sound alike and may confuse listeners, such as where and wear.

2.7.7 Patience

Patience is a virtue, especially when it comes to effective communication. If you rush things and become easily frustrated, your communication abilities suffer. If you are always ready to slow the pace as needed or go back over certain points, you will communicate much more efficiently.

2.8 SUMMARY

Communication is at the heart of many interpersonal problems faced by business organisation. Understanding the communication process and then working at improvement provide

2.9 EXERCISE

Answer the following questions:

1. What barriers do you think that a business organisation can experience to communicate internally?
2. How does language act as a barrier to communication? Explain with examples.
3. What is meant by "Status Blocks"? How do they hinder communication?
4. Mention some ways in which failure to utilize channels properly can result in poor communication.
5. Explain the terms Faulty Transmission and Poor Retention and show how it affects communication?
6. Why do we say that the adult human mind resists change? What effect does have upon the communication process?
7. Write an account on the socio-psychological barriers that could occur in business communication.
8. Why do people close their minds to communication? How can we get rid of such barriers?
9. Discuss briefly the factors which give rise to communication gap.
10. Define the concept of Barriers to Communication and discuss the physical barriers.
11. How will you overcome the barriers of Time and Distance?
12. What do you understand by cross cultural barriers? Discuss.
13. How do our attitudes create hurdles in the way of communication?
14. What are assumptions? Give examples.

- 15 What are barriers in the environment? Enumerate them and discuss ways of overcoming these barriers.
- 16 Examine the different types of cross-cultural barriers and methods overcoming them.
- 17 What are the gender barriers? Do you think we can overcome such barriers? How?
- 18 What are the different ways to overcome the listening barriers? Explain them with suitable examples.
19. Write short notes on:
 - a. Un-clarified Assumptions as barriers to communication
 - b. Emotionally loaded words
 - c. Organisational structures and Status Barriers
 - d. Distrust of the Communicator
 - e. Status Symbols
 - f. The Psychological Barriers
 - g. Inattention, as a Barrier to Communication
 - h. Causes of Inattention
 - i. Different perceptions
 - j. Allness and the closed mind
 - k. The Halo and horn Effect
 - l. Gender Barriers
 - m. The Effect of Emotions on Communication
 - n. Wrong choice of medium
 - o. Barriers to Effective Listening
 - p. Slanting;
 - q. Cross-cultural barriers;
 - r. Polarizations.
 - s. Poor Hearing and Poor Presentation as Barriers.
 - t. The Mechanical Barriers and how to overcome them.
 - u. The Language Barrier and the methods to overcome it.
 - v. Barriers in the medium
 - w. Overcoming Environmental barriers
 - x. Overcoming barriers in the mind.



THE NATURE AND FUNCTION OF COMMUNICATION

AT THE VERY BEGINNING IT SHOULD BE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD that this book is not trying to produce orators or elocutionists. Books and teachers of oral communication gave up that objective years ago. Today we are more interested in content than in form.

We are not interested in the fancy rhetorical and technical devices of formal debate, in elegance of platform behavior, or in soul-exposing and heart-rending expression. We are not going to let ourselves get involved in trying to win friends or influence people by high-pressure methods. We are not even going to talk about art or logic, except in passing. Our only interest, here, is to help college students say what they mean as easily and accurately and effectively as possible.

In this first chapter, we'll consider:

1. Communication *vs.* expression
2. How communication works
3. The conditions necessary to communication.

Our immediate purpose is to get a general picture of the nature and function and operation of communication.

COMMUNICATION VS. EXPRESSION

We write and speak for many different reasons—to inform, to arouse, to convince, to express emotion, to entertain, to pass the time, to do one or another of a dozen different things. But all of these reasons can be boiled down to two: we want

either to get some kind of idea across to another person or to give our feelings an airing. For the sake of simplicity, we'll call the first of these *communication* (getting an idea over to someone else) and the second *expression* (giving vent to our emotions).

Although communication and expression are two entirely different things, they are usually used together. Though we occasionally find pure expression or pure communication in writing or speaking, as a rule one or the other dominates. This domination is sufficient, most of the time, to color the whole and to enable us to see that the real purpose of the passage is to communicate or to express.

EXPRESSION

The second kind of writing, expression, can be got out of the way first so that we can go on to communication. There's nothing wrong with expression; it's just that we're not interested in it here.

