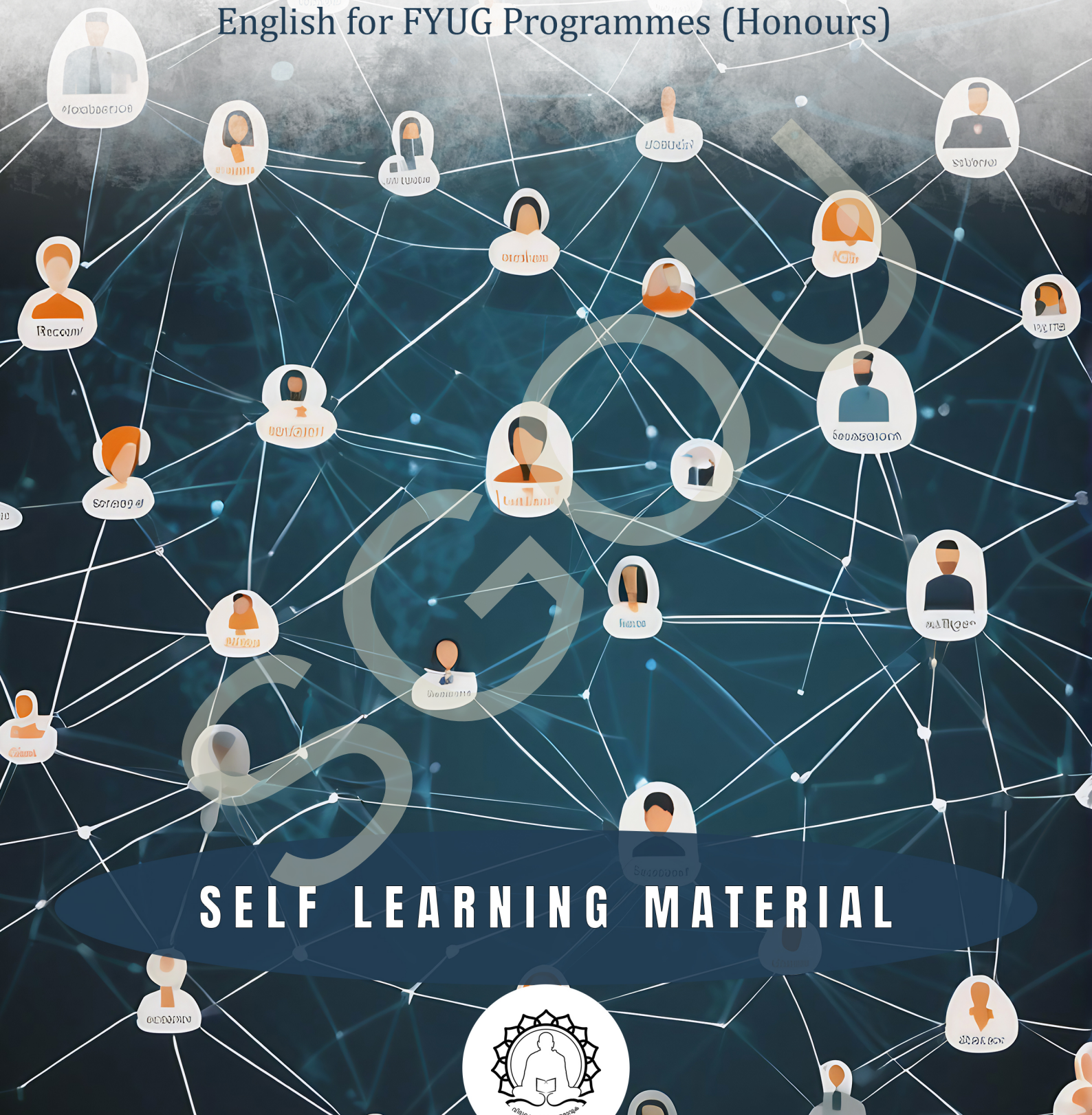


English for Communication

COURSE CODE: SGB24EG101AC

Ability Enhancement Course

English for FYUG Programmes (Honours)



SELF LEARNING MATERIAL



SREENARAYANAGURU
OPEN UNIVERSITY

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

The State University for Education, Training and Research in Blended Format, Kerala

Vision

To increase access of potential learners of all categories to higher education, re-search and training, and ensure equity through delivery of high quality processes and outcomes fostering inclusive educational empowerment for social advancement.

Mission

To be benchmarked as a model for conservation and dissemination of knowledge and skill on blended and virtual mode in education, training and research for normal, continuing, and adult learners.

Pathway

Access and Quality define Equity.



English for Communication

Course Code: SGB24EG101AC

Semester - I

Ability Enhancement Course English for FYUG Programmes Self Learning Material

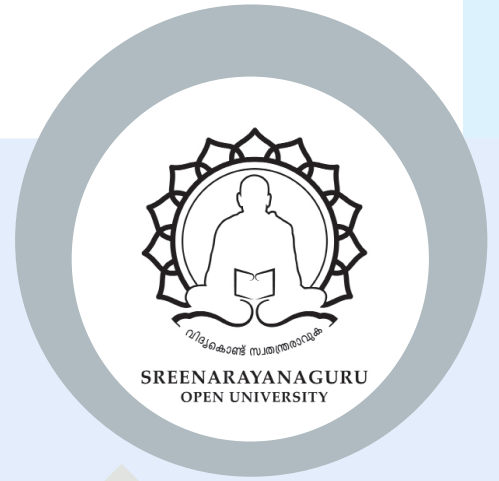


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The State University for Education, Training and Research in Blended Format, Kerala

SGB24EG101AC
English for Communication
Ability Enhancement Course
Semester -I
English for FYUG Programmes



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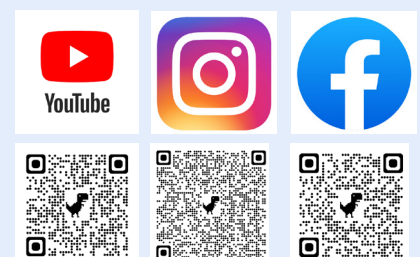
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Message from Vice Chancellor

Dear learner,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to Sreenarayanaguru Open University, established in September 2020 to promote higher education through open and distance learning. Our mission is guided by the principle that 'access and quality define equity', ensuring excellence in education.

The university is committed to providing high-quality education and carefully designed programmes to meet the expected standard. It bears the name of Sreenarayanaguru, a prominent modern Indian thinker who inspires us to maintain quality in all our academic pursuits. Our educational approach utilises a 'blended format', combining Self-Learning Material, Classroom Counselling, and Virtual modes. This structure aims to provide a comprehensive learning experience, addressing the potential limitations of distance education.

The four-year undergraduate programmes by the university offer a comprehensive learning experience, providing in-depth subject knowledge, enhanced research skills, and industry-relevant training. They emphasise critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation while focusing on digital literacy and global perspectives. With personalised learning paths and continuous assessment, these programmes ensure holistic development, preparing learners for diverse careers and further academic pursuits. Our curriculum balances theoretical knowledge with practical applications, ensuring well-equipped graduates.

This course, 'English for Communication', is offered as a mandatory ability enhancement component in the first semester of all four-year undergraduate programmes. We have designed it to meet the growing demand for effective communication skills in English. The course includes exercises and problem-solving activities to enhance your learning experience.

Our learning support services are available to assist you throughout your academic journey. We encourage you to contact us with any queries or concerns regarding your studies.

We wish you every success in your academic endeavours.

Warm regards,



Dr. Jagathy Raj V.P.

Vice Chancellor

Sreenarayanaguru Open University

04.09.2024

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BLOCK - 01

Communication and Language

Unit 1

Introduction to Communication

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learners will be able to:

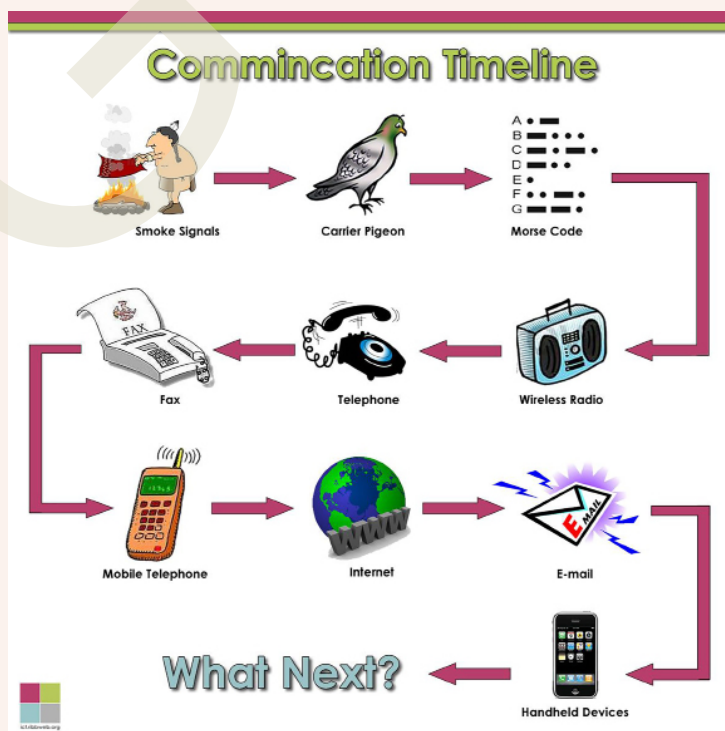
- ▶ get awareness on the significance of communication
- ▶ familiarise themselves with different types of communication
- ▶ critically think about the process involved in communication
- ▶ analyse the relationship between messages and their meanings

Prerequisites

From the earliest cave paintings to today's instant messaging, humans have always sought ways to connect and share information. Our journey as a communicative species is a fascinating tale of innovation and adaptation.

Prehistoric humans likely relied on a combination of grunts, gestures, and facial expressions to convey basic needs and emotions. As our ancestors' cognitive abilities evolved, so did their capacity for more complex forms of communication. The development of spoken language marked a pivotal moment, allowing for the transmission of abstract ideas and the preservation of cultural knowledge across generations.

The invention of writing systems around 3200 BCE



in ancient Mesopotamia revolutionised human communication, enabling the recording and dissemination of information across time and space. From cuneiform tablets to the printing press, each technological advancement expanded the reach and impact of human communication.

In the modern era, the pace of change in communication technology has accelerated dramatically. The telegraph, telephone, radio, and television each brought new dimensions to how we interact and share information. The digital revolution and the rise of the internet have further transformed the landscape, creating a globally connected world where information flows at unprecedented speeds.

Today, we stand at the threshold of new frontiers in communication, with emerging technologies like virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and brain-computer interfaces promising to reshape how we connect and understand each other. As we explore these new possibilities, it's valuable to reflect on the fundamental principles that have guided human communication throughout history.

Keywords

Verbal, Non-Verbal, Features, Language, Origin, Theories

1.1.1 Human Communication: Verbal and Non-verbal

Communication, as we have experienced, is basically the process of sharing information. Language is a primary tool used for communication, but not all kinds of communication rely on language. There two types of human

communication, verbal and non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication is the exchange of information through non-linguistic means, and verbal communication is exchanging information using words. Now let us learn what verbal and non-verbal communications are.

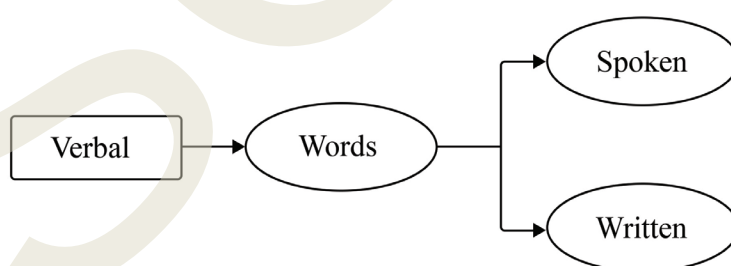


Fig 1.1.1 Verbal Communication

Verbal Communication is based on language. Language plays a vital role in our daily lives. As children, we first learn to speak and then to write. Depending on our social sur-

roundings, we communicate with ourselves, individuals around us, or amongst a group. Communication can also be formal or informal. Conversation in a peer group is informal.

We use casual language to communicate with them as there would be a continuous flow of ideas, thoughts, and emotions. These are expressed without any restraints. Communication in a classroom, in contrast, is formal. It has a formal setting. During a seminar or conference, we maintain a decorum of language and behaviour. We can classify most forms of communication as either formal or informal.

We will discuss formal and informal communication at length in the next unit.

For example, on Monday Jina is having a meeting at 9 am in her office. So, she has to leave early for the office. We can imagine the following communication to be taking place between Jina and her mother on Sunday:

JINA: Mom, tomorrow I have a meeting in the morning.

MOM: Oh okay. When will you leave for office?

JINA: At 8. Can you please give me breakfast at 7:30?

MOM: Sure. I will prepare breakfast for you.

Here we can see two people, Jina and her mother, in conversation. Jina is communicating her needs and informing her mother that she has to leave early. They communicated by using words. There would have the possibility of non-verbal communication during the above conversation. For example, Jina's mom would

have nodded her head in response to Jina's first statement and Jina could have indicated 'tomorrow' by waving her hands in a semi-circle.

Here are a few types of verbal communication.

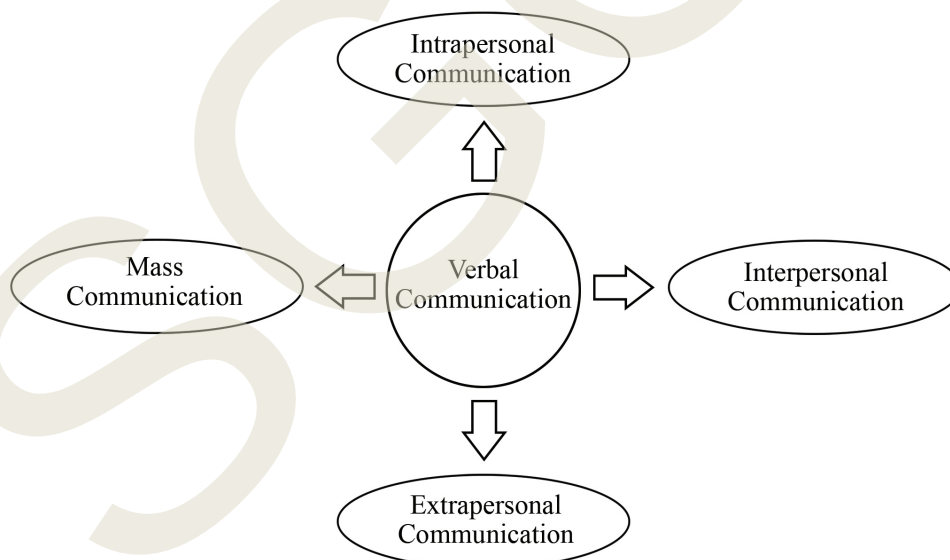


Fig 1.1.2 Types of verbal communication

- All of us communicate with ourselves through thoughts and interior monologues. This is self-communication. Here the sender and receiver are the same

person. Hence, it is called intrapersonal communication. A representative image of intrapersonal communication is given below.



Fig 1.1.3 An instance of intrapersonal communication

- Every day, we also talk to our family and friends. These conversations include two or more people. This participant-based communication mode is called interpersonal communication. In the image given below, we can see two people in a conversation. Imagine a conversation between them and try to write it down.



Fig 1.1.4 Interpersonal communication

- Another thing to remember is that we communicate with humans and non-human beings. When we reach home, our pets may come running to us to show affection. We stroke them and talk to them. In this context, touch and the sounds we produce are part of a unique kind of communication. This interaction between human and non-human beings is termed extra-personal communication.
- Verbal communication is not lim-

ited to these modes of interaction, where the sender and receiver are present in the same place. Communication can take place even when the sender and receiver are separated by space and time. For example, you are aware of events happening in other countries. This is made possible by various media including newspapers, TV, magazine, and social media, which brings you information about the affairs of the world. This form of communication through media that disseminates information to multiple receivers simultaneously is called mass communication.

1.1.2 Forms of Verbal Communication

Verbal communication can be classified in many other ways too. Forms of direct communication like face-to-face or telephonic communication can be classified as oral communication. Another form of verbal communication is its written form. We write letters to send messages to people who are living far away.

In the early days, we used to send messages via inland, letters, postcards and send telegram. In the 21st century, we use email and other communication applications like Messenger, WhatsApp, Signal, or Telegram to send instant

messages. In digital communication, words are often supplemented with emojis, stickers, memes, and gifs to share our emotions. These being pictorial representations of our written messages, they often help us to communicate the emotion behind the idea better than otherwise possible. Thus they are also a part of non-verbal communication which is very important as it often supplements, bolsters, or replaces the verbal message altogether. We will discuss non-verbal communication later in this chapter.

When we share our pictures and videos with friends, family, and the public through social media, we engage in visual and audio-visual communication. Every image has the capacity to speak and convey meanings. In newspapers and magazines, pictures are often included to communicate the message more clearly and also to increase the engagement of the reader. Photographs have the ability to convey messages in an accessible way. Taking this idea further, we can see that scholars studying data use charts and diagrams. They help us to tabulate and visualise huge chunks of information available to us. For audiences, who are illiterate, information can be more easily conveyed to them with the help of images, graphs and

tables.

Movies are a further example of audio-visual communication. The depth of ideas that can be communicated through combination of sounds and images is infinite. The advance in technology has made it possible for audio-visual communication to be more realistic and cheaper. Anyone with a smartphone/video camera and a decent mic can now produce quality video content. This has revolutionised the way we as a species communicate.

1.1.3 Non-Verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication, as mentioned earlier, takes place when we communicate information without relying on written or spoken language. The babble of babies is a great example of this kind of communication. Non-verbal communication is crucial in lending depth of meaning to the message that is communicated. While gestures, facial expressions, movement of hands and body, etc, can work as non-verbal cues to enhance the quality of communication in face-to-face interactions, memes, emojis, stickers and others work as non-verbal cues in digital communication.

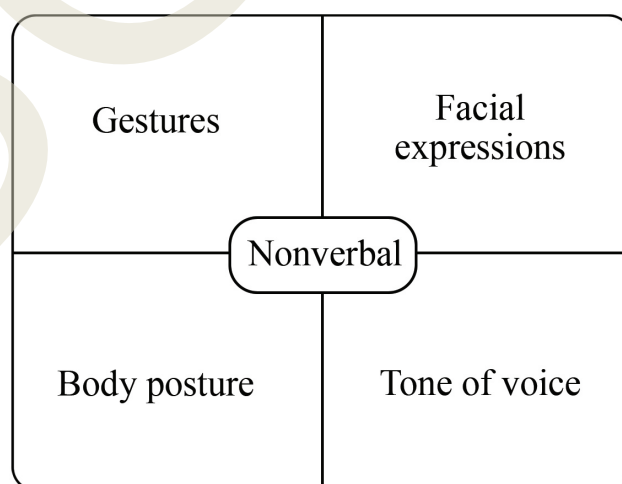


Fig 1.1.5 Elements of nonverbal communication

Verbal communication includes the usage of words, and it is even assisted by human voices or letters. Whereas, nonverbal communication is different as it refers to how you look, gestures, facial expressions and body postures communicate different meaning. But do nonverbal cues like gestures have a specific meaning at all?