When you're working and you hit your finger with a hammer or jab it with a needle, you cry out "Ouch!"—or perhaps you say something stronger! Sometimes when you're particularly happy you hum, or sing, or exclaim "Boy! Oh, boy!" You utter these sounds whether there's anybody with you or not. When you're alone, or even when someone is with you, you're not trying to tell anyone that you're hurt or happy; you're merely expressing your feelings. Certain emotional, expressive people write poetry or keep a diary for the same purpose—not for publication, not for anyone to read, not even for their own future reference. All they want to do is express themselves. Poets, even when they write for publication and are consciously passing an idea on to someone else, are sometimes mainly interested in expressing their feelings.

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Leithe-wards had sunk.

In these lines by Keats, expression seems to dominate, though there is obviously an element of communication in the poem. The desire to express has produced our finest literature. Expression is a good thing; it provides an emotional outlet, in both writing and speaking; it makes us feel better and helps us keep our balance. We have no quarrel with expression; but in this book we are not concerned with it.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is what we are concerned with. Remember, now and all through the course, "communication" is simply the name we have given to *getting an idea over to someone else*.¹ When you tell a story, when you describe something, or argue, or explain, or do anything else for the purpose of conveying your thoughts (and feelings) to someone else, you are communicating. Whenever you try to get an idea over to someone else, you are communicating. If your purpose in writing or speaking is to share your thoughts or feelings with another person, you are communicating. This explanation has been stated and restated because it is the key to the whole business of communication. The student who keeps this in mind, who understands it and believes it, is well on the way toward successful communication. In college you'll be required to communicate constantly. You'll be giving both oral and written reports, reading foreign language assignments aloud, reading papers to the class, writing all kinds of papers, writing short quizzes, and taking both oral and written examinations. Most of these activities are what we sometimes call *formal* communication, because they are done in a more-or-less fixed manner and according to a somewhat standardized form. There is also note-taking, to a somewhat standardized form. When the hero says to the heroine, "I love you," he is certainly communicating an idea, but he is also communicating a feeling, and he's expressing. When a poet expresses his feelings in a poem which is largely communicative, he is communicating feeling. At first glance there might appear to be some confusion between the *communication of feeling* and *expression*. But if we grant at the outset that ideas sometimes consist of feelings and that communication is an attempt to get an idea across to someone else, there can be no serious confusion and we can still see that there is a difference between communication and expression.

when you transfer an idea not to someone else but to yourself. These are all examples of relatively formal communication.

Outside of class there are countless occasions for communication. What are some of these? Which ones are formal and which ones informal? You could make a long list of the occasions, beginning with the morning greeting to your roommate, running through meal-time conversations, letters home, work in the library, conferences with the dean, the elaborate process of getting a date, bull-sessions, and concluding with the final "Good night."

HOW COMMUNICATION WORKS

The communicator's purpose is always to get an idea over to someone else. Therefore, anything which interferes with or interrupts the transference of the idea is bad, and anything which helps and makes the transference easier is good. Let's look at what happens to an idea from the time it is born in my mind until it gets into your consciousness, and then we can look at some of the things which help or interfere.

I have an idea which I want you to have. But it is certainly clear that a bare *idea*, a thought or feeling, cannot be conveyed to anyone else (except by mental telepathy or some other device not included in the curriculum). The idea has to be represented by something which is transferable from me to you. This something we call a *symbol*. Usually, of course, a single symbol is not sufficient. More often than not, a group of symbols constituting a compound-symbol is required. But, single or multiple, the symbol is conveyed either by visible marks (writing) or by audible sounds (speaking) from the communicator to the receiver of the communication—from me to you.² Within the mind of the receiver, the symbols are then transformed into the idea again.

² For our purposes, symbols must be either audible or visible.

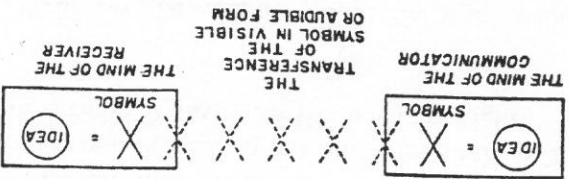
There are tactual and possibly olfactory symbols, too, but they are not within our field of interest. We deal only with what can be seen or heard.

It should also be noted that symbols may *not* be visible or audible while they are in transit, as in the various types of electrical communication: radio, telegraph, television, etc. But, to the communicator and to the receiver of the communication, they are either visible or audible.

Here is a simple example. I see you running toward a railroad track. I also see the coming train, which you do not see. I have an idea that I want to save you from danger. I have an additional idea that if I can make you pause before you get to the track you can be saved. For various reasons, which needn't be considered in this course, the most convenient and effective symbol for conveying my idea is STOP. So I call out "Stop" or I hold up a sign on which the word "Stop" is printed. The symbol is transferred to your mind and there it arouses the idea that I want you to stop. I have communicated an idea to you. This is a crude and bare example which has been pared down to the simplest outline. It omits many important factors such as my experience, my selection of symbols, my intentions, your experience, your receptivity and attention, and all the other psychological and semantic factors. But the example will serve our purpose because this book deals only with communication—not with what precedes it and very little with what accompanies it.

If all the conditions were favorable and you wanted to be saved, you would stop when I communicated the symbol STOP. But the process might have gone wrong at several points. I might have mispronounced the word or misspelled it, so that it meant nothing to you. I used the English form of the STOP symbol. Suppose you had been a Frenchman unacquainted with the word "stop." The form I gave to the symbol would have been unsuccessful, whereas the word "*arrêtez-vous*" would have conveyed the right idea. I might have spoken so softly that you couldn't hear me, or the sign might have been so faded that you couldn't read it. I might have failed to catch your attention because you were concentrating on something else. Or, everything might have been all right except for one fundamental factor: you might have been a small child who, for some unknown reason, had had no experience with either the idea or the symbol STOP. That's unlikely, but it's possible. It would be even more possible if we were considering a more complicated idea such as might be conveyed by the symbol VOTE or TRY or PAY.

Your lack of experience or any one of a dozen other things might have interfered with the communication. If everything is just right, the process of communication can be pictured in a simple diagram which omits the psychological and semantic factors that belong in the complete picture.



The idea is represented by the symbol; the symbol is given form (a spoken or printed word or words) for the purpose of transference; the symbol then produces the idea again in the mind of the person receiving the communication. Put differently: Idea = Symbol = Word = Symbol = Idea.

This is communication. Fortunately, most of our communication consists of more interesting discourse than "stop." In speaking, and perhaps more so in writing, we use compound-symbols for the most part. Except for the imperative verbs and "yes" and "no," we rarely think in terms of single symbols or transfer those symbols in the form of single words. Most of our communication is based on compound-symbols which are complicated in their relationship and which are represented by elaborately organized combinations of words. Unrelated and unemphasized, the members of a compound-symbol remain single and meaningless.

For example, suppose I want to tell you about a letter which is on my table. The idea, the image in my mind, can be communicated by the words "the letter on my table." Each of the words in this phrase is a symbol in its own right and each has one or more meanings; that is, each represents at least one definite idea, sometimes several, as "letter" or "table." As five single and separate symbols, the letter—

on—my—table, they don't mean much and certainly don't convey the idea, the image, which was in my mind when I started telling you about the letter. When they have been put together in the right order and connected to each other, certain definite relationships are established between them. They acquire a meaning which is not just the sum of the five meanings. It's a new meaning, a compound, which takes something from each word, something from the arrangement of words, something from the meanings surrounding each, and something from the particular emphasis which I give to one or another of the words. It is a compound-symbol—or more accurately, a compound representation in words of a compound-symbol. It is not five separate symbols. Despite the great complexity of most compound-symbols, we use them constantly, easily, and freely, and we give no thought to their complexity.

Communication is like running. When we try to find out what makes a Dobbs or a Cunningham run, when we study nerves, muscles, co-ordination, physiology, anatomy, and mechanics, we find that running is a very complicated and involved process. Fortunately, most of us run well enough for ordinary purposes without knowing all that lies behind and beneath every movement. However, if we want to become good runners, we must know a *little* about the mechanics, and we have to practice. So it is with communication.

THE CONDITIONS NECESSARY TO COMMUNICATION

There are a half-dozen conditions which, if they are met, will assure reasonably effective communication.

1. Communication must be based on a common ground of experience shared by both the communicator and the receiver, to help insure that the ideas and symbols are possessed and understood by both parties.
2. The form (words) which the symbol is given for transference must be known by both parties. In other words, they must speak the same language—literally and figuratively.

3. The symbol must truly represent the idea, and the word must truly represent the symbol. The equation must be balanced: Idea = Symbol = Word. (You can think of the Symbol and the Word as the same, if you prefer. They are similar. But actually there may be a difference, as when the symbol STOP is conveyed by the word "stop" or "*arrêtez-vous*" or "*Halten Sie.*")
4. The form of the symbol must be audible or visible; that is, the word must be audible or visible.
5. The receiver's attention must be secured and held.
6. In the case of compound-symbols, the parts must be properly related and emphasized.

If each of these conditions is met, communication will be practical and probably successful. If any of them is not fulfilled, a state of communication will not exist and ideas will not be transferred from one person to another. They will fall short like the ball in an incomplete pass.