Nonverbal cues can be considered in terms of emblems and illustrators. Emblems are non-verbal cues that have a universal meaning in our global culture.



Fig 1.1.6 Thumbs-up cue

Everyone knows the thumbs-up sign as a gesture communicating a meaning. It means ‘well done’!

We must remember that though emblems communicate meaning, they are specific to cultures. They need not communicate the same meaning across all cultures. Whereas the illustrators, unlike emblems, are unique to a person. They are not tied to a culture. They are gestures we use automatically and involuntarily to inform our utterances. They are nonverbal gestures we use intuitively; neither learnt nor specific to a culture. They are unique to a person and the context. For example, if you are seeing a long-lost school friend, you might say, “I am so excited”! You would illustrate your happiness with a wide sweep of arms and/or a beaming smile. These nonverbal gestures are deeply rooted in our communication experience.

We can also understand that non-verbal communication can often contradict, substitute, or emphasise the message conveyed ver-

bally. For example, someone is asked if they want to go out and says *yes*, and their gesture and body language suggests hesitation, it could mean that these non-verbal cues contradict what they have communicated verbally. Similarly, if someone is asked a question and they simply nod or shakes their head, we can understand that the verbal message of *yes* or *no* is substituted using a non-verbal cue. Finally, if a person who is asked if they need tea shakes their head and says *no*, they are employing non-verbal cue to repeat and emphasise what is communicated verbally.

1.1.4 Language

Have you ever thought of how language originated? There is not any theory that explains the origin of language. It occurred thousands of years ago and thus remains mostly a mystery. We don’t know the details about the origin of language. The history of language can be traced back to the paleolithic age, and the evidence of the scripts of languages are seen from the neolithic age. However, through observation, scientists have come to some realisations and uncovered some possibilities. It is hypothesized that we started to speak through imitation, just as babies learn imitating the sounds that the adults around them make. Human language has many more features. The script (alphabet) has no relation with the combined word it can produce. The combination of these sound scripts differ from word to word. Thus, we set a different meaning and different pronunciations. We are capable of producing new meaningful words, and also our language is passed on from generation to generation. Human infants learn language from elder people, which unusually would be their mother tongue. When they grow up, they learn other languages too. In different places, we have different languages.

As we have discussed earlier, there are dif-

ferent aspects of language that enable communication. Body language, sign language and animal language are all examples of the same. Languages are developed by humans and used as a tool for communication. Here we will discuss the features of human languages: arbitrariness, reflexivity, displacement and creativity.

1.1.5 Features of Human Language

- ▶ Human language is **creative**. The utterances and combinations possible in human language are infinite. Animal communication, in comparison, is far limited. The combinations of sounds and movements that they can produce is fewer. They are also limited to communicating information about basic necessities like food, shelter, and warnings of imminent danger.
- ▶ Another unique quality of human language is its **arbitrariness**. There appears to be no logical correlation between a word and the object or thought or feeling that word conveys. For example, the word tree and the concept of tree has no relation each other. When you hear the word tree, the image of a tree comes to your mind. But the same image can be conveyed using a word in another language, like Malayalam or Hindi. There is no relation between the object and its linguistic form. The exception is, as we have discussed earlier, the onomatopoeic words which has close resemblance between the sound and the word.
- ▶ Human communication is also unique in its **reflexivity**. When a message is sent, the receiver processes it and responds to it, and

this chain of communication can be sustained over time and space. And through interactions, language also develops. Over time, meanings change, and the way words, phrases, and signs are used evolve significantly. Reflexivity allows human language to develop and change over time.

- ▶ Language allows us to talk about the past, present and future. It can be used beyond time. We talk about imaginary things that are non-existent. This feature of human language that allows it to evoke events and objects that are removed in time or space is called **displacement**.

1.1.6 Origin of Language

Our everyday activities depend on language. Edward Sapir says “language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols,” Sapir has left a vagueness in this definition using the terms “ideas, emotions and desires.” These terms do not convey what is communicated by all languages.

It is also impossible to know exactly how humans arrived at the idea of language. Some philosophers, like Yuval Noah Harari, speculate that language developed because of a very human need to gossip. Gossip was a way in which primitive humans managed to form social bonds with their fellow beings. Especially when the herd size increased beyond the point where each member could interact with every other member, they relied on gossip to know whom to trust, whom to avoid, and whom to cooperate with. Let us now exam-

ine some theories on the origin of language in detail.

1. Language is the imitation of natural sounds. We have already read about **onomatopoeic words**. Maybe the primitive men used the onomatopoeic sound to inform his fellow beings about birds like *cuckoo*, *crow* and *chirp*. They would have also tried to communicate sounds of nature like *rattling*, *ooze*, *buzz*, *ripple*, *vroom*, *bang*, *hiss*, etc. This theory, often referred to as **Bow-Wow theory**, thus explains the formation of certain words. However, the theory is limited in that it cannot explain the development of other words. This theory fails to further explain how languages developed in the later years.
2. **Ding-Dong theory** is a similar one to Bow-wow theory which postulates that early man might have imitated the sound of nature and expressed them vocally by using sensory impressions, like striking of bells, swaying of trees in winds, movements of rivers, etc. This theory proposed by Max Muller stresses on the rhythm of nature which created a sensory impression on human beings.
3. Have you heard of the expression pooh-pooh? It means to make fun of something or someone. The speech utterances of man during pain, shock, excitement, and pleasure are traced by **Pooh-Pooh theory**. When we are happy, we use the words 'ha ha' to denote our happiness. When we slip and fall down, we say 'ouch' in pain. This theory cannot be universally applied

because these expressions differ in different languages, 'Oi' is the expression used by Russians for pain. Few other examples are boom, crash, oink, etc.

4. Similarly, men working in groups utter words in a rhythm to reduce their effort. Men carrying woods call out "oh hoi, oh hoi" repeating one after the other. These sounds are made involuntarily to reduce their muscular effort. The theory of language-origin that argues that language developed from such expressions of labour is called **Yo-He-Ho theory**.
5. When we say 'I' and 'me' we have a tendency to point fingers towards us and we point the person standing opposite when saying 'you'. A few theorists say our gestures and the movement of the tongue together can help us to utter new sounds and form words. We know that in the early days human beings communicated primarily through gestures and signs, later it might have been replaced by lips, jaws and tongue. The book titled *Human Speech* by Sir Richard Paget gives reference to **Gest-ure theory**.

The above theories of language-origin help us to understand a bit more about human behaviour and communication but they are inadequate to sufficiently explain the origin of human languages. Though we can assume that language developed as a consequence of a combination of the above mentioned factors, the exact moment and ways in which it has happened remains unexplained.



Recap

- ▶ Communication is a basic tool for survival in all species. Human language is complex and systematic than that of other beings. Studying communication allows us better manage our relationships and improve productivity
- ▶ Human communication can be classified into verbal and non-verbal. Communications can be intrapersonal, interpersonal, extra-personal, or mass communication
- ▶ Verbal communication is communication based on language and uses words. It can also be classified as written and spoken and formal and informal
- ▶ Non-verbal communication relies on cues, like gesture, facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice. In digital communication emojis, gifs etc. are examples of non-verbal cues
- ▶ Human language is unique. It is arbitrary, creative, reflexive, and can be displaced over space and time
- ▶ The exact ways in which language originated are explained. There are some theories that try to explain this phenomenon.

Objective Questions

1. What are the two types of communication?
2. Which type of communication relies on cues?
3. Which language theory relies on onomatopoeia?
4. What is communicating to oneself called?
5. Which type of communication makes use of language?
6. Which is the feature of language that allows us to talk about the past, present and future?
7. Who proposed the Ding-Dong theory?
8. Who wrote the book *Human Species*?
9. What is the term used to describe the communication between two or more people called?
10. What is the term used to denote the imitation of natural sounds?

Answers

1. Verbal and Non-Verbal
2. Non-Verbal communication

3. Bow-Wow theory
4. Intrapersonal communication
5. Verbal communication
6. Displacement
7. Max Muller
8. Sir Richard Paget
9. Interpersonal communication
10. Onomatopoeia

Assignments

1. Record a brief conversation with yourself.
2. Differentiate between verbal and non-verbal communication.
3. Write a note on different types of non-verbal communication.
4. Discuss the features of human language.

Suggested Reading

1. Defleur, Melvin L. and Patricia Kerney. *Fundamentals of Human Communication*. Mayfield, 1997.
2. DeVito, Joseph A. *Essentials of Human Communication*. Pearson, 1997.
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Unit 2

Barriers of Communication

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ acquire an idea on the barriers of communication
- ▶ detail the etiquettes of communication
- ▶ get awareness on the features of the formal and informal communications
- ▶ find out the differences between oral and written communications

Prerequisites

Picture this: A spice market in ancient Muziris, Kerala. Traders from Arabia, China, and Rome gesticulate wildly, trying to haggle over pepper and cardamom. A Tamil merchant struggles to understand a Greek buyer's accent. Near the docks, a scribe carefully etches Malayalam script onto palm leaves, recording the day's transactions. Meanwhile, atop the Western Ghats, drum beats echo through the valleys, carrying messages from one village to another.

This scene from Kerala's rich past illustrates a fundamental truth—communication has always been vital and challenging. From the earliest days of trade along the Malabar Coast to today's global connections, humans have continually sought ways to bridge the gaps between minds and cultures.

As civilisations grew and trade networks expanded, so too did the need for clear, effective communication. India's diverse languages and dialects reflect the complexity of human interaction, while the development of writing systems like Brahmi and its descendants demonstrates our drive to preserve and transmit knowledge across time and space.

In our modern, interconnected world, instant messaging, video calls, and translation apps are at our fingertips. Yet misunderstandings persist, cultural nuances get lost, and the sheer volume of information can overwhelm our ability to process it effectively.

In this context, understanding the barriers that impede clear communication becomes crucial. By examining these obstacles, we can develop strategies to overcome them, enhancing our ability to connect, collaborate, and comprehend in an increasingly complex global society.

Keywords

Barriers, Oral communication, Written communication, Etiquettes, Formal communication, Informal communication

Discussion

1.2.1 Barriers of Communication

A communication barrier can be anything that restricts or hinders communicators from delivering the correct message to the right person at the right time. In a workplace, the information that is passed from a sender to a receiver tends to be obstructed by a number of communication barriers.

In a business context, communication failures are commonly cited by the managers as one of their most serious challenges. Yet, communication issues are frequently just a sign of deeper issues existing in the system. Poor planning, for instance, could result in confusion regarding the firm's direction. Similar to this, an organisation that is badly structured may fail to explain organisational relationships clearly. Individuals might be uncertain about what is expected of them if performance requirements are vague. In order to avoid simply addressing the signs of communication issues, the insightful manager will search for their root causes. There may be obstacles in the sender, the message's transmission, the recipient, and the feedback. Some of the important barriers of communication are as follow:

1.2.1.1 Psychological Barriers

A number of mental and psychological issues might make it difficult to communicate effectively. Some people struggle with depression, phobia, speech issues, stage fright, etc. All of these factors can be extremely hard to manage at times, and they will definitely affect the effective communication among people.

1.2.1.2 Emotional Barriers

The ease and comfort with which someone can speak depends on their emotional IQ. Effective communication requires emotional maturity, which only some people possess. Putting

it another way, those who allow their emotions to rule them will encounter some challenges. A person's ability to make decisions might be clouded by emotions like anger, impatience, and humour, which limits the efficiency of their communication. Hence, effective communication requires the ideal balance of information and emotions.

1.2.1.3 Physical Barriers

The physical barriers stand out as the biggest obstacles to effective communication. They consist of barriers such as noise, defective communication devices, enclosed cabins, etc. In a large office, there may occasionally be significant physical impediments to good communication between different employees due to the physical distance between them.

1.2.1.4 Cultural Barriers

Anyone working in a large organisation may have colleagues from different countries because of the growing globalisation of society. Some fundamental societal principles have distinct meanings in different cultures. Clothing, religions, food, and general behaviour differ greatly among cultures. So, it is imperative that we consider these various cultures when we communicate. This is what we mean by cultural sensitivity. Many multinational corporations offer specialised orientation sessions to teach new employees about other cultures and how to be polite and tolerant of others.

1.2.1.5 Physiological Barriers

Effective communication among the various channels of an organisation may also be hampered by specific problems, illnesses, or other limitations. Physiological barriers to effective communication include dyslexia, shrill voice, and others.



1.2.1.6 Organisational Barriers

Barriers resulting from organisational structure, rules, and regulations are referred to as organisational barriers. The numerous forms of communication impediments can be present as a result of superior-subordinate interactions which prevent open communication. The complexity of organisational structures and the presence of numerous managers can occasionally make it challenging to communicate ideas clearly, resulting in distorted and misunderstood informations.

1.2.1.7 Semantic Barriers

Semantic barrier is another term for language barrier. Ineffective communication between the sender and the receiver is the root cause of these barriers. Semantic barriers in communication can be seen in many situations. When conveyed, a message should be clear and simple to understand so that the recipient can easily understand the information. Semantic barriers can occur occasionally as a result of the sender's unclear or complicated information-delivery method. Linguistic barriers can also occur when an information is sent using technical words that the recipient does not understand. By functioning as a barrier to efficient communication, it causes uncertainty and misunderstanding between the sender and recipient.

1.2.2 Formal Communication

In academic and professional settings, formal communication is used to convey information in a structured and systematic way. So, formal communication is the exchange of information using the proper channels. It is also known as official communication. Formal communication includes conversations between superiors and subordinates. Making sure that the message has been delivered accurately and having a proper conversation are the major goals of this communication. Because

of the time it saves through its structured flow of communication, this mode of communication is seen as effective. Reports, job descriptions, work orders, information about sales and inventories, etc. are examples of formal communication. There are four different types of formal communication such as upward, downward, vertical, and horizontal.

1.2.2.1 Vertical Communication

Vertical communication, which directs the flow of information both up and down the chain of command, follows the organisational structure. The general practice in most business communication is to go either from superiors to subordinates or from subordinates to superiors. Hence, in this context, communication takes place when information is passed from leaders, management, or superiors to lower-level employees, or when front-line employees may ask questions to or bring up a concern to the higher authorities, who then respond. Hence, the process of communication is up and down, or more precisely, vertical.

1.2.2.2 Horizontal Communication

When teams, organisations, or people who are at the same hierarchical level in an organisation communicate with one another and exchange messages, it is known as horizontal communication. An organisation can foster internal communication among its staff members who hold similar functional positions by using horizontal communication. According to Betty and Kay, "Horizontal Communication occurs between workers at generally equal levels in an organization."

1.2.2.3 Diagonal Communication

Diagonal communication is the flow of information that is neither vertical nor horizontal but rather diagonal or zigzag. Here, personnels from various departments can communicate with one another. Diagonal commu-

nication, also known as crosswise communication, can take place between a management and a certain team.

1.2.2.4 Upward Communication

It refers to the transmission of information from a lower to a higher level, or from subordinates to superiors. The morale of the employees is raised by this type of communication. This mode of communication is not authoritative and directive in nature as its purpose is to provide feedback. It includes complaints, requests, comments, reports, reactions, ideas, and other forms of upward communication that are valuable to those in management positions as they make crucial decisions for the business.

1.2.2.5 Downward Communication

Downward communication is when information is passed from top management levels to various subordinate levels in a downward direction. Such a type of communication channel is most prevalent in organisations that follows the organisational hierarchy and moves in a standard line of command. It consists of instructions, orders, policies and information.

1.2.2.6 Informal Communication

In the informal, non-official style of communication, ideas are freely conveyed between two or more people without adhering to established procedures, formalities, systems, or organizational structures. The informal communications are devoid of conventional rules and other formalities of organisations because they are built on personal or informal relationships with people like friends, peers, family, club members, etc.

As there is no apparent hierarchy through which the information flows, the informal communication is characterised by an indefinite route of communication. Information can therefore originate from anywhere. Such com-

munication usually results from the social ties that people make with others based on shared interests, preferences, likes or dislikes.

1.2.3 Communication Etiquette

Etiquette is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as the conventional guidelines for conduct in polite society. It is treating one another with respect, being polite, and having good manners. Effective communication etiquette calls for actions and approaches that will enable you to convey information accurately while keeping good ties with your superiors, co-workers, and clients.

An essential component of efficient business operations is the effective communication inside the workplace. Effective communication can guarantee that your message is understood by your audience as you meant. A stronger workplace and more effective interactions can arise from the absence of misunderstandings. Also, it may indicate that you are a skilled communicator, imply that you are a leader, and open up more career prospects for you in the future.

Since the dawn of human civilization, manners and etiquette have existed. Even the most savage tribes and populations can be found throughout the globe bearing witness to this. The social norms we follow in order to treat others and ourselves with respect are known as etiquette or manners expected in any group. Leadership, quality, business, and professions are all enhanced by good manners. The concept of trust should be carried out during the communication. Instead of destroying the confidence, communication should be used to foster it.

Good etiquettes are not determined by just one set of guidelines. Communication is personal and heavily dependent on circumstance. You may be capable of communicating with



someone you know well and have a high level of trust in ways that you might not be able to with someone you hardly know.

Some of the building blocks of communication etiquettes are as follow:

- **Responding quickly**
- **Expressing gratitude publicly**
- **Informing others**
- **Apologising publicly**
- **Displaying personal integrity**
- **Responding right away, even to decline**
- **Complimenting others**
- **Encouraging others**
- **Providing good feedback**
- **Maintaining promises**
- **Being truthful, kind, and courteous**

1.2.4 Oral or Written Communication?

Oral communication is the process of sending messages or reports orally from the dispatcher to the receiver. In contrast, written communication involves sending messages or information in a written form to the recipient. Oral communication as an informal mode of communication is typically used in both private and public conversations. Written communication is employed as a formal communication in specific settings like schools, colleges, and the business sectors.

In contrast to written communication, oral communication lacks any kind of record or drafting. While written communication requires some costs, spoken communication is inexpensive. Written communication requires more time to provide feedback, but in oral communication responses are very quick. In

contrast to written communication, oral communication requires less time to prepare and deliver messages.

The main benefit of oral communication is that it enables the message to be communicated with the appropriate pitch and tone. Also, it significantly reduces the amount of effort required and saves a great deal of time. Compared to other methods, oral communication is less formal, which gives one's message a more personal touch. Oral forms, when used in connection with the proper verbal communication, can generate trust and loyalty among people.

Making oral communication effective can be done in a variety of ways. Attempting to make sure the language is appropriately framed and spoken in the appropriate pitch and tone is crucial. An efficient oral communication system must have the qualities of clarity, conciseness, and precision. It is advisable to avoid complicated language and jargon to ensure that the information is understood correctly. Establishing eye contact and adjusting body language in accordance with the message are crucial. For instance, expressing a strict order with a formal and stern body language can be more effective.

Even though most contents are communicated through words, oral communication is frequently carried out efficiently through the use of non-verbal elements like body language and tone variations. Visual aids are occasionally used in connection with oral communication to aid in the establishment of a clear message.

Oral communication has various advantages, but it also has certain limitations. This method of communication is particularly prone to misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Effective oral communication requires a high level of expertise and is not something that everyone can do.

Written communication is a form of communication that is recorded by writing/drafting and is sent from one person to another. Examples of written communication are letters, research papers, reports, memos, etc. It is a highly concrete type of recorded proof and may also be referred to in the future. As it is a written document, the knowledge or information can be easily circulated to a large number of people. The accuracy of the information presented is the same for the entire audience because it does not vary from person to person.

If you want your written communication to be effective, it is essential to write with com-

pleteness, clarity and accuracy. Written communication must be detailed and accurate in order to ensure that the intended message is conveyed because there can be no rapid feedback.

Moreover, keep your messages clear and error-free. While drafting written communication also has its disadvantages, such as the absence of immediate feedback and effective sound modulation. They can be effectively overcome by combining written and spoken communication in order to bring together their advantages while also removing their disadvantages.

Recap

- ▶ A major problem in organisations is poor communication
- ▶ Communication barriers occur at the levels of sending, transmission, receiving or feedback
- ▶ Psychological issues might make it difficult to communicate effectively
- ▶ Struggle with depression, phobia, speech issues, stage fright, etc
- ▶ Effective communication requires emotional maturity
- ▶ Physical Barriers-such as noise, defective communication devices, etc.
- ▶ Consider various cultures when we communicate
- ▶ Effective communication may be hampered by physiological barriers like dyslexia
- ▶ Organisational barriers result due to organisational structure, rules, regulations, etc
- ▶ Semantic barrier is another term for language barrier
- ▶ Formal communication-exchange of information using the proper channels
- ▶ It is a conversation between superiors and subordinates
- ▶ Types of formal communication- upward, downward, vertical, and horizontal
- ▶ Informal communication is non-official method of communication
- ▶ Etiquette - the conventional guideline for conduct in polite society
- ▶ Oral communication- sending messages orally from the dispatcher to the receiver
- ▶ Written communication is a form of communication that is recorded by writing/drafting

Objective Questions

1. What is the term used to denote anything that hinders the receiver from getting the message?
2. What are the mental issues that make it difficult to communicate effectively called?
3. What are the barriers such as noise, defective communication devices, enclosed cabins, etc. called?
4. What is the name given to the type of communication in offices?
5. Name another term for language barrier.
6. Name a type of formal communication.
7. What is the term attributed to the barrier that hinders communication between people of different cultures?
8. What are the conventional guidelines for conduct in polite methods called?
9. What is the process of sending messages or reports in written format called?
10. What is the flow of communication that is neither vertical nor horizontal called?

Answers

1. Barrier
2. Psychological barrier
3. Physiological barrier
4. Formal communication
5. Semantic barrier
6. Vertical communication
7. Cultural barrier
8. Communication etiquette
9. Written communication
10. Diagonal or Zig-zag communication

Assignments

1. What are the major barriers to effective communications?
2. Compare and contrast oral and written communications
3. What is meant by communication etiquette? Elucidate
4. Write a note on formal and informal communications

5. Differentiate between upward and downward communications
6. What are different forms of formal communications?
7. Find out the differences between the vertical and horizontal communications
8. How is diagonal communication different from vertical and horizontal communications?
9. Discuss the semantic barriers in communication
10. Elaborate on cultural barriers in communication

Suggested Reading

1. Jain, Girish. *Decoding Communication: A Complete Handbook for Effective Communication*. Notion P, 2021.
2. Jegadeesan, M. *Communication Skills And Personality Development*. Nipa, 2021.
3. Sinha, M.P, et al. *Fundamentals Of Effective Communication*. Atlantic, 2014.

Unit 3

Four Skills of Communication

Learning Outcomes

Upon the completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ get acquainted with the different types of communication skills
- ▶ become familiar with various techniques to enhance communication skills
- ▶ acquire techniques to write effectively for different contexts and readers
- ▶ familiarise themselves with speaking skillfully and ethically

Prerequisites

Picture a bustling classroom. A teacher explains a complex concept in Malayalam and then switches to English for key terms. Students take notes, some in Malayalam script, others in English. In the back, two friends whisper, effortlessly mixing both languages.

This snapshot of a typical classroom highlights the multilingual nature of education and communication in the state. From ancient times, when scholars debated in Sanskrit at Kodungallur, to the present day of global connectivity, our land has been a melting pot of languages and ideas.

The ability to communicate effectively – whether in one’s mother tongue, English, or other languages – is crucial in today’s world. It shapes our educational experiences, career prospects, and personal relationships. As we explore the fundamental skills of communication, we’ll discover how mastering these abilities can open doors to new opportunities and foster deeper understanding in our diverse linguistic landscape.

Keywords

Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Techniques, Communication, Improvement

Discussion

Communication can be in both spoken or written modes. Effective communicators need to develop two different sets of skills that would make them effective senders and receivers of messages. Speaking and writing are the skills necessary for productive communication while listening and reading are the receptive skills.

In this unit, we will be discussing the skills needed for flawless communication. We need to be practice these skills to finetune and improve our communication. The four communication skills, which will be discussed here, are: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. We need to develop these skills through practice

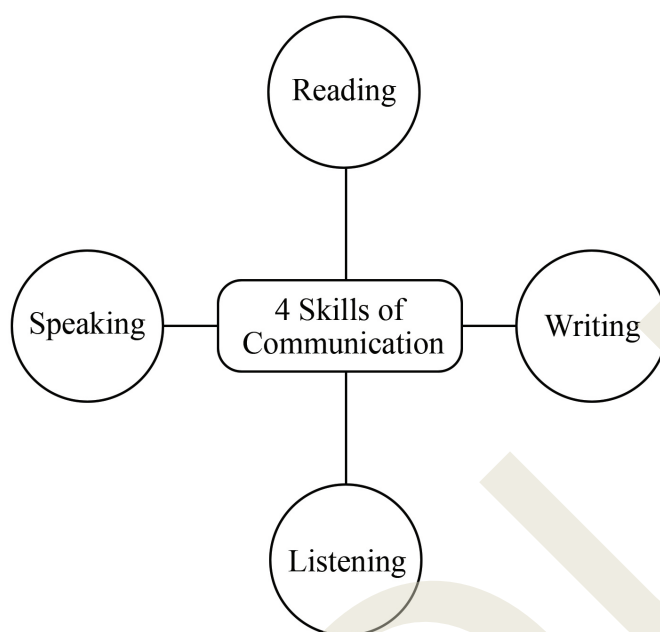


Fig 1.3.1 Four skills of communication

1.3.1 Listening

Some of us are good at listening, but not everyone is. There is a distinction between listening and hearing. Hearing is a casual activity that we are constantly engaged in. We hear all the sounds and noises around us, we hear the cry of the crows, bickering of neighbours, and the calls of the fish vendors. Listening, however, is an activity which needs our conscious effort and is essential if we are to efficiently communicate.

If you are talking to a friend and he is not paying attention to you, the conversation remains incomplete. The message would not be conveyed as it is intended by you, the sender. Here, the listener is inactive. Good listening habits are an essential part of primary skills of communication and active listening is part of a good conversation.

Imagine you are in a railway station, airport, or bus station. You hear all the announcements but you have to listen carefully to obtain some specific informations. On such occasions, you

will pay full attention to the announcements to find out the expected arrival or departure time of your train, bus, or aeroplane. Listening to announcements is required to collect specific information you need.

As part of your academic life you listen to live talks on television, radio, podcasts, YouTube, TED platforms, etc. Here your purpose of listening to these audios will be different. When we read or listen, we are searching for information, facts or maybe for entertainment. You may listen to audio lectures and descriptions for facts and you arrive at an inference. This may be for your academic purpose. You may listen to the radio or television for weather updates, to know whether it is a sunny day or not.

As a student, you sit in a classroom to listen to lectures. It is very important that you understand the lectures clearly. The listener and speaker should use a common language which both of them are expert at, then only the communication becomes effective. Through-

out the lecture, the listener should not be bored, disturbed or distracted. An active listener, during a lecture, would take notes for future reference. Notes are helpful in two ways. It keeps you grounded and helps you in preventing your attention from wandering away from the lecture. These notes can also be used for future reference, and can be revisited whenever needed.

An additional thing that an effective listener can do is to research. To be an effective listener at lectures, you can find out the day's topic previously and do a background study. Carry a notebook and pen to take notes while listening. Avoid all distractions during the lecture and focus on the lecture. Listen for specific things with an open mind and recollect your previously acquired knowledge. Try to comprehend the lecture. Write lecture notes in your own words, so that there will not be any confusion in the future. Identify the new terms and note them down to refer later. Use mind maps to remember the complicated concepts. Read up additional information regarding the topic after the lecture as well. These steps will lead you to be an active listener and get the best out of the lectures you attend.

Read the following classroom lecture.

Teacher: Sonnet is an ancient poetic form that has its roots in Italian poetic traditions. A sonnet typically has fourteen lines divided into an octet and a sestet or into three quartets and a couplet. William Shakespeare is one of the best known sonneteers in English.

Do you know any sonneteers in English?

Student: Yes ma'am, John Milton.

Teacher: Very good. Milton has written many sonnets including "On his Blindness"

In this classroom interaction between the

teacher and the student, we can see the student respond to the teacher by answering the question. Here, the student is an active listener. Active participation in the conversation identifies you as an effective listener. The student was able to reproduce his previous knowledge about sonnet and sonneteers. Providing appropriate feedback at the appropriate time is a key part of being an active and effective listener.

There are occasions in our professional and personal life where we will need to listen to conversations and to report the conversation or to act accordingly. We have conversations with our boss who may give orders on what to do. We also exchange information in personal conversations, classroom discussions, conferences, and seminars or through different social media platforms. Even in personal communication, active listening is important. A passive listener is not someone others would be interested in conversing with people who show lack of interest in conversations, more who don't respond to questions or are constantly distracted are mostly avoided by speakers.

Have you now understood the difference between hearing and listening? We all hear the phonetic sounds created by the speaker, but only an active listener decodes and understands the message behind the sequence of sounds. Listeners do more than just hearing. Good listening is linked with retrieval of the information.

Now let us see what factors affect active listening:

- ▶ The listener should be interested in the conversation. The topic should be relevant for the listener as well.
- ▶ The verbal competence of the speakers is important. They should have expertise in their use

of language.

- ▶ Incomplete utterances impact the ability of a listener to follow an argument.
- ▶ Hesitation and pauses in between the sentences can also impact the quality of listening.
- ▶ Listener's ability to overcome the distraction determines the amount of time that he/she can actively listen.
- ▶ Speed of the speech should be moderate. It should not lag or else the listener may get distracted.
- ▶ Avoid jargon and unfamiliar colloquial expressions that are not known by the listener.
- ▶ Non-verbal communication should be minimised in formal communication.
- ▶ Assuming the listener's prior knowledge and omitting certain things in the conversation may sometimes lead to miscommunication.
- ▶ The difference between the capacity of speaking and listening can also impact the quality of effective listening.

1.3.2 Speaking

English is considered a global communicative language. To speak English fluently,

both the technical and communication skills are necessary. Our strength as a communicator lies in our ability to speak a language fluently and confidently. Speaking requires a different approach from writing. A good listener can easily be a speaker as well.

A message is clearly passed on only if the speaker is fully aware of the purpose and function of the communication, and also uses the correct expression. When speaker effectively communicates his/he purpose to listener, then the communication is successful.

Let us ask an important question once again. Why do we communicate? We communicate to share information based on our perception, our past and future plans, present our opinion, give instructions, convince people, sell products, ask doubts, give permission, express thanks, congratulate someone and so on. Based on this, we can identify the functions of communication.

We can classify the functions of communication into four main categories. They are informative, instructive, persuasive and integrative.

The classification is presented in the table below:

INFORMATIVE	INSTRUCTIVE
- o Introducing oneself - o Conveying personal information - o Reporting events and expressing comments - o Opinion and information about places, an organisation, or daily routine	- o Giving instructions - o Giving directions - o Explaining - o Describing things - o Commands and orders

PERSUASIVE	INTEGRATIVE
- o Advertising - o Selling goods and services - o Reasoning - o Suggestions - o Giving reasons - o Convincing people	- o Making requests - o Greeting people - o Giving advice - o Making enquiries - o Expressing sympathy - o Complementing - o Appreciating - o Encouraging

Table 1.3.1 Functions of communications

Speaking skill is a primary skill one needs to acquire. You learn to speak and write in your primary classes. The ability to speak fluently and confidently is a basic quality you need to acquire for effective communication. Speaking can be classified as formal and informal.

Have you heard the famous speech by Martin Luther King, Jr.? If not, listen to the speech here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vP4iY1TtS3s>. In the speech, he addressed tens of thousands of people using the proper words that inspire us even now.

Through this speech, Martin Luther King, Jr. attracted the listening capacity of many generations. People still feel liberated and awed when they hear his speech.

All of us may not be great communicators who can inspire masses towards liberation. However, by learning to communicate effectively, we can create an impact in the lives of those we interact with. To ensure effective communication, there are a few things you can develop:

Understand the purpose and need to communicate

Begin well. *Well begun is half done*

Switch between formal and informal as suited to the occasion

Be spontaneous

Listen and respond to feedback

End conversations neatly and with grace

Fig 1.3.2 Steps to develop for effective speaking skill

Keep the above tips in your mind and start communicating effectively. Now let's learn a few speaking skills that would be handy in

everyday conversations.

Read the conversation given below.

1. Conversation between two friends

Babu: Hey, wassup?/

Aswin: Hey. I'm so tired.

Babu: Why, what happened? You ok?

Aswin: Yeah, man. Sat up all night watching movies and now I'm sleepy. That's all.

Babu: Haha. Ok. I'll catch you later, then. See you. Bye

Aswin: Bye.

2. Office conversation

Nidhi: Good morning Arya.

Arya: Good morning Ma'am.

Nidhi: Have you completed the report?

Arya: Yes, ma'am. I mailed it to you last night.

Nidhi: Good, thank you. Make sure that you intimate the client about the completion of the project.

Arya: Okay, I will draft a detailed email and once you have approved, I will forward the same to the client EOD. Shall I come to your office around 2:00?

Nidhi: Yes, that should work. I will read the report and we will discuss it as well.

Arya: Okay, ma'am. Have a good day.

Nidhi: You too.

Did you read the conversations? Can you identify which conversation is formal and which is informal? The conversation between the friends is informal and the office conversation is formal. The salutation in both the conversation helps you to identify whether it is formal or informal.

The first thing to do when you meet someone is to greet them politely. This would help you to have a functional and effective communication. There are certain criteria to follow

while you greet them based on

- ▶ the time you are meeting the person
- ▶ the relationship with the person whom you are meeting
- ▶ the occasion when you are meeting the person
- ▶ whether it is a formal or informal situation

Here are some useful phrases for formal and informal communication.



Formal	Greeting: Good morning! Good afternoon! Good evening! Starting a conversation: How do you do? How are you? Responses: How do you do? Fine, Thank you.
Informal	Greeting: Hello Hi Hey Starting a conversation: Wassup? How have you been? Responses: Nothing much Good.

Table 1.3.2 Some useful phrases for communication

It is important not only to begin a conversation well but also to end it well. In formal contexts, we may say, 'Thank you', 'See you later', 'Good day', 'Good night', etc. In informal contexts, we may simply say 'Bye', or 'Nice talking to you.' These closing remarks indicate that the conversation has ended so that there are no awkward pauses or the persons are free to leave.

There can be occasions in everyday communication where we would greet someone or wish someone. Some phrases and words that can be useful in those occasions are given below. These phrases are often followed by an exclamation mark.

- ▶ Congratulations
- ▶ Well done
- ▶ Good luck

- ▶ Welcome to our team
- ▶ All the best

When you meet someone new, you will have to introduce yourself. Here are some useful phrases you can use:

- ▶ My name is (your name) and I am from (your place)
- ▶ I would like to introduce myself, I'm (your name)
- ▶ Hi, I am (your name)

On some occasions, you will have to introduce someone else. If you are organising a program, you would have to introduce the guest to the audience. Then you can say "I feel privileged to introduce our mayor to the function."

Here are some useful phrase to introduce others:

► I would like to introduce Mathew from England

► Here is Mathew from England

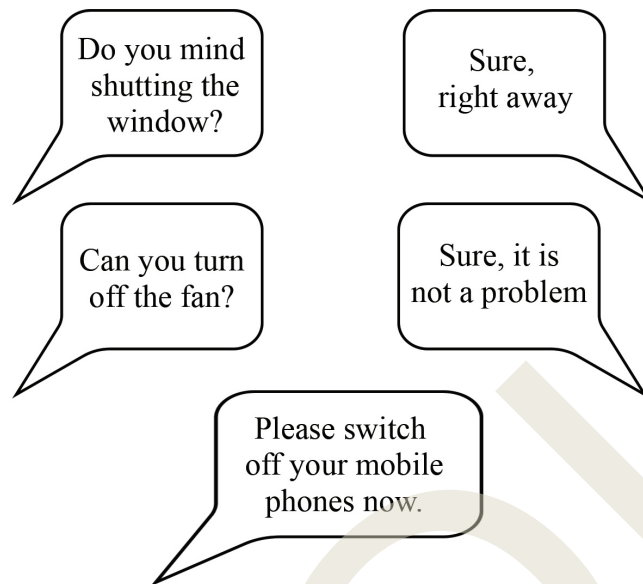


Fig 1.3.3 Sample of making requests and their responses

On certain occasions, we would have to ask others for help, to do certain things for us. It is very important to be polite and make requests. If you don't ask politely, the listener may feel that you are being rude. To avoid such a situation, be kind in your actions and words.

During an informal conversation with your friends and family, you can use these phrases.