The purpose of this book has been stated several times, but let's look at it once more. It is to help you convey ideas from your mind to the mind of your listeners—as easily and accurately and effectively as possible.

When you communicate, keep this discussion of the theory of communication in mind. Don't let it distract you, of course, but keep it in mind. Remember the purpose and the pattern of communication. When you read a passage aloud, when you give a talk, and when you participate in group discussion, try to see to it that you and the situation meet the conditions necessary to communication.

EXERCISES

(A)

Make a list of ten or a dozen visual symbols, such as the swastika, the skull-and-crossbones, and the dollar sign. When you come to class, go up to the blackboard and draw your symbols. Then, pointing to each visual symbol, tell

the class the auditory equivalent. Point to the swastika and say "Nazism"; don't say "Swastika." Say "Poison," not "Skull-and-crossbones." Don't name the symbol, but present the idea behind it. Then, try to tell why that symbol has come to stand for that idea.

If anyone in the class disagrees with your interpretation of the symbols, he should speak up. Try to find out why there are different interpretations. Which of the conditions necessary to communication has not been met? What interpretation is right, if any? Maybe both are right. Why?

(B)

Write two paragraphs (about 200 words each) about your college or college life. Write the sort of paragraphs which you might write in a letter home to your parents or to an intimate friend. (The paragraphs should not cover the same material.) Tell about some experience you've had, or describe the school or the buildings, people, traditions, or customs, or tell how you like college life—anything connected with the school.

In the first paragraph, *communicate*; make most of what you say communication.

In the second paragraph, *express*; make most of what you say expression.

Try to weed out all expression from the communication paragraph and all communication from the expression paragraph. If you succeed in doing this, which will not be easy, you probably understand the difference between communication and expression.

(C)

1. Read to the class the paragraphs you wrote for exercise B, above. When you finish reading, let the members of the class discuss your paragraphs. Is one truly communication and the other truly expression? What is good and what is bad about your paragraphs?

2. Here are some common foreign words and phrases.

What, if any, are the English equivalents? Do the English equivalents really represent the ideas behind the foreign words? Is a literal translation of a foreign word always a true representation of the idea? If there is no English equivalent, why not? How do we convey that idea? Why do we use foreign words if we have English equivalents? A few of these words, though originally foreign, are now English. Why?

At the suggestion of your instructor, discuss six of these terms. Tell the class everything you know about them.

| | | |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| ad infinitum | fait accompli | per se |
| à la mode | Gesundheit | poncho |
| affaire d'honneur | finis | pièce de résistance |
| a priori | hasta mañana | prosit |
| Blitzkrieg | idée fixe | raison d'être |
| carpe diem | in medias res | savoir faire |
| cherchez la femme | laissez faire | status quo |
| con amore | Luftwaffe | tour de force |
| corpus delicti | maître d'hôtel | Tovarich |
| coup d'état | mot juste | vandeville |
| de rigueur | nom de plume | Wanderjahr |
| en rapport | par excellence | Weltschmerz |
| en route | per capita | Zeitgeist |

(D)

For further information or for comparison of points of view toward matters discussed in this chapter, look up some of the following readings:

Bloomfield, Leonard, *Language*. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1933. (Chap. IX, "Meaning," is a thorough and interesting consideration of speech sounds as "signals.")

Clough, Wilson O., "Words Are Symbols," *The Educational Forum*, January, 1944, Vol. VIII, pages 159-168. (A semi-popular treatment of a fascinating aspect of communication.)

Fleisch, Rudolf, *The Art of Plain Talk*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946. (Read the first two or three chapters, or the whole book. It's one of the most provocative, down-to-earth, and readable books on the subject of getting ideas

across. It deals chiefly with written rather than spoken communication.)

Fries, Charles C., "Implications of Modern Linguistic Science," *College English*, March, 1947, Vol. VIII, pages 314-320. (The attitudes and techniques embodied in this article should be compared with those of the Thorndike article below. Here is a prominent linguist speaking on the science of language.)

Hayakawa, S. I., *Language in Action*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., 1941. (Chap. I, "The Importance of Language," and chap. II, "Symbols," present the popular semantic view of language and symbols. This book was a best seller and deserves some consideration.)

Sapir, Edward, *Language*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1939. (Chap. I, "Language Defined," is heavy reading, but well worth the effort. Students really interested in communication should read Sapir. His book is a classic in this field.)

Thorndike, E. L., "The Psychology of Semantics," *The American Journal of Psychology*, October, 1946, Vol. LIX, pages 613-632. (This article is of particular value as an example of one modern approach to meaning.)

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