"Can you come with me, please?"

"Could you help me to solve the maths

problem?"

While making requests, the auxiliary verbs "could" and "can" can be followed by verbs.

In 'formal' conversations use "would you mind" + verb + -ing form. For example "Would you mind shutting the window?" "Do you mind shutting the window?" These are the formal ways of requesting.

Now let's see few more phrases to make requests and their responses

REQUEST	RESPONSES
- o Can you come here? - o Could you come here? - o Do you mind coming here? - o Would you mind coming here, please?	- o Yes, of course - o Certainly - o Right away - o In a minute... - o Sure - o Ok - o No problem at all

Fig 1.3.4 Phrases of making requests and their responses

At times, you would have to turn down the requests. On those occasions, remember to be polite and use kind words to decline the requests. You need to be polite in your rejections too, so that the listener would not feel offended.

Some instances of declining requests are:

- o I'm sorry, I can't because
- o I'm afraid I can't because
- o I wish I could be of some help but

Some useful phrases to make requests are:

- o Can I ask you a favour?

- o Do you think you could.....
- o I wonder if you could.....
- o Could I

Formal way of making requests

- o May I request you to.....
- o I'd be grateful if you could.....
- o If you don't mind, could you.....
- o Sorry to bother you, but could you....

When you are requesting someone for something, you are also asking for permission to the person. If you want to use someone's mobile, you have to ask permission.

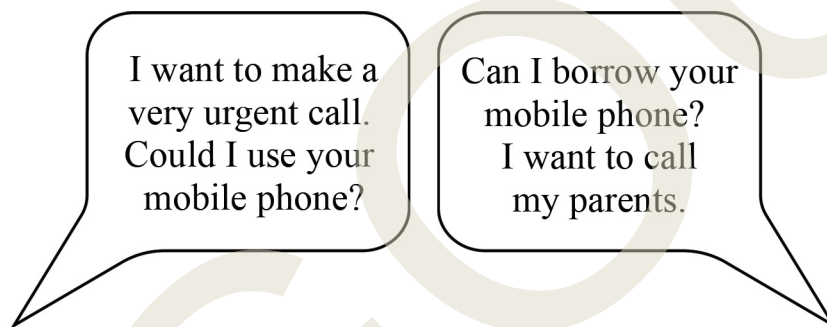


Fig 1.3.5 Examples of making requests

In your daily life, you ask permission for many things. To borrow a book, to lend some money, to take leave, to organise a party at college and for many other purposes, you need permission.

1.3.3 Reading

Reading is part of our everyday life. We read newspapers, advertisements, charts, letters, documents, online data, poems, novels, etc. We need to decode the written data to understand it wholly. Let us begin with an exercise.

The following is a poem titled “Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening” written by the American poet Robert Frost. The poem is about the speaker who is riding past the woods and

suddenly stopping to enjoy the snow-falling on the woods. He resumes his journey when he thinks about his duties that need to be fulfilled.

Now let's read the poem and try to answer the questions.

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Robert Frost

*Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.
My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near*

*Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.
He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.
The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.*

Now, answer the following questions

1. Where did the speaker stop?
2. Who shook the harness bells and why?
3. Why did the speaker decide to keep moving despite the woods being lovely, dark and deep?

1.3.3.1 Reading Prose

Now, let us read a prose fiction of political satire titled "The Cockroach" by Luís Fernando Veríssimo.

In this prose work, an innocent meal becomes a bureaucratic nightmare.

The maître d', who was called over by the waiter, asked:

"Is there a problem, Sir?"

"Problem, no. Cockroach, yes."

"I beg your pardon?"

"Look."

The maître d' looked and saw a cockroach in the middle of the salad.

"Yes . . ."

"Yes, you say? Well I say: no. I ordered a

salade niçoise, which does not—as far as I know—come with cockroaches."

"Please remain calm, Sir."

"I am calm."

"Let me bring you another salad."

"I don't want another salad. I want an explanation."

"It was an accident."

"An accident, you say. Well I say: I am not so sure. If a cockroach had strayed from its pack, had wandered into the kitchen and landed in the salad—now that would have been an accident. But that is not what happened. For one, the cockroach is dead. There is no doubt that your salad dressing is, as they say, killer—but I doubt it was the cause of death. It's obvious the cockroach was dead before it fell into the salad. Its body shows no signs of struggle, which leads me to believe it was the victim of pesticides used for killing armies of roaches and other creatures in your kitchen. It's impossible to say exactly when it happened. An autopsy would reveal the exact time of the cockroach's death. The fumigation might still be affecting the food in your kitchen—not only garnishing it with dead insects, but seasoning it with invisible poison as well. If this is true, then I would like an explanation. I am a citizen; I know my rights. This is a democracy."

"I will call the manager."

The manager, who was called over by the maître d', arrived. He confirmed that the kitchen had undergone a fumigation, but that it had been a month ago. The restaurant was closed during the operation. There was no danger of the food being contaminated, nor evidence that the cockroach was a result of the recent fumigation.

"So," the client said. "Perhaps it took a



while to die. Perhaps it stumbled miserably around the kitchen for a month before it saw my *salade niçoise* and chose this lettuce leaf as its shroud. Believe me, I will spread the word. What kind of establishment is this?!”

The manager called the owner of the restaurant, who soon appeared at the door. The fumigation of the kitchen had been mandated by the Ministry of Health. To confirm this, the owner had brought along the municipal health secretary, who said he had been following ministry protocol. The head of the ministry was called; when he arrived at the restaurant, he accepted full responsibility for everything. Except the cockroach. The cockroach on the salad could not be, chronologically speaking, a result of the fumigation. Unless someone in the kitchen had kept it, preserved it in ice, and waited for the perfect occasion to . . .

The patron interrupted the minister’s speculation with a slap on the table and asked to see his superior. The minister sighed and took his cell phone from his pocket to call the president of the republic, who arrived, sharply dressed, in under half an hour. He had just left a reception at the presidential palace.

“What is it?” said the president.

“Look.”

The president looked and saw the cockroach.

“And?” he said.

“This is your responsibility.”

The president nodded. He asked what it was he wanted.

“An explanation.”

The president apologized. The man did not accept his apology. The president offered compensation. The man refused. They called the

minister of the army.

The general arrived and, like the *maitre d’*, asked:

“Is there a problem, Sir?”

The man pointed at his salad. The general looked and said, “An olive. Great!” He took the cockroach and swallowed it. Later, the man was arrested and sued for *falsely* accusing the restaurant. It was a democracy, up to a point.

(Translation from the Portuguese)

Some questions to ponder over the above short fiction are:

- Why didn’t the customer accept that the cockroach in the salad was an accident?
- Who were the people called in to provide an explanation to the customer?
- Why did the customer not accept an apology?
- How was ‘the problem’ resolved?

1.3.3.2 Method of reading

Reading is considered an important skill in language learning. A person should be capable of reading in order to decode and interpret the data of the reading material. Reading is a source of self-education and an important language skill. It will help to acquire the other skills of communication including listening, speaking and writing.

Reading seems as a simple process but it is an important skill of communication. Reading is an activity using symbols, letters, words, meaningful ideas and thoughts. The reader needs a certain level of background knowledge for his/her understanding of any the content of any type.

When you read the poem and the short fiction

provided above, you would first try to understand the meaning of the words and then the underlying message. The simple questions provided above are tools to aid you in understanding the basic content of the text. By acquiring proficiency in the language, you will be able to go further than basic comprehension. Then, you will be able to understand the more coded message that the text contains. For example, there are further questions that can be asked about the poem and the story we just read. In the poem, what does snow symbolise? What is the message emphasised by the repetition of the line “And miles to go before I sleep”? In the story, what is the political message that is embedded in the ending? What does it mean to say “It was a democracy, up to a point?”

The written text provides you with structured meaning and, from this, you could understand the socio-cultural meaning as well. The contextual meaning is acquired through your previous knowledge or based on the socio-cultural background.

We can say that reading is an interaction between language and thought. Our reading would be only complete only when we read the text and integrate its structural meaning with

our existing ideas and thoughts that are generated by the reading and experience demand.

Reading a poem is an act that does not demand deep intellectual effort. But to read it in a way that we comprehend the intended meaning in its entirety is a more complicated process. This would require the reader to understand the nuances and cultural context imbued into the text by the author. If the reader cannot decode the language, some meanings cannot be understood.

Reading is a skill which needs to be taught and nurtured over time. It is a visual process which happens also in our mind. Our capability as a reader can be judged by the following factors.

The efficiency of the reading depends upon the linguistic proficiency, and background knowledge. An efficient reader the one who has a purpose to read, comprehends what he is reading and remembers what he has read. A good vocabulary will help to read faster and comprehend easily.

Reading depends upon the following factors.

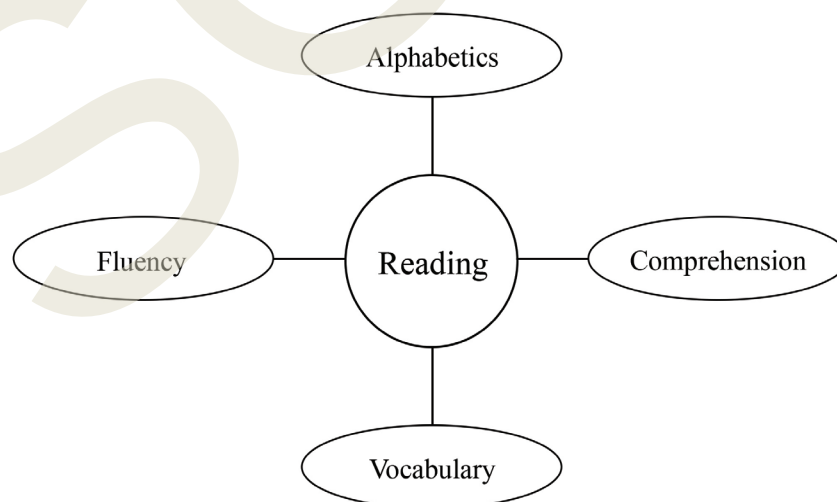


Fig 1.3.6 Factors for effective reading

Reading can be silent or loud based on the purpose. If you are reading for yourself, it can be silent reading, and if you are reading loud it is oral reading. News readers practise oral reading. It is also informational reading, as they read to provide informations.

- ▶ Sometimes you read a page or data to get a particular information, which is called scanning.
- ▶ Skimming involves a quick running over the text to get the essence out of it.

The following are some factors to overcome your reading problems.

- ▶ Practise reading.
- ▶ Recognise unfamiliar words and understand the literal and contextual meaning.
- ▶ Understand the unfamiliar words with the help of a teacher or a dictionary.
- ▶ Develop linguistic competence.

1.3.4 Writing

“Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man,” says Francis-Bacon, the 16th century essayist. A speech may be forgotten later, if it’s not recorded, but writing and documenting is a record forever. The literary works of the past were recorded so that we read them in the present age. Writing provides physical evidence of the content or record.

Language is a storehouse of knowledge with different kinds of production and reception. In the language use, writing is the act of combining symbols into meaningful words and sentences. Symbols are arranged in certain conventions to form words. These words represent thoughts and expressions into meaningful forms.

Good writing skills by converting them allow you to communicate with clarity and ease. Through it, the message would be conveyed clearly. Continuous learning and practice makes you a proficient writer. Writing skills are not static but dynamic. It includes a mechanical process. The words can be written by hand or typed. In both, the spelling should be correct and proper punctuation should be used.

If the handwritten copy is not readable, the message cannot be decoded. Similarly, if the spellings are misplaced or wrong, the meaning may change. The tone of the text is also very important. The punctuation should be correctly placed; otherwise the meaning can be misread.

Writing should be legible and logical. The written communication or addresses a larger group of audience than face to face or telephonic conversations. The prior knowledge and expertise in vocabulary will help you imminently in the writing process.

The writing process includes five steps. Let’s discuss them in detail.

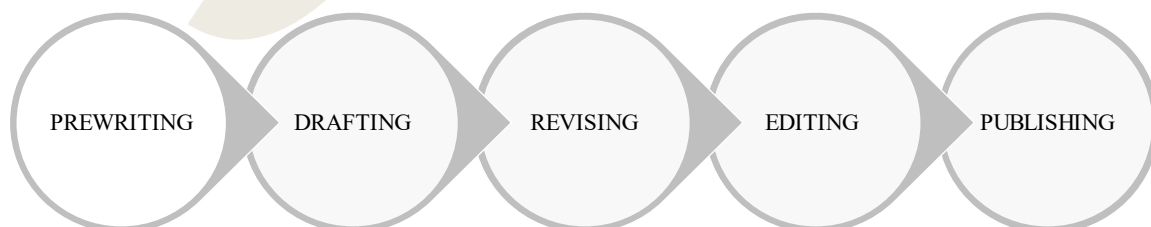


Fig 1.3.7 Steps involved in writing process

Let us briefly expand each of these steps:

Prewriting:

- ▶ Organise your topic
- ▶ Brainstorm your ideas
- ▶ Collect data

Drafting:

- ▶ Create a rough copy
- ▶ Arrange your ideas
- ▶ Get feedback on your topic

Revising:

- ▶ Improve your writing
- ▶ Check your vocabulary
- ▶ Spell check

Editing

- ▶ Proofread your work
- ▶ Make sure the written document is original

Publishing

- ▶ Create a clean and final copy

1.3.4.1 Writing Sentences

The basic building blocks of written communication are the sentences. A sentence is a combination of words arranged according to certain grammatical rules. A sentence is used to express your thought in the form of a statement or it can be a request, a question, command or an emotion.

There are four types of sentences in the English Language:

- ▶ Declarative or Assertive sentences

The declarative sentences convey information. They make affirmative or negative sentences.

For example: This is my pen.

This is not my pen.

- ▶ Interrogative sentences

Interrogative sentences are used for asking questions or information. These sentences end with a question mark.

For example: Would you like a cup of tea?

- ▶ Imperative sentences

Imperative sentences are used to issue orders, instruct, make requests, or to give advice.

For example: Give me the pen.

Open the door.

Please buy me a cake.

- ▶ Exclamatory sentences

Exclamatory sentences are used to express strong feelings or emotions. These sentences will end with an exclamation mark.

For example: You are so pretty!

1.3.4.2 How to write paragraphs

A paragraph contains a few sentences relating to a particular idea or topic. The central idea of the paragraph would be tuned with topic of the entire text of document. In a well written paragraph, all sentences would be connected to each other. The sentences that follow the topic statement should substantiate the topic. The last paragraph of an article should sum up the whole idea of the content.

The topic sentence comes at the very beginning and the conclusion comes at last. A paragraph should be comprehended completely in isolation. The order of sentences within the paragraph is very important. One sentence should naturally lead to the other. If a sentence is incorrect, the whole paragraph would become ineffective or simply wrong.

1.3.4.3 Parts of a paragraph

The following method is usually employed while writing a paragraph:



- Topic sentence:
 - It is the first sentence of the paragraph.
 - It shows the main idea of the sentence.
 - It tells us about what the paragraph is about.
- Supporting sentences:
 - They develop the topic idea presented in the topic sentence.
 - They give more information about the topic and develop the paragraph.
 - They give more data through examples, charts and diagrams.
- Concluding sentence
 - It is the last sentence of the paragraph.
 - It restates the topic sentence.
 - It also summarises the main point in the topic.

1.3.5 Cultural Awareness

In American culture, it is acceptable to give flowers to the hostess of a dinner party. The social act of giving flowers may not be accepted in any other country. To understand our social surroundings where we live is important. It develops our culture. It differs from place to place.

In addition to the basic communication skills (listening, speaking, Reading and Writing), we can add one more skill. This fifth skill is cultural awareness. Culture is an integral part of language instruction. To teach about culture is different from learning vocabulary and grammar.

Culture is fluid and cannot be defined whereas vocabulary and grammar are concrete. Culture as the fifth skill stresses the learner's ability to distinguish, understand, and ultimately accept cultural relativity.

Cultural awareness as a fifth skill of communication refers to a set of following abilities:

- ▶ The ability to perceive and recognize cultural differences. ("Oh, so that is how you are supposed to give flowers in Russia!")
- ▶ The ability to accept cultural differences. ("From now on, I must remember to give an odd number of flowers.")
- ▶ The ability to appreciate and value cultural differences. ("Isn't it interesting that the number of flowers holds significance!")

1.3.6 Bilingualism

We learn to speak our mother tongue from home and our second language from school. In India, we learn English and Hindi or other languages along with our mother tongue. We can also learn other foreign languages by taking special coaching. The use of two languages in teaching, especially to foster learning in students, is the part of a bilingual system.

Bilingualism means our ability to speak two languages. It is acquired early by children in the regions where adults speak two languages or more like the use of Malayalam and English in a Malayali household. The ability to speak two or more languages is called Multilingualism.

Advocates of bilingual education argue that it accelerates learning in all subjects and allows students from marginalised communities to feel integrated in the formal education system.

Translation plays an important role in a bilingual or multilingual society. Translation is not changing languages from one to another, it is more than that. It can construct bridge between two languages. It allows you to experience different cultural phenomena which

would otherwise be foreign to us.

Skilful translators are needed for translations. Translators require to possess a thorough understanding of both the source language and its culture, and the target language and its culture. They can use more words, or change the wording of a whole paragraph, but should stick to the meaning of the original. Then, you can begin to understand foreign concepts that have been bridged over to your native tongue.

In this age of advanced technological interventions in our day-to-day life, we turn to technology so that language problems can be solved. In a situation where two people do not speak a common language, they can turn to Google Translate (<https://translate.google.co.in/?sl=auto&tl=fr&op=translate>) to understand the meaning of other's sentences.

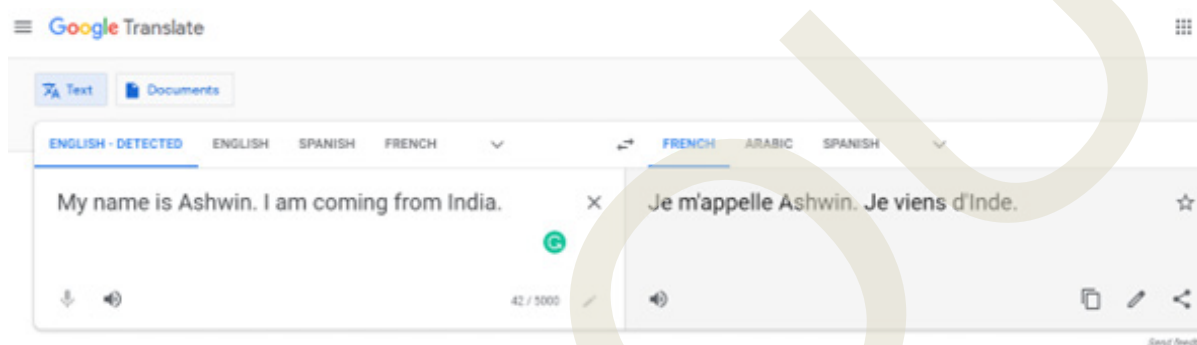


Fig 1.3.8 English to French translation using Google Translate

Language is the expression of culture, society and beliefs. We express even the minute details of our daily life through language. Thousands of cultures exist around the world and so many languages. Most people express their emotions, thoughts, and feelings more

effectively in their native language than other languages. Even if you are an expert in another language, your mother tongue may stand as a stronger vehicle to express your emotions.

Recap

- ▶ There are four basic communication skills - Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing
- ▶ Listening - Active and passive listening
- ▶ Speaking - Formal and informal
- ▶ Reading - Skimming and scanning
- ▶ Different stages of writing - Prewriting, Drafting, Revising, Editing and Publishing
- ▶ Significance of cultural awareness in communication
- ▶ Bilingualism is the ability to speak two languages
- ▶ Multilingualism is the ability to speak more than two languages

Objective Questions

1. What are the four basic skills for communication?
2. What is a quick reading to get the essence called?
3. What is the fifth skill necessary for communication?
4. What is the ability to speak more than two languages called?
5. In which stage of writing do you brainstorm your ideas?
6. Give an example of a formal request.
7. What kind of a conversation is this?
Tom: Hey, wassup?
John: I am dog-tired
8. What is the type of listening that needs voluntary effort from the part of the listener called?
9. Which is the final stage of writing?
10. Name the process of converting a text from a source language to a target language.

Answers

1. Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing
2. Skimming
3. Cultural awareness
4. Multilingualism
5. Prewriting
6. I would be grateful if you could lend me your book.
7. Informal
8. Active listening
9. Publishing
10. Translation

Assignments

1. Read a story or poem of your choice. Prepare comprehension questions for the same.
2. Listen to a novel in audio format, and write down the major themes in it.
3. Construct a dialogue between friends who have been in far off places for study. Enact the scene with the help of a friend.

Suggested Reading

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Significance of English as a Global Language

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ become aware of the importance of learning English language
- ▶ acquaint themselves with the variety of English used in India
- ▶ enhance their knowledge on the global role of English, English as lingua franca, and as an international language
- ▶ gain insight into the inhibitions non-English speakers face while communicating in English
- ▶ channelise their interest into communicating in English

Prerequisites

An urban tea shop. The owner greets customers in Malayalam, Hindi, and English. A group of foreign tourists struggle to order chai, gesturing wildly. Meanwhile, a local businessman conducts a heated phone call, switching effortlessly between Malayalam and English. In the corner, a student pores over an English textbook, mouthing words silently.

This scene encapsulates the complex linguistic landscape of modern India, where English plays a pivotal role as a bridge language. But how did a tongue from a small European island become a global lingua franca?

The story begins with British colonialism, which spread English across vast swathes of the globe. In India, English arrived as the language of governance and commerce, gradually permeating education and literature. Post-independence, many former colonies, including India, retained English as an official or link language, a decision born of practical necessity in multilingual societies.

The rise of American and European economic and cultural power in the 20th century, followed by globalisation and the digital revolution, further cemented English's global status. It became the dominant language of international business, diplomacy, academia, and the internet.

In India, English evolved from a colonial import to a tool of empowerment and opportunity. It serves as a bridge across the country's linguistic diversity and is often seen as a ticket to better education and employment prospects.

However, the dominance of English is not without controversy. Critics argue it marginalises local languages and perpetuates social inequalities. The emergence of “New Englishes”, like Indian English, challenges traditional notions of linguistic correctness.

Keywords

Global language, Indian English, Communication

Discussion

1.4.1 Significance of English as a Global Language

Let us imagine a situation. You belong to Kerala and study in a university in your home State. During your summer vacation, you wish to visit Paris. You booked your tickets, boarded the flight to Paris and reached the city. What will you do when you step out of the airport? You have to find a place to stay. To reach there, you have to take a cab. How will you communicate to the cab driver whose mother tongue is French? Once you reach a hotel where you can stay, how will you communicate to the receptionist there, whose mother tongue is French again? Now, imagine that you, the cab driver, as well as the receptionist are comfortable speaking in English. Does that make any difference in handling the situation given above? You will be able to talk to the cab driver as well as the receptionist in English. They will also be able to understand you and respond to you easily. What is the reason for the difference here? When you have a common language in which you can talk to each other, communication becomes easier. Similar is the situation when you have to travel to any part of the world. English is the common language that

is known to many for various historical reasons. So, English is considered to be a global language.

What do you mean by a global language? Why is English considered the global language? Global language is the language that is widespread all across the globe geographically and makes communication possible for people belonging to different language groups. It is best explained by the Latin phrase '*lingua franca*' which means a common language that can bridge the gap between two persons having different language backgrounds. In today's world, English is learned and spoken across countries by people of almost all linguistic communities. English is taught as the second language in schools in many countries across the world. Moreover, English is easier to learn compared to other languages in the world. It has just twenty six alphabets. Thus, English, as a language, creates equity among people belonging to different language and cultural backgrounds, in terms of communication. The internet and the spread of technology have also contributed to the spread of English.

The status of English as a global language can be traced back to the history of colonisation. It is in the sixteenth century that Britain



began to establish its colonies in other countries. According to them, they were civilized people who had the responsibility of civilizing all other people across the world. They termed it “the white man’s burden”. They went around the globe and created their colonies and imposed their culture, which they found superior to all, onto the people there. The British Empire also imposed their native language, English, on the countries where they established their colonies. This is the beginning of the spread of English language. Gradually, English was introduced in schools and in handling official matters. The native people of these countries got familiarised with the language. Even after the British left them in the wake of their independence from the British, the effect of English continued in their culture. English has created a huge impact in the post-colonial world.

In this era of globalisation, English has become even more important. Imagine that you are a businessman. To expand your profit, you wish to open branches of your business product in different countries around the world. When you have to deal with a client in Japan, you will have to learn Japanese. Similarly, if the client is from Germany, you will have to learn German. Is it possible for you to learn so many languages in a short span of time? If not, you will find it difficult to communicate. Now, imagine that there is a common language known to everyone across the world. Does that make things any different? Yes, you will be able to communicate to anyone around the world by learning just one language. Today, nobody is confined to their home country. People go to foreign countries to study and work and also for tourist purposes. We are all familiar with international organisations like World Health Organisation, United Nations, International monetary Fund, World Trade Organisation and scores of others. India, like many other

countries are members of these organisations. For handling their official matters, they need an official language. English has solved the problem.

Consider this from the point of view of a student. Your access to the renowned universities across the world depends on your knowledge of English. To travel to any foreign country, you need to pass exams like IELTS or TOEFL, where your proficiency in English language will be checked. Also, these universities may provide online contents, which will again be in English. There are scientific journals and plenty of other international magazines that can enrich your knowledge across disciplines. They also use English as their language since it will help most of the people to access it. Similarly, if you are a research scholar and want to publish an article, if you choose to write it in English, people across the world can access your ideas. If you want to read something for leisure, there are a plethora of novels, stories, dramas or poems available in English. Films and music in English is enjoyed by people of all language communities. English, as the global language, can solve the problem of communication barrier and can take up the role of a bridge that can connect people across the world in different fields like business, economics, education, international relations, science, trade and tourism and entertainment, among other things.

1.4.2 Communication in English

We are familiar with communication as we have discussed it in detail in the first unit. In order to express one’s thoughts through speaking and writing, there is a need for a language. People around the world use different languages to communicate with one another. We have seen that English is the language that is widely used by people to communicate. We have also seen the significance of English as a

global language. So, communication in English is essential to us as global citizens.

Let us consider an instance. In our day to day life, we depend on the internet for many things. Whenever we need help in understanding anything, we seek the help of the internet. When you open your laptop or mobile phone and use the internet, which is the language that you find there? Most of the time, it is English. Why is it so? The simple reason for it is the global language status of English. The Internet can provide us with information in our mother tongue or any of the regional languages. But most of the information will be available in English. Most of the data stored in the internet is in English. Once we know English language, the scope for getting information on any topic on the internet expands.

Now, consider another instance. When you buy a product from the market, for example, a mobile phone, you will get a user manual along with it. This provides us with the instructions regarding how to use the mobile phone. Have you ever paid attention to the instructions given in such a user guide? In which language are they given? Most of the time, it will again be in English. Even when it is given in other languages, it is certain that it will be given in English too.

From the above discussed situations, the need to be equipped with communication skills in English is clear. Since it is the language widely accepted across the world, communication in English becomes essential. Even within India, English stands as a common language for people who belong to different states.

1.4.3 English in India

In a multilingual country like India, language becomes a barrier to communication. When India got independence in 1947, the country was divided into states based on lan-

guage. And, different states in India have different languages as their mother tongue as well as official language - like Malayalam in Kerala, Tamil in Tamil Nadu, Assamese in Assam, Telugu in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarati in Gujarat, Punjabi in Punjab, etc. Living in a country with such a huge variety of languages is not easy. When you have to travel from one part of the country to another, you will face the problem of communicating. How can this problem be addressed? Here is the need for a common language. Hindi is the language that is spoken by the majority in India. But when it comes to a common language for all, English is preferred by people across the country. People belonging to the south Indian states prefer English over Hindi when they need a common language to communicate. This can be seen as the effect of India being a colony of the British before gaining independence. We have already seen the role colonisation had in spreading English language across the world. During the British rule, English was used for official purposes and was also taught as a second language in Indian schools. As a result, English language became familiar to the people of India. Now, English is the official language of Indian judiciary as well as some of the States and Union Territories in India.

The official status of English in India can be seen as the effect of colonialism but the adoption of English as a common language is more or less the effect of globalisation. Since globalisation, people across nations started interacting with each other. In the case of India, the strength of the Indian Diaspora expands every day. People from India, travel to English speaking countries for better job and educational opportunities. People who take travel as a profession acquire proficiency in English so that communication becomes easier for them anywhere in the world.

We have already learned about bilingualism



in Unit 3. A person who is bilingual has fluency in two languages. Have you ever heard of the term ‘Manglish’? While using social media, you type malayalam words using English alphabets, a kind of transliteration. At least once, you might have used this term to refer to the language that you use. What does it exactly mean? This is an example of hybrid language or “chutnification”, a language that is a hybrid of Malayalam and English. There are many such hybrid languages in India, combinations of English and an Indian language. For example, Hinglish (Hindi and English), Tanglish (Tamil and English), Kanglish (Kannada and English), Tenglish (Telugu and English), Punglish (Punjabi and English) and so on. Indian English is a variety of English spoken by Indians. There are a variety of Indian Englishes that you can find in different parts of the country. A person from Tamil Nadu speaks English differently from a person from Punjab. The influence of the local language comes in when Indians speak English. So, when a Hindi speaking person talks in English, he pronounces words similar to the way in which he pronounces Hindi, his mother tongue. So, people in India speak an Indianised version of English. English has become a language which can be appropriated according to the linguistic culture of the people who speak it.

1.4.4 The Inhibited Introvert

While communicating, what are the problems that we face? When we communicate in a public sphere, sometimes we tend to stammer or stutter. Such problems mostly occur because of psychological problems related to lack of confidence as we lack fluency in English language. Considering the problems that affect an individual’s communication practice, we can divide it into different categories- physical, social and economic. Psychological barriers manifest as physical.

Physical barriers that people have in communication are lisping, stammering, stuttering, deafness, etc. Such barriers affect users of foreign language especially since it is not their native tongue. This is the reason why we lack fluency in the language. Since the language is foreign to the user, he or she has acquired it and hence takes time to master the language

Social barriers might arise from the presence or company of more skilled individuals. There arises a social divide among people with regard to their proficiency in using the English language. A person educated in the vernacular may know English as a second language but will be diffident in using English in the company of English medium educated peers. This creates a barrier for them to communicate in English with comfort.

When we come to the **economic barriers**, English is seen as a language of prestige. One’s social position is questioned based on his or her English speaking skills. People from economically challenged backgrounds will be inhibited because of this.

All the above mentioned factors inhibit people from English language without fear and makes a person an introvert. Now, how to overcome inhibition? There are many methods to do this. One is to **practice on one’s own**. Since we all have mobile phones now-a-days, we can easily record our own voice. We can hear it again and understand our mistakes. We correct them ourselves and improve. Another one is **non-correctional method**. This involves encouraging fluency at first, without correcting mistakes. The mistakes they make are not corrected immediately as it will lead to inhibition. Instead, their mistakes are noted and corrected later. In this way, inhibition can be avoided and their language can be improved as well. **Peer practice** is the next way to counter inhibition. It is all about creating avenues to use English

in peer groups, without the obtrusive presence of a teacher or an adult. People can thus review themselves in the group and improve themselves. Exposure to the language can also help to avoid inhibition. Exposure in virtual as well as real modes can help one enhance one's language and improve the communication skills.

1.4.5 Literature as a Creative Application of Language

We all are familiar with the term literature. Every language has its own literature to claim. What is literature? How is it different from common language? While looking at these questions, let us observe something that we are very familiar with. Have you ever come across a blog? While using the internet to search of information, we come across certain platforms

known as blogs. It is in platforms like these that people post their creative writings and their ideas about different subjects. This is one of many examples of literature. People use social media platforms for creative application of language. One such platform is blogs. Thus, literature can be observed as the creative application of language. Literature is different from the common language because it is creative and captivating. It grabs the attention of the reader and makes language all the more interesting. Users of English can attempt production of literature through scaffolded practice such as story building, paraphrasing, translation, etc. All these come under the creative applications of English language. This can help an individual improve his or her proficiency and fluency in the language as well as overcome inhibition.

Recap

- ▶ Global language: language learned and spoken all around the world
- ▶ English as the global language to bridge the communication gap among people across countries
- ▶ English facilitates communication around the globe in the fields of business, economics, education, international relations, science, trade and tourism, entertainment, etc.
- ▶ English functions as the common language for communication in the multilingual culture of India
- ▶ Hybrid language: A Mixture of two languages. E.g. Manglish, Hinglish, Tanglish, Kanglish, Punglish, etc.
- ▶ Inhibition: Barriers that keep you from communicating freely and comfortably in a foreign tongue. It might be physical, social or economic.
- ▶ Methods to tackle inhibition: practice on one's own, non-correctional method, peer practice and exposure

Objective Questions

1. What is the Latin phrase that refers to a common language?
2. Considering the native speakers, which is the most spoken language in the world?
3. What is the term used for fluency in two languages?
4. What is a language that is a mixture of two different languages called?
5. What is the term used for the English spoken by native Indians?
6. Name the hybrid language formed by the following pair of languages-
 - a. Kannada and English
 - b. Punjabi and English
 - c. Hindi and English
 - d. Tamil and English
7. What are the physical barriers that might arise while communicating in a foreign tongue?
8. Name the method to overcome inhibition where one is encouraged to speak in English and his or her mistakes are not corrected immediately but later.
9. What type of barrier does obstructs people of financially low backgrounds from communicating in English?
10. Which method in learning English does include help from peer groups?

Answers

1. Lingua franca
2. Mandarin
3. Bilingualism
4. Hybrid language
5. Indian English
6.
 - a. Kangleish
 - b. Punglish
 - c. Hinglish
 - d. Tanglish
7. Lipping, stammering, stuttering, deafness
8. Non-correctional method
9. Economic background
10. Peer practice

Assignments

1. How did English evolve to become the global language? Write an essay in not less than 300 words.
2. What role does English play in the world of globalisation? How does it help to enhance the process of globalisation?
3. Write an essay about the introduction and spread of English language in India and the role of colonialism in spreading the language.

Suggested Reading

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BLOCK - 02

**Receptive or
Passive Skills**



Learning to Listen

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ get an insight into the different types of process involved in listening
- ▶ delineate different types of listening
- ▶ define synchronous and asynchronous communication
- ▶ acquire details regarding listening etiquettes

Prerequisites

A bustling café. At one table, a group of students huddle around a laptop, watching an online lecture with headphones on. Nearby, two friends chat animatedly, their conversation punctuated by frequent glances at their mobile phones. At the counter, a barista carefully takes an order from a foreign tourist, both struggling to understand each other's accents.

This scene encapsulates the complex landscape of modern communication, where listening skills are both more crucial and more challenging than ever before. In our technology-driven world, we are constantly bombarded with information from multiple sources, making effective listening an increasingly valuable skill.

The evolution of communication technology has transformed how we interact and learn. From face-to-face conversations to video calls, from classroom lectures to online courses, the modes of communication have diversified. Yet, regardless of the medium, the ability to listen effectively remains fundamental to understanding and learning.

Listening is not merely hearing; it's an active process that involves comprehension, analysis, and response. In educational settings, good listening skills can mean the difference between grasping a concept and missing it entirely. In personal relationships, attentive listening fosters understanding and empathy. In professional contexts, it can lead to better decision-making and more productive collaborations.

However, the modern world presents numerous challenges to effective listening. Distractions abound, attention spans are tested, and the sheer volume of information can be overwhelming. Moreover, in multicultural environments like India, linguistic diversity adds another layer of complexity to the listening process.

Keywords

Listening, Synchronous communication, Listening etiquettes, Learning skills



Discussion

2.1.1 Learning to Listen

We hear many things, but most of them just pass through us. As the saying goes, it enters through one ear and exits through the other. When that happens, we are involved in passive listening. We assume that our brain will capture the important part and that we will be able to reproduce it later, whenever needed. This is not always the case and a lot gets lost in communication. To ensure effective communication, active listening is crucial.

An active listener can improve his/her listening skills with practice, which will also improve his/her interpersonal relationships. If you practice active listening, it will also allow you to recollect and retrieve important information readily.

An active listener concentrates on the speaker and shows curiosity in the conversation. He/she will convey response to the speaker as well. In interpersonal communication, being a good listener is important. It will also help to improve your leadership qualities.

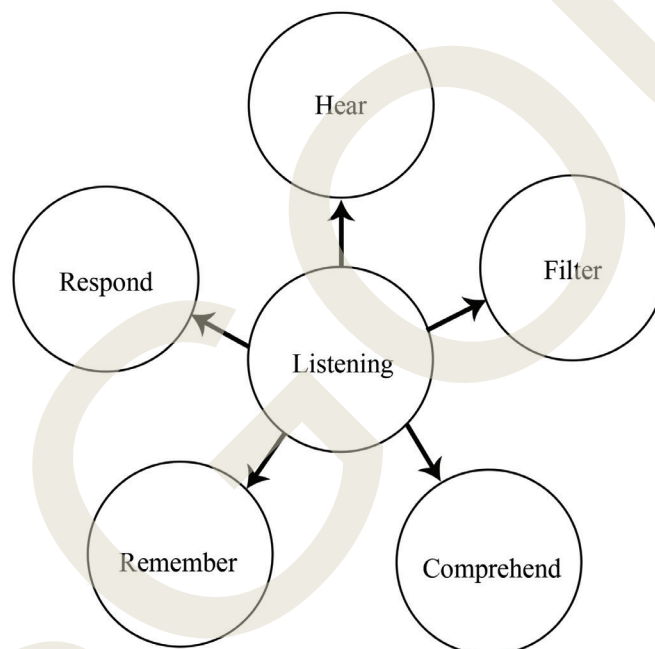


Fig 2.1.1 Steps involved in listening

Let us break down the listening process into its five constituent steps. Understanding each of these steps allows you to fine tune and improve the process of listening.

- Hear:
 - The first essential step is hearing. Hearing is the process of perceiving sound. To begin to listen, we have

to pay attention and concentrate on what the speaker is saying.

- Filter:
 - In this process, we pay attention to or concentrate on the words we need and filter out those that we do not need to process the information. Filtering out the essential content that is relevant for us is a nuanced

skill. We also need to be non-judgmental about the speaker.

- ▶ Comprehend :
 - Once you select the relevant content, understand the retained message from your perspective. Absorb and assimilate the content.
- ▶ Remember:
 - While hearing a lecture, you absorb the content and store the content in your memory for future use. This storage is not for immediate response, but for future use. In face-to-face communication, the response will be immediate so this is often remembered only for a short duration until or unless it is needed in the future.
- ▶ Respond:
 - This is the last step of the listening process. Giving feedback on what you understood from what you heard. Here we can ask questions and clarify your doubts.

Listening is so important because good listening is an easy way to connect with people and build relationships. Active listening is the opposite of passive listening. Both the speaker and the listener have an impact on the advantages of active listening.

The person you are talking to will be technically listening but they are tuned out, on autopilot and not mentally engaged with what you are saying. And as a speaker, it can be very dissatisfying and discouraging when people are not really paying attention. Here, there are chances for miscommunication to take place.

The emotions of the listener are also important. The listener should be in a mood to listen to the speaker. The communication will be suc-

cessful only when the sender and the receiver are ready to speak and listen.

When you pay attention to the speaker, we can build a bond between the speaker and the listener. Attentive listening makes for better working conditions and a better life. It can reduce miscommunication, resolve conflicts, and create an encouraging work station.

We listen to many things. We talk to people, listen to music, and listen to lectures, audios, movies, and so on. Other than just conversations, we listen to many more things around us. We listen to different types of sounds.

Let us discuss some types of listening.

▶ Appreciative Listening

We listen to music, poetry, podcasts and other audio. This is for your pleasure, and there is no pressure on you to listen. We often listen to music for enjoyment. We may or may not pay attention to the words. This is appreciative listening.

▶ Comprehensive Listening

When you are learning, you listen to comprehend the content of the audio. We try to learn from our teacher or instructor through observation. In a lecture class, we take notes for future reference. Here we try to comprehend the ideas into main points and sub points. This is called comprehensive listening.

▶ Empathetic Listening

We listen to the emotions of our fellow beings. Talking to our family and friends connects us with emotions. The more we listen, the better the relationship will be.

▶ Critical Listening

Critical Listening occurs when we are listening to scrutinize a message and pick something apart. Here we listen to the things that matter the most.



► Active Listening

Active listening involves responding to what somebody just said. You ask a question, they respond and you give an informed response to them. In this conversation Sumit is responding to Amit's questions. Both of them are involved in the conversation. Amit is asking questions

based on his previous knowledge about scuba diving. The listening is active. Sumit is also responsible for replying to Amit.

If the conversation was like this, it would have been an incomplete conversation. Read the following conversation.

Read the conversation below

Amit : Hello

Sumit : Hey Amit!

Amit: What have you been up to lately?

Sumit: I went diving last weekend.

Amit: Wow, I didn't know you were into diving. How did you start diving?

Sumit: My friend from Lakshadweep introduced me. It is an exciting experience. To go underwater and interact with the environment.

Amit: Were you trained by a certified scuba trainer?

Sumit: Yes. I was trained under a certified instructor, and now I'm a scuba trainer.

Amit: Congratulations. Can you take me scuba diving?

Sumit: Sure. Come to the scuba diving club tomorrow at 5 p.m.

Amit: Thank you. See you tomorrow.

Sumit: Bye. See you.

Amit : Hello

Sumit : Hey Amit!

Amit: What have you been up to lately?

Sumit: I am into diving.

Amit:ok fine! Can you borrow your physics notes?

Sumit: My friend from Lakshadweep introduced me to diving. It is one of the most exciting experiences. To go underwater and interact with the environment.

Amit: When can I meet you?

Sumit: Yes.

Amit: Can you take me scuba diving?

Sumit: bye. See you.

Amit: Thank you. See you tomorrow.

In verbal communication, active listening is important. The listener would ask good questions and respond according to the speaker's message. And they let the speaker fully answer it.

Like a therapist, we should listen to the speaker carefully. And we can reply with small utterances like *I hear you, yeah, that makes sense* or making sound like *Mm, Ah*. These utterances keep us engaged and show the other person that we are following the words.

Active listening involves non-verbal communication. They are:

► **Eye contact**

The Listener should look into the eyes of the speaker. In face to face communication, if you look into the eyes of the speaker, they will be more confident that you are listening to them.

- 'Listen with your eyes' notice what is happening to the person's mood or emotion. Do they look nervous, frustrated, or annoyed?

► **Body posture**

It should be open and oriented. Here, one should observe the speaker's non-verbal cues.

The key is to respond to what they have just said. What you should not do is look at them blankly and not react. Do not sit with a stone face. It is not active listening. Respond to the speaker whenever appropriate.

Keep the focus on them and let them talk. This is going to be all about the speaker, so don't jump to your conclusions or change over to your favorite subject. Eventually, once they finish talking, you can speak.

By developing these qualities, you can improve your listening skills as well. Application of a synchronous communication strategy

will improve speaking ability by focusing on vocabulary and fluency. This can help in building self-confidence.

2.1.2 Listening skills in synchronous communication

What is synchronous and asynchronous communication? If you email your friend, it will take time for him/her to reply to you. Until they see your email and reply to you, you will be waiting for the reply. This is asynchronous communication. In other words, asynchronous communication is communication that does not take place in real time. As a result, responses may be delayed. If you are having a video conference, it is a live interaction with the person on the other side, this is synchronous communication. In other words, when communication can only be exchanged in real time, this is referred to as synchronous communication. It necessitates the presence of both the transmitter and the receiver at the same time and/or space.

In a video conference, you can talk to the other person and get immediate replies. It connects people in real time.

Online learning systems can provide synchronous and asynchronous learning environments. Real-time interaction is synchronous; it requires simultaneous student and teacher presence. Direct interaction with teachers and students is like face-to-face communication in the classroom. Distance is not a barrier in this method as the internet helps connect you simultaneously from anywhere.

Asynchronous interactions are not time-bound and they can work from anywhere and are accessible to the materials at any time needed. Audio/video lectures, articles, power point presentations, and handouts can be accessed anytime.



Let's differentiate synchronous and asynchronous interactions.

Synchronous

- ▶ Users are connected at the same time
- ▶ It is a real time conversation
- ▶ Only limited participants can join
- ▶ Based on virtual connection platforms like google meet, zoom etc.
- ▶ Oral form
- ▶ Spontaneous
- ▶ It is not lasting, it is not permanent
- ▶ Reaches the receiver immediately
- ▶ Eg: Video chat, Video conferencing

Asynchronous

- ▶ Users are not connected at the same time
- ▶ Delayed conversations
- ▶ Numerous participants
- ▶ Written format
- ▶ It is permanent and can be revis-

ited later.

- ▶ Information transmission is slow
- ▶ Eg: Social network Facebook, Instagram, Discussion groups, Notice boards

There are several varieties of synchronous and asynchronous tools available for education. This can help the learner be part of various activities. There are advantages and disadvantages to both, and a combination of these two often proves to be most effective.

Listening Etiquettes

Etiquettes refers to certain rules that you should follow for effective listening. Don't you feel irritated when you are talking to someone and they are not listening to you? Yes, you will feel that they are not responding to you as you need.

When you are interrupting a conversation, begin with "I am sorry to interrupt". If someone is praising you for good listener, do not forget to thank them.

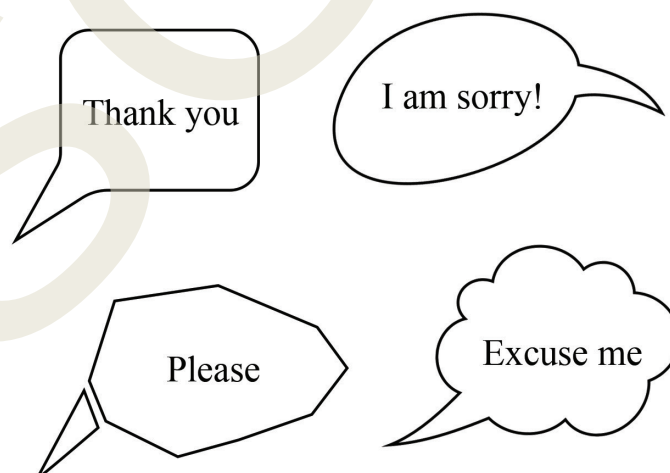


Fig 2.1.2 Some phrases to use while listening

Above are a few words that can improve your communication skills.

While listening, you have to maintain certain body postures and non-verbal cues to make sure that you are concentrating on the listening process. We often get distracted while listening, and there is a chance of you slipping from active listening to passive listening mode. To avoid that, let us learn some tips for active listening.

- ▶ Show people that they matter. Give importance to the speaker, let them speak. Listen through the whole conversation and then reply when they are expecting you to talk.
- ▶ Do not speak in between; that may interrupt the thought process of the speaker. Listen to understand, and not to respond. Don't be judgmental and argue your opinion with the speaker while they are talking.
- ▶ Our physical appearance conveys details about us. It conveys whether you are interested in the conversation or not.
- ▶ Clarity of the speaker is also important. If you are not able to follow the speaker, excuse yourself and ask them to repeat. For example "Pardon me, can you repeat the last sentence? It was unclear."
- ▶ If you are going to attend a lecture class, make sure to arrive on time. Be seated before the speaker comes in.
- ▶ Do not enter or leave the lecture hall during the lecture.
- ▶ Feedback is an important factor. Include the positive and negative aspects of the presentation, and include your recommendations in

the feedback.

- ▶ Show that you are listening to the speaker with an open body posture. Sit erect while facing the speaker.
- ▶ Take lecture notes. Write down valuable information that may be useful in the future.
- ▶ Avoid using mobile phones and laptops during the lecture. Turn your mobile phone into silent mode or vibration mode.
- ▶ Do not eat during the presentation. Wait till the presentation is over.

Tips to improve your listening

- Stay focused on the speaker and topic
- Identify the emotion of the speaker
- Ask questions
- Feedback is necessary
- Use polite words
- Maintain eye contact

Lecture Etiquette, things not to do

- Do not interrupt the speaker
- Do not be judgmental
- Do not be disturbed by external factors like mobile phone
- Do not speak to others while someone is talking to you
- Do not barge into a conversation

2.1.3 Problems affecting the learning

We know that even if we try to concentrate on speech, lecture, or class, there will be certain problems affecting our learning. The problems affecting our learning will be the social background; there can be emotional or



physical barriers. Learning disabilities affect our learning process. Difficulty in reading and writing can be a cause of ineffective learning.

Social and cultural backgrounds can affect our learning process. Peer pressure can change your enthusiasm to learn. Also, those coming from a financially poor background will be pressured to earn money rather than give importance to education. Lack of access to information due to age or finances, inability to travel for education are all barriers to learning.

Lack of confidence in their own skill and negative experiences in the learning process can affect one's interest in education. They won't be interested in learning due to their previous experiences. These are emotional barriers. Unidentified learning disabilities are also an emotional barriers.

2.1.3.1 Learning disability

Learning disabilities may be due to genetic or neurobiological factors causing difficulties in learning. These problems can interfere with basic learning skills such as reading, writing or working with numbers. These symptoms can be diagnosed during school.

Learning disabilities should not be confused with learning problems related to visual, hearing, emotional, or mental disabilities. People with learning disabilities may have low or high intelligence. Learning disability is an umbrella term used for a number of other difficulties.

Types of learning disabilities

- ▶ **Dyscalculia:** It is the difficulty in learning with numbers.
- ▶ **Dysgraphia:** when someone finds it difficult to write, a problem that affects a person's handwriting ability is called dysgraphia.
- ▶ **Non-verbal learning disability-** finding difficulty in coordinating

facial expression and body language is called non-verbal learning disability.

- ▶ **Oral/written language disorder-** when a person finds it difficult to understand what they read. This is called Specific reading comprehension deficit.

First generation learner

In education there is always an external support system, which helps us in our growth. There are many illiterate families in the society. The first-generation students who receive education will not have any learning support from the family. As they are uneducated, the family members will not be able to support the first learner in the family.

Linguistic barrier

Everyone is, seemingly, fluent in speaking English. If the medium of education is English, as it is the globally accepted language, people who are not fluent in this language may find it difficult to understand. Students from varied backgrounds and those who use different mother tongues will not be able to follow the language.

Students who study in different countries for higher education and better opportunities often find it difficult to follow the pronunciation and tone of a new place. Sometimes they may also find it difficult to follow the language.

Physical barrier

The physical distance can also be a barrier. If the person has to travel long distances to learn, it will be difficult for them to continue their education. Transport facilities and finances can also be barriers to learning.

Technological unawareness

We are living in the age of technology. We use the internet and web pages for information. Education is more dependent on the internet. But everyone won't be able to access information and technology in the same way. Lack of technological awareness can also be a barrier to your learning.

Developing learning skills

Every action we take is the effect of our previous learning. A lot of learning happens throughout our life. For example, our experiences, meetings, newspapers, books, thinking, friends and colleagues. Learning is something that we do for ourselves. If we have the will to learn we can develop our personality.

Learning will help you develop your thinking process. If you are an enthusiast for learning new things, you need to make an effort to focus. Self-motivation can help you control yourself and learn new things.

To develop your learning skills, improve your

- ▶ **Communication skills-** Communication skills can be improved by working on your language skills. Developing your language will make it easier to communicate with others.
- ▶ **Thinking process-** Critical thinking and creative thinking will help you have a better perspective on the world around us. Always try to remember what you have learned. This can help in gaining long-term memory.
- ▶ **Research-** Do research on the topics of your interest. Research is simply the skill to gather the ex-

isting information on a topic and to comprehend or arrange them in a rational and logical manner.

- ▶ **Social interaction-** The people around us can teach us through their experiences. Social interaction can help you gain knowledge. Being part of forums, seminars, conferences, and other types of collective learning helps to master learning.
- ▶ **Self-management-** Organizing and disciplining yourself shows a desire to learn. Take notes in a journal. Make notes of your daily tasks. A good memory will help you learn more.
- ▶ **Remove obstacles-** Avoid all the distractions while learning. Take care to find a place where you won't be disturbed.
- ▶ **Keep yourself prepared-** Before going to class, read the topic that is going to be discussed or have an idea about what will be taught in the class.
- ▶ **Establish your learning style-** Everybody has their own style of learning; some people may read aloud, some might study by writing notes, etc. Identify your style of learning and practice to sharpen it.
- ▶ **Clarify your doubts-** While learning, if you have any questions in your mind regarding any of the topics being taught, write them down and clarify them, either with the help of the internet or with the help of your teacher.



Recap

- Active listening is crucial for effective communication to take place
- Active listening means giving attention to the speaker
- A good listener is essential in interpersonal communication
- Listening process can be divided into five constituent steps
- Hearing is the process of perceiving sound
- Filtering aids in distinguishing between important and non-essential information
- During comprehension a person will absorb and assimilate the information/content
- good listening is an easy way to connect with people and build relationships
- The emotions of the listener are also important
- Attentive listening makes for better working conditions and a better life
- In comprehensive listening one may try to comprehend the ideas into main points and sub points
- Critical listening occurs when we listen to scrutinize a message and pick something apart
- Active listening involves responding to what somebody just said
- Active listening is important in verbal communication
- Asynchronous communication is a communication that does not take place in real time
- Synchronous communication occurs when messages can only be exchanged in real time
- Online learning systems can provide synchronous and asynchronous learning environments
- Asynchronous interactions are not time-bound they can work from anywhere.
- Etiquette is a set of rules for effective listening.
- Social and cultural backgrounds can affect our learning process.
- Unidentified learning disabilities are also emotional barriers.
- A problem that affects a person's handwriting ability is called dysgraphia.
- Specific reading comprehension deficit is when a person struggles to understand what they read.

Objective Questions

1. What is crucial for effective communication?
2. What is important in interpersonal communication?
3. How many steps are involved in listening process?
4. What is the last step of listening process?
5. What type of listening does make for better working conditions and a better life?
6. What kind of listening does take place when you are learning something?
7. What kind of listening does occur when we listen to scrutinize a message and pick something apart?
8. What is the communication that does not take place in real time?
9. What is the communication that can only be exchanged in real time?
10. What kind of interactions are not time-bound?

Answers

1. Active listening
2. A good listener
3. Five steps
4. Respond
5. Attentive listening
6. Comprehensive listening
7. Critical listening
8. Asynchronous communication
9. Synchronous communication
10. Asynchronous interactions

Assignments

1. Explore the barriers in effective listening and measures to improve effective listening.
2. Differentiate between synchronous and asynchronous communication
3. How do one develop learning skills?
4. Explain the non-verbal cues that help active listening.
5. Explore the problems affecting effective learning.
6. Describe the steps in active listening.

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Unit 2

Listening Skills and the Media

Learning Outcomes

Upon the completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ detail the significance of listening as a key skill in learning the English language
- ▶ describe the use of media as a learning strategy for the development of listening skills
- ▶ identify various audio file formats for the transfer and storage of audio resources
- ▶ acquire familiarity with different online platforms that offer audio resources

Prerequisites

Imagine a crowded college canteen in Mumbai. A group of students huddle around a smartphone, watching an English movie with subtitles. Nearby, a young professional listens intently to a podcast on business communication. At another table, an aspiring singer hums along to a popular English song, trying to mimic the pronunciation.

This scene captures the evolving landscape of English language learning in India, particularly in developing listening skills. The journey from radio to internet has transformed how we engage with audio content, offering unprecedented opportunities for language learners.

While radio introduced the magic of disembodied voices, television added visual context to enhance comprehension. Now, the internet provides a vast array of audio and audio-visual resources, from YouTube tutorials to language learning apps, accessible anytime, anywhere.

For English learners in India, this digital revolution is a double-edged sword. On one hand, exposure to diverse accents, contexts, and content has never been easier. Learners can immerse themselves in English-language media, honing their listening skills in real-world contexts.

On the other hand, the abundance of content can be overwhelming. How does one choose the most effective resources? How can learners structure their listening practice for optimal improvement?

As we explore the intersection of listening skills and media, we'll examine how various digital platforms and audio formats can be leveraged for language learning. We'll consider strategies for effective listening practice using media resources, and discuss how technology can enhance this crucial language skill.

Keywords

Media, Audio and video learning, Listening through internet



The process of listening is complex, and involves a five-step process: hearing, filtering, comprehending, remembering, and responding (as explored in the previous unit). In practicing effective listening, we are required to understand and evaluate the information heard. While we may be able to do this efficiently in our first language, improving our listening skills in a foreign or second language like English requires an appropriate strategy. This is where the use of media such as radio broadcasts, videos, news broadcasts, films, documentaries, and songs can go a long way in improving listening skills.

How can we access media resources to improve and develop our listening ability in English? The term ‘media’ includes all platforms that we can listen and watch. In early times, the radio was a source of information, news, and entertainment. Being able to listen to conversations, interviews, plays, music, and broadcasts from different places was a wonderful experience then. No doubt that listening to different radio programmes allowed the audience/listeners to better their vocabulary and pronunciation.

Since radios rely on sound, this medium proved to be useful for the illiterate and the visually challenged sections of society. Though

the world introduced by the radio was accessible only through sound, the listener’s mind and imagination provided visuals to the content that came through the airwaves. Today, the radio has become increasingly portable and inexpensive, allowing it to cut across various barriers of learning.

After the era of radio, the television was invented as an audio-visual medium. It presented both sound and visual images, engaging the ears and eyes (sound and sight). Thus, the information conveyed in this medium is enriched with audio and visual aids, including images and written words. Further, the television could reach people in remote locations. Today, apart from normal programming, there are television channels aimed exclusively for educational purposes such as language learning.

With the invention of the computer and the internet there emerged a wide variety of platforms, websites, and apps through which people could be educated. Mobile phones further changed this scenario by making online educational resources even more accessible. For instance, one of the most popular websites of the twenty-first century is www.youtube.com. This webpage makes possible asynchronous communication, i.e. communication that

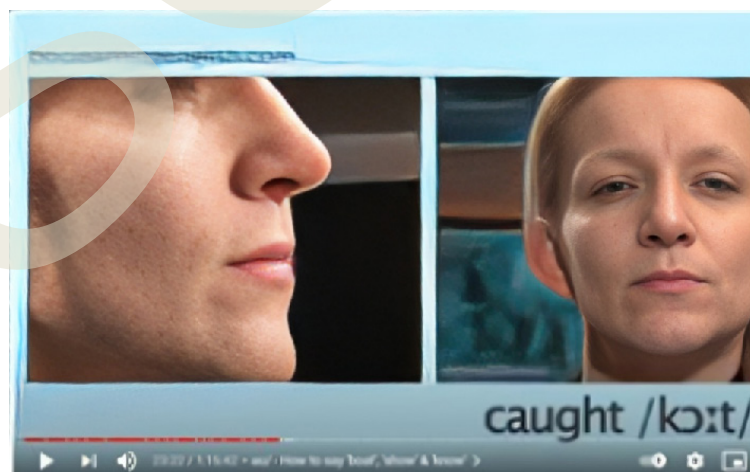


Fig 2.2.1 Screenshot from *bbclearningenglish.com*

doesn't happen in real-time.

Such media have changed the landscape of language education dramatically. Suppose you wish to learn about English speech sounds or pronunciation. You might go online and access the English learning webpage of the BBC, which provides a series of comprehensive videos where instructors demonstrate proper pronunciation. These videos were produced by the BBC at a particular time and place, and uploaded online; you, the learner, may make use of this facility at a time and place of your convenience. The development of digital technology has thus enhanced the facilities available for teaching the English language, and the core skill of listening along with it.

2.2.2 Digital Platforms

The internet is often referred to as the 'network of networks.' This is because of the vast amount of data and resources that become accessible over the internet. We can access any video, produced in any language or in any part of the world, from wherever we are. As

such, being able to listen to audio and audio-visual contents in English is a significant tool in developing key skills and acquiring proficiency in the language. Apart from regular media content that is available online, there are many digital platforms where educational resources for advancing listening skills are available.

2.2.2.1 YouTube

YouTube is an online audio-visual archive, or a digital collection of videos, that can be accessed from anywhere in the world. Listening to the audio/audio-visual content available in the platform allows learners to practise their pronunciation and improve vocabulary. There are also resources dedicated to the teaching of the English language. For instance, consider the following screenshot from a YouTube video (Fig.2). You can see that it is a resource for an English listening exercise. Such YouTube channels offer non-native learners different exercises and tips for the wholistic development of listening skills.



Fig. 2.1.2 Screenshot from a YouTube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxQUApA-2w4>.

2.2.2.2 Vimeo

Vimeo is a platform that is similar to YouTube, with an online collection of audio-visual content. It provides necessary access to educational material related to the development of

listening as a language skill. Being an asynchronous platform, the audio-visual media on Vimeo can be used according to the learners' convenience. Even videos uploaded for the purpose of entertainment, such as movies,

songs, and others, can be used as learning resources for improving one's listening skills.

2.2.2.3 TED

TED stands for Technology Entertainment Design. It is a global community where people from distinctive cultures come together to put forth their views for deeper understanding of the world. It was founded by Harry Marks in the year 1984. It began as a conference where Technology, Entertainment, and Design converged to mould exciting topics. However, today it covers almost all topics, from Science to Business, in more than 100 languages. TED also has a wonderful online platform that introduces to the world's most inspiring thinkers and free souls to the world. It is a room of thoughts, knowledge, and viewpoints.

Other than being a source of information and entertainment, TED Talks are an excellent tool for developing listening comprehension skills. English language learners can self-practice by listening to the audio-visual content and testing their ability to grasp pronunciation, vocabulary, and concepts. The diversity and varying levels of difficulty of the content allows the learners to continue improving their listening skills.

2.2.2.4 NPTEL

With the support of the government, the top universities and colleges in India have uploaded videos of their online classes. In fact, many foreign universities also possess digital resources through which some of their courses can be accessed remotely and for free. These platforms introduce learners to classes held in different universities across the country and across the world.

One such prominent national resource is the National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL), a joint university-level venture by the Indian Institutes of Science

and Indian Institutes of Technology. This initiative is funded by the Ministry of Human Resource and Development, Government of India. The main idea is to upload video lectures online, taught by the members of these institutes, which can be accessed by everyone. They have a YouTube channel which is publicly accessible.

On the one hand, NPTEL offers readily available resources for English language learning through tailored courses. On the other hand, the digital collection of lectures and classes are a ready source for practicing listening skills in a setting that is academic and technical.

2.2.2.5 Subtitled Videos

Another digital resource that is useful for listening practice is subtitled videos. When engaging with audio or audio-visual content in a foreign language, learners may find it difficult to follow the pronunciation and the ideas being presented. Subtitled content allows learners to self-test, verify their listening skills and correct themselves. Thus even though the content is not interactive, in that learners cannot ask questions or clear their doubts, such resources can go a long way in improving their language skills.

2.2.3 Audio Files: Transfer and Storage

Audio content for the practice of listening skills can be transferred and stored on different gadgets in specific file formats. Such formats used for accessing and storing audio data in the computer are referred to as Audio file formats. Audio coding formats are used for the storage or digital transmission of audio data such as digital television, digital radio, audio and video files. Some of the most popular examples of these are:

- MP3 – third audio format of MPEG

- ▶ AAC- advanced audio coding
- ▶ Vorbis - a free open software
- ▶ FLAC
- ▶ Opus
- ▶ LDAC

ble of encoding or decoding signals; an example of the same is LAME, which converts a digitalised WAV audio file into a MP3 format.

There are also audio codecs which are capa-

Recap

- ▶ Significance of practicing 'listening skills' using media
- ▶ Includes audio and audio-visual contents
- ▶ Media resources include radio, tv, computer, smart phones, internet etc.
- ▶ Asynchronous learning is possible
- ▶ Material prepared in one location and time can be accessed from another location and time
- ▶ Importance of digital technology in facilitating the development of listening and English language learning
- ▶ Digital Platforms contain learning resources for practicing and self-testing listening skills
- ▶ Such platforms include YouTube, Vimeo, TED, and NPTEL
- ▶ Subtitled videos are also vital learning tools- allows learners to self-practice, evaluate, and correct their listening skills
- ▶ The storage and transfer of audio resources for listening practice is possible through gadgets
- ▶ Audio file formats such as MP3, AAC, Vorbis, FLAC, Opus, and LDAC are used
- ▶ Audio codecs capable of encoding/decoding signals
- ▶ Eg: LAME which converts WAV audio format to MP3

Objective Questions

1. What are the five steps involved in the listening process?
2. Why was the radio useful for the illiterate and the visually-challenged sections of society?
3. Which senses are engaged by audio-visual media such as television?
4. What is asynchronous communication?
5. What is the internet referred to as?
6. What kind of resources are available in YouTube?
7. Which institutions jointly run NPTEL?

8. What are the advantages of subtitled videos?
9. What are Audio file formats?
10. Which audio codec can convert WAV audio files into MP3 format?

Answers

1. Hearing, filtering, comprehending, remembering, and responding
2. Because it relied on sound
3. Sound and Sight
4. Communication that doesn't happen in real-time
5. 'Network of networks'
6. Audio-visual
7. Indian Institutes of Science and Indian Institutes of Technology
8. Learners can self-test, verify their listening skills and correct themselves.
9. Formats used for accessing and storing audio data in the computer
10. LAME

Assignments

1. Develop a learning exercise for improving listening skills in English using any of the digital platforms discussed in the unit.
2. What role does media have in the development and improvement of listening as a key language skill in English?
3. Write a short note on the use of digital platforms for the betterment of listening skills in English.
4. Briefly mention the different audio file formats and codecs that are used for the transfer and storage of audio files.
5. Explore the impact of new media and social media in the learning of listening skills in English.

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Unit 3

Ready to Read

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ define the process of reading and its many purposes
- ▶ acquire details on different ways to enhance one's vocabulary
- ▶ describe the process of scanning and skimming in reading
- ▶ obtain details on decoding a dictionary

Prerequisites

Picture a library. A young student frowns over an English novel, pausing frequently to look up words in a well-worn dictionary. Nearby, a businesswoman skims through a newspaper, her eyes darting rapidly across the headlines. At a computer terminal, an elderly man slowly sounds out words from an online English learning course, his lips moving silently.

This scene encapsulates the diverse world of reading in modern India, where individuals at various stages of English proficiency engage with text in myriad ways. Reading, a fundamental skill in language acquisition, is far more complex than simply decoding symbols on a page.

For many Indians, reading in English presents unique challenges. Unlike their mother tongue, which they may have absorbed naturally from their environment, English often requires deliberate study and practice. The journey from recognizing letters to comprehending complex texts is a long one, fraught with obstacles but rich in rewards.

In our digital age, reading has evolved beyond books and newspapers. From social media posts to email, from online articles to e-books, the opportunities for reading are endless. This abundance of text brings both benefits and challenges. While it offers

unprecedented access to information and ideas, it also demands new skills - the ability to quickly sort through vast amounts of information, to critically evaluate sources, and to adapt reading strategies to different formats and purposes.

Moreover, in a multilingual society like India, reading in English often involves mental translation, cultural interpretation, and navigating between different scripts and language structures. This makes the process of reading not just a linguistic exercise, but a cognitive and cultural one as well.

Keywords

Reading , Vocabulary, Scanning, Skimming, Speed reading, Decoding the dictionary

Discussion

2.3.1 Ready To Read

If we find a pamphlet or if we get a message on our phone, what do we do? We try to read and understand them. Reading is one of the primary skills to be learned in a language. What do you mean by reading? Reading is the process by which one is able to comprehend the meaning of a written piece of work. In order to read something, we need to be familiar with the language. What is the base of a language? What do we do first when we start learning a language? In our kindergarten, when we started studying English, we all began with learning alphabets. Alphabets are the base of any language that has a script. It is alphabets that form words and it is words that form sentences. Once we are familiar with alphabets, we learn to form words with them. After forming words, we learn to form sentences with them. This is how we progress in learning a language.

Let us try to list our reasons for reading:

- ▶ Information
- ▶ Instruction
- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Pleasure

Look back and recollect the things that you read in a day. It might be the newspaper, a novel, a message in your phone, an email, an advertisement or even a user manual for your new computer. Now, try to figure out the reason why we read different things in our daily lives. You read the newspaper in the morning so that you get to know what happens around us. It gives us information about the happenings in the world. When you get an email or a message on your phone, you read them because somebody is trying to communicate something to you personally. Similarly, when you reply to that message, you are trying to communicate with them. Thus, reading becomes essential in communication. When you read a novel, a cartoon, a poem or a short story, you do it for pleasure. The piece of writing that you read gives you pleasure or a break from your mundane routines. When you buy a new computer, in order to operate it, you need to refer to the user manual provided by the company. Now, what does this do? It provides you with instructions on how to operate a computer. We read for information, instruction, communication, and pleasure.

We read aloud and also silently for meaning. Reading aloud is mostly done during childhood. It helps in practice for pronunciation as



well as learning to emote with the right tone and vocal expressions. We read aloud to convey information to others. While reading aloud, we have to divide our attention between reading and speaking. Reading silently involves understanding the message or meaning in the text.

Pronunciation is an important element while you get ready to read aloud. This is essential for both reading and speaking skills. Spoken language helps a lot in enhancing reading ability. When we read out loud, it is necessary that we are able to pronounce the words in the correct way. If someone asks you to read out a poem, you should have the ability to pronounce the language properly as well as communicate meaning through your voice. How do we learn to pronounce words? Phonetics and phonology are the studies that explain how words are pronounced, arranged, and used in a language. We grow up hearing the language from people around us. This plays an important role in developing our language and reading skills. We learn most of the words during our childhood, even before going to school. Then, in school, when we are taught to read, it becomes easier for us since we are already familiar with the words.

What about a foreign language? We get introduced to the language only when we decide to learn it. In order to pronounce the words, we might seek help from a native speaker or an instructor who can teach the language to us. Otherwise, we might look up online sources where we can learn the lessons in pronunciation. Pronunciation will be dealt with when we discuss speaking skills.

As we get ready to read, we learn the words in the language and their meaning. Not only words, but also the symbols used in the language. It is the combined effect of words and symbols that will be reflected in the writing. When we start the process of reading, rather

than focusing on the meaning, we tend to focus on words and their pronunciation. We try to understand how the alphabets are put together to form words. Then, we try to understand the meaning of the words. You might have experienced this when you first read a novel, an essay or any other book. You might also have come across many words that you are not familiar with. These are the initial difficulties that you face in the process of learning to read. When we get ready to read, it is important that we are familiar with many words and their meanings. Without knowing them, we will not be able to understand the content of any writing. Once we know the words in a language, it will be easy to understand the sentences. Only if we are able to read will we be able to write.

Read the following passage loud and then silently and answer the questions below:

Passage:

Reading is an essential aspect of learning and has multiple benefits attached to it. It is not just about picking an article and going through it. It is a cognitive, multifaceted process wherein you actually recognise the word and comprehend it to understand its meaning.

While reading an article, you might have come across some words that confuse you or certain words that you hardly even recognise. Finding out their meaning and regularly reading can be the best solution for you to enhance your vocabulary and expand your knowledge.

Our brain needs to be stimulated to function properly and foster ideas. One of the easiest ways to sharpen your mind is through concentrated reading. Almost all notable personalities read every day as they recognise that knowledge is the key to success. Reading requires you to have the patience to build a cognitive perspective. This is considered a prime brain-stimulating activity to sharpen your

mind. Individuals engaged in reading have a slower memory decline than those who avoid reading. It also improves memory and builds focus.

Reading leads you on a journey to another world. People reading literature or novels require a lot of concentration, which allows them to stay away from the distractions in their lives, which in turn promotes inner calmness and enhances overall health.

Reading is important because it makes you more empathetic, knowledgeable, and creative. Reading is just like a spider's web, linking things you know to things you just learn and creating innovative solutions.

Questions:

1. Finding out the meaning of unfamiliar words and regular reading is the best solution for?
 - a. Enhancing vocabulary
 - b. Expanding knowledge
 - c. Both a and b
 - d. Only a
2. What is one of the easiest ways to sharpen your mind?
 - a. Reading books
 - b. Reading with concentration
 - c. Reading a lot
 - d. Reading for pleasure
3. Who has a smaller memory decline than whom?
 - a. People who read than those who avoid reading
 - b. People who avoid reading than those who read
 - c. People who read a lot than those who read less
 - d. People who read literature than those who avoid reading it
4. Why do people who read literature or novels have enhanced concentration?
 - a. It allows them to stay away from distractions
 - b. It promotes inner calmness
 - c. It enhances overall health
 - d. All of the above
5. Why is reading important?
 - a. It makes one more empathetic
 - b. It makes one knowledgeable
 - c. It stimulates creativity
 - d. All of the above
6. Provide an appropriate title for the passage.
 - a. Concept of reading
 - b. Benefits of reading
 - c. The habit of reading
 - d. Importance of reading

2.3.2 Enhancing Vocabulary

We have seen that when we get ready to read, we need to know the words in a language. Has your English teacher in school asked you to develop your vocabulary? What do you mean by vocabulary? Vocabulary is nothing but the words in a language. A strong vocabulary is essential for developing good reading skills as well as writing skills. Why is it important to enhance your vocabulary? How does it help with reading and writing? As children, we learn a lot of words in our mother tongue from spoken language. We listen to the people around us and learn the language from them. Then, when we get introduced to the alphabets and words in school, we learn to read and write them.

When we start learning to read a foreign language, our vocabulary will be very weak. When we learn a language that is not our mother tongue, we will not be familiar with the language through a spoken medium. So, the first step is to listen to the language. We have already discussed listening skills in the previous units. When we listen to the language, we start picking up the words, which enhance our vocabulary. When we move from listening to reading, with our not-so-strong vocabulary, we try to understand the words and their meaning.

As we have discussed earlier, in the initial stage of reading, we might come across many unfamiliar words. When we encounter such words, we try to know their meaning. Sometimes, we tend to assume their meaning according to the context in which we find them. Have you ever experienced a situation where you guessed the meaning of a word according to the context in which it was used? While reading, if we find a word twice, thrice, or multiple times, we try to assume its meaning according to the context. Repetition of words helps us learn their meaning. Otherwise, we take the help of a dictionary to find word meanings.

Gradually, it is through the process of reading that we enhance our vocabulary.

Once we get familiar with the process of reading, our vocabulary improves every time we read something. A good vocabulary is essential for good communication. When we are familiar with plenty of words, we can express our thoughts in a better way. Also, we will be able to understand written works. So, reading skills are a key to improving one's communication skills.

A vocabulary can be built using different means:

1. Using dictionary.
2. Using thesaurus. A thesaurus gives you the synonyms of a particular word.
3. Subscribe to online feeds like “A word a day”.
4. Play word games. The Wordle game has become a rage in recent times. Doing crossword puzzles also help.
5. Learn roots of words and meanings of suffixes and prefixes.
6. Understanding meaning by context. Reading habit helps this.
7. Keep a book to note down new words you come across.
8. Start using newly learnt words.

2.3.3 Speed Reading

Once we have a strong vocabulary and have developed the habit of reading, we try to enhance our reading skills. If we read things regularly or more frequently, we gradually improve our reading speed gradually. Let us take an example. When we find a novel to read, what is the first thing that we all do? We go through the list of contents given on the first page and see how many chapters are there and how long the chapters are. We go through this content very quickly so that we get a general

idea of the book. When we start reading the books, we go line by line and read the content completely. What is the difference between the two? When we go through the content quickly, we get a general idea but not the details. But when we read it in detail, even when it takes time, we get to know each and every detail of the story.

In the above given instance, we can see two kinds of reading. While one saves time, the other helps us learn more about the content in a written document. In order to save time, we read things quickly. We get to know the crux of the content in very little time. Speed reading is the technique through which we enhance our ability to read quickly. Speed-reading helps us improve our reading speed as well as our ability to identify the main points and ideas. The practice of speed-reading trains our eyes to go through the writing quickly and get to know the relevant facts.

There are different ways in which speed reading can be done. Two of the methods of speed reading are:

1. Scanning
2. Skimming

Let us discuss in detail about these two methods.

2.3.4 Scanning and Skimming

Try to recall the way in which we approach a newspaper. What will we read first when we get a newspaper in hand or on the screen? We all tend to go through the headlines at first. After that, we go through the news in detail. In a news article, certain things will be highlighted, some data will be given in boxes, and sometimes, below the headline, the main issue will be mentioned in brief. Have you ever noticed it? Why is it done? The news in a newspaper is arranged in such a manner that the reader gets

to identify the main points immediately after looking at it. So, we scan through the news to read the highlighted points or the things given in bold letters first and then get into the further details of the news.

Now take another instance. If we find an essay important for the exam and we are left with very little time to read it, how will we read it? Since we don't have the time to read the complete essay, we will go through it quickly and try to locate the important points that are relevant for the exam. If the essay is divided into many paragraphs, we might read the beginning of every paragraph and try to read the introductory and concluding paragraphs. We scan through the content to eliminate the unnecessary details and focus only on the main points.

What exactly are we doing in both of the preceding cases? These are the ways in which we enhance our reading skills. We save time by going through the written content selectively. In the first instance, the technique of reading through the content quickly to find the important points or specific facts is known as scanning. This is similar to a revision reading that helps us to recall the main points that we have already read. When we read our textbooks, we often underline the things that we find important. We do this so that at the end, when we go through it again, we read only the important points and not the entire chapter in the textbook. Also, when we revise something, we have already read, we try to focus not on the entire content but on the points that might be underlined or given in bold.

In the second instance, when we go through the content at a glance, we get to know the general ideas that the essay conveys even though we don't get to know the entire content in detail. The technique of quickly reading through the content to identify a general



overview of it is known as skimming. Before reading the content, skimming through it gives us a good idea of its essence.

Scanning is for specific detail, and skimming is for general understanding. We use the technique of skimming in order to get an overview of the written content. On the other hand, we go for scanning, in order to find a specific fact from the whole content. Both of these techniques help us save time while reading. Skimming and scanning help us read something in a short period of time. At the same time, these techniques will not help us understand the content completely. When we are short on time, these techniques can be used. Also, if we are not very efficient readers, it might be difficult to skim or scan through the content. There are chances that we might miss out on certain important points. Once we acquire the skill of reading, these techniques can be preferred to make reading easier.

Now go back to the reading exercise that you did at the beginning of this unit. Were you able to answer the questions that followed the passage? How did you manage to find out the answers? Did you use the technique of scanning and skimming? How do we scan and skim through a passage? Let us look at the given passage again. When we skim through the passage, we get the idea about the topic of the passage. In the given passage, we get to know that the passage is about the benefits of reading. This will help us give the passage a proper title. When we scan through the passage, we find specific and important points in it. Scanning helps us answer specific questions on the benefits of reading. While scanning the passage, the first thing that we come across is the topic sentence. What is a topic sentence? It is the sentence that introduces us to the passage and gives us an idea about what follows. In this passage, the first sentence is the topic sentence that provides us with an idea about

the content of the passage. We get to know that the passage is going to be about the multiple benefits of reading. A topic sentence can also be found at the end of the paragraph, where the whole paragraph is concluded. This also helps us identify the essence of the passage.

Now, how can we read anything more efficiently? Let us discuss some of the reading techniques that will help us read better.

1. Ask critical questions

Ask critical questions to help orient you to a text. For example, what is it about? Why was it written (the purpose)? Who was it written for? etc. Asking such questions will help you know the text in detail. This will give you an idea about the topic of the text, the purpose of it, the audience of it, etc. If the title of a text is given, it helps us understand the crux of the text. Similarly, asking questions makes it easier to understand the text better.

2. Identify reference words/phrases

In a text, when talking about an idea, reference words are used in order to avoid repeating the same word over and over. Reference words and phrases refer back or forward to a word or idea in a passage. For example, the words 'these' and 'such' are used to avoid repetition. Once you identify such words or phrases, it will help you understand and arrange different ideas or points discussed in the text.

3. Identify main and supporting ideas

How do we identify the main and supporting ideas? How are they different? Being able to separate main ideas and supporting ideas is a key reading skill. Every paragraph will have parts that are more important than others. They are the main ideas. They are supported by other points and ideas. So, it is important for us to identify the key words that are related to the main theme of a text and subsequently identify

the main and supporting ideas.

4. Identify text structure

Identifying the structure of the text is another step in reading. A text will be divided into many paragraphs. The first paragraph will be the introduction, and the last will be the conclusion. A new paragraph may start a new idea or sometimes carry over an idea from the previous paragraph. A single topic is sometimes developed over many paragraphs. A paragraph may also have more than one topic. A text divided into paragraphs is easier to understand. So, when the text is not divided into paragraphs, try to divide them according to their content. Breaking the text into paragraphs helps the reader sort out the text and thus understand it better. This will also help you to summarise the contents.

5. Vocabulary

How can you understand the meaning of a word in context? Look at the words used. What parts of speech do they belong to? What are linking words? How does a text link facts and ideas? Linking words are used to mark connec-

tions between ideas in writing. Knowing such words will help you understand how the ideas are connected and also help you make accurate predictions as you read.

6. Signposts

While reading, look for signposts. Signposts help you find the important parts of a text. They also tell you that some things are not so important. Words and phrases like 'above all', 'the main point to note', 'the important point is', etc. tell you what is important. Some signposts, like 'There are three major facts to be noted', tell you how many main points are there in the text. So, while reading, by paying attention to such signposts, important points may be highlighted. Some signposts express text organisation. Phrases like 'there are three important facts... firstly..' suggest the order in which the ideas are arranged. Some show a change of topic, like 'let us now consider', 'next', 'lastly', etc.

Given below are certain words that are used to convey certain ideas. This will help you understand the ideas while reading a text.

Idea	Words Used
Reason	because, since, on account of
Contrast	whereas, but, however
Conclusion	consequently, as a result, to summarise/conclude, in short, therefore
Rephrasing	in other words, i.e
Example	for eg., for instance, to illustrate
Addition	In addition, Furthermore

Fig 2.3.1 Words used in particular contexts

Now, read the passage again and try to answer the questions. Have you found it much easier than before? While reading, we need to keep these reading techniques in mind so that we can comprehend better and have a better reading experience.

2.3.5 Decoding the Dictionary

As we have already discussed, the dictionary plays an important role in enhancing our vocabulary. When we read, it is quite normal that we find words that are unfamiliar to us. The dictionary stands as the source from which we can find the meanings of words. Since our school days, we have been familiar with the dictionary. Is it only the meaning of words that we find in a dictionary? No. They provide many more details about words. When you look up the dictionary to find the meaning of a word, have you ever noticed the things mentioned there apart from the word meaning? If not, pick up a dictionary and observe it. The word is given in the dictionary in such a way that we can identify the syllables of the word from it. Right next to the word, you will find the way to pronounce the word. After the pronunciation,

the parts of speech are mentioned, from which we can identify whether the word is a verb, adjective, or adverb. Then the meaning of the word will be given. In order to understand this better, look at the diagram given below and try to observe the details.

So, a dictionary can be used not only to find word meanings, but also other details about the word.

If you come across an unfamiliar word while reading something, will you look it up in the dictionary immediately? While reading certain things, we might find a lot of words that are unfamiliar to us. In such a situation, every time you look something up in the dictionary, it will be tiresome work. So, we might note the words, sometimes by underlining them and once we are done reading, look them up in the dictionary to find all the meanings in one go. Sometimes, we might be able to understand a word that repeats many times in a piece of writing by situating it in the context. In that case, we take the help of a dictionary to confirm the meaning after we complete reading the content.

Recap

- ▶ Reading is the process of comprehending written text
- ▶ Pronunciation is essential for both reading and speaking skills
- ▶ Phonetics and phonology study how words are pronounced, arranged, and used
- ▶ Reading is a cognitive process that involves understanding the meaning of words
- ▶ Focused reading is an excellent technique to develop your thinking
- ▶ Reading is important because it makes you more empathetic, knowledgeable, and creative
- ▶ Vocabulary is nothing but the system of words in a language
- ▶ Repetition of words helps us learn their meaning
- ▶ Our vocabulary grows as a result of the reading activity
- ▶ A good vocabulary is essential for good communication
- ▶ A thesaurus gives you the synonyms of a particular word
- ▶ Regular reading increases reading speed
- ▶ Speed reading is the technique through which we enhance our ability to read quickly
- ▶ Speed-reading helps us improve our reading speed and identify important ideas
- ▶ Scanning and Skimming are the two methods of speed-reading
- ▶ Skimming is the process of quickly reading through content to gain an overview
- ▶ Scanning is the process of quickly reading through the content to gain specific facts in the content
- ▶ Scanning is for specific detail, and skimming is for general understanding
- ▶ Topic sentences introduce a passage and provide an idea of what follows
- ▶ Identifying the structure of text is essential for reading
- ▶ Linking words are used to mark connections between ideas in writing
- ▶ Signposts help you find the important parts of a text
- ▶ The dictionary stands as the source from which we can find the meanings of words

Objective Questions

1. What are the two passive skills essential for communication?
2. What is the system of words in a language called?
3. What are the two methods of speed reading?



4. Which technique of reading is used to get a quick overview of the content?
5. Which technique of reading is used to find specific facts in the content?
6. What is an excellent technique to develop your thinking?
7. What gives you synonyms of a particular word?
8. What increases reading speed?
9. What helps us improve our reading speed and identify important ideas?
10. What introduce a passage and provide an idea of what follows?
11. What are used to mark connections between ideas in writing?
12. What helps you find the important parts of a text?

Answers

1. Reading and listening
2. Vocabulary
3. Skimming and Scanning
4. Skimming
5. Scanning
6. Focused reading
7. Thesaurus
8. Regular reading
9. Speed-reading
10. Topic sentences
11. Linking words
12. Signposts

Assignments

1. Take an English newspaper and choose an article from it. Try to read it aloud. Copy it and underline the unfamiliar words. Find out their meaning and note it down. Try reading it again and notice the difference.
2. Pick up a paragraph from any of the books that you are reading. Underline the difficult words. Take the help of the dictionary and write down all the five details that the dictionary provides about all the unfamiliar words.
3. Take a long passage from a text of your choice and divide it into small paragraphs. Write down the sign-posts that you can find in the text and also identify what those signposts suggest.

4. Use a print resource of your choice and develop a learning exercise to improve the vocabulary and reading skills of an English language learner.
5. Use a print resource of your choice and write down the topic sentences and linking words.

Suggested Reading

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Print Reading and Online Reading

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ familiarise themselves with print and online reading
- ▶ obtain details on some of the major browsers for gathering electronic resources
- ▶ define links and hypertexts
- ▶ acquire details on online resources for literary reading

Prerequisites

Picture a coffee shop. A student flips through a well-worn paperback, occasionally jotting notes in the margin. Nearby, a businessman scrolls through news articles on his tablet, his finger swiping rapidly across the screen. At another table, an elderly woman adjusts her reading glasses, peering at an e-reader filled with her favourite novels.

This scene encapsulates the evolving landscape of reading in modern India, where traditional print and digital formats coexist and compete for readers' attention. The advent of digital technology has transformed how we access and interact with text, offering new possibilities and challenges for readers of all ages.

For many Indians, particularly those learning English, this digital revolution presents both opportunities and obstacles. Online platforms provide unprecedented access to a wealth of English-language texts, from classic literature to contemporary blogs. Digital tools like built-in dictionaries and text-to-speech features can aid comprehension. However, the sheer volume of available content can be overwhelming, and the distractions inherent in digital devices can hinder deep reading and retention.

Moreover, in a country with varying levels of digital literacy and internet access, the shift towards online reading raises questions of equity and accessibility. While urban centres buzz with Wi-Fi hotspots and smartphone users, many rural areas still rely heavily on print materials.

Keywords

Print Reading, Online Reading, Link, Hyperlink, Online literary reading

Discussion

2.4.1 Print and Online Reading

We have all been to a library. Why do we all go to a library? A school library or a public library is the place where we go to read books in printed form. The library's reading rooms make it easier to settle down and read the books we desire. We also borrow books from the library to read at home. Thus, print reading refers to the practice of reading things printed on paper. Hard copies of books, journals, or magazines are examples of reading materials in print.

Is reading in print the only medium to read? Are there any other options available for people who wish to read things? On our laptop and phone, we watch videos that are informative, and we also find audio books. Similarly, books are also available on the internet. Online reading refers to the practice of reading things that are available on the internet. This is also known as digital reading. While reading something on a screen, rather than going through the content systematically, we might skim through the content. When we read from a book in hand, we start reading from the beginning and continue it till the end. But when the reading is done online, we have the facility to search for the particular thing that we are looking for. For example, if we are reading a PDF (Portable Document Format) file, there will be a search bar at the top where we can type and search for the content we want. If the reading material is too heavy, it is easier to skim through the content if reading is done online.

As technology progresses, our daily tasks have become more simpler. Online reading is an example of such an innovation. Consider the situation of a school-going child. The person has to take all the books to school according to the timetable given by the school. Now, imagine if all the books were available to them

on screen. The child will have to carry only a laptop or a tablet to school. The weight of the school bag will not be an issue for the child. Also, it will be easier to search for contents in an online book. Since you have to possess only a gadget in order to access online reading resources, it is much more comfortable than reading in print.

There are a number of sources available on the internet to read different things. Numerous websites are available where we can find stories, articles, novels, essays, poems, scientific journals, and even the newspaper on the internet. Web logs (blogs) are available on the internet, where people write their thoughts and opinions for others to read. They are similar to the writings that we find in printed magazines. Everything is available at the tip of our fingers. Some internet resources are free, while others require payment. Since the sources are plentiful, there will be a number of reading materials accessible to us. All of them can be accessed within a very short time. Thus, the amount of information that can be acquired in a narrow time frame is much more than the information that books in our hands can provide.

Imagine going to a library and searching for a book. We take the time to look at the book number and find the book on the shelves of the library. Now, what is the difference if we read the book online? The time that we use to search the book can be saved. When we search for a book online, we get it within seconds. In the previous unit, we have discussed decoding the dictionary. While reading online, if we find an unfamiliar word, instead of searching for the word in the dictionary, we can get the word's meaning by merely touching or clicking on the word. The internet provides us with this facility too.

Let us look at another instance. If you have to share a book with your friend, what will you



do? You have to hand it over to your friend when you meet. If you have the book in your laptop or phone or tablet, how does the situation change? You can share it with your friend through online platforms for sharing files. In online reading, the same book can be accessed by many people at the same time. Sharing the written content can be done in digital reading.

2.4.2 Navigating through the Internet

Mobile phones have become inevitable in our lives. From waking up in the morning until we go to sleep at night, we use our phones. What else do we do with our phones besides calling people? We use it to buy things online, watch videos online, chat with our friends and family, be informed about daily news, read things, etc. Out of all these uses, let us focus on reading. As we have already discussed, we can read a lot of things on our phone. We have also seen the benefits of reading online over reading in print.

What is the source of all these e-resources?

With a phone in our hands, how can we get access to it? It is with the help of the internet that we get access to digital media. Now, what is the internet? How does it help us in gaining access to the digital media? The Internet is a global system of computer networks that are interconnected with each other. Since it is a global network, we can find information from all around the world on this platform. When it comes to digital reading, books or magazines from around the world are available on the internet. Once we get an internet connection on the device, how do we find out what we want on the internet? Our devices already have a tool called an internet browser, which can be used to find the information we want from online sources. There are many internet browsers available on devices for searching online. Some of them are Google Chrome, Internet Explorer/ Edge, Mozilla Firefox, Apple's Safari, and Opera.



Fig 2.4.1 Internet Browsers

Once we get access to the internet browser, we have to find the information that we want. The Internet is a sea of information. It contains videos, magazines, newspaper articles, music, scientific journals, games, movies, etc. All this information is organised and stored in places called websites. Separate websites are designed by individuals or companies in order to promote their products or services. Every website has its own address, which stays the same all the time. Through the internet browser, we can go to websites that can provide us with information about the things we want. For example, if we want to find e-books, we should go to websites that provide e-books. How do we go to a website? When we have the address

of a website, we can type that address into the search bar on the top of the browser and search for it.

Now, if you are searching for a book to read and you don't know of any website that provides details about it, what can you do to find the book? It is here that we use a search engine. It is a special website where we can search for any kind of information. Some of the search engines are Google, Yahoo, Bing, Baidu, AOL, and Ask. While searching on a search engine, it provides us with the details of different websites that can provide us with the information we want. From these, we can choose the one we like.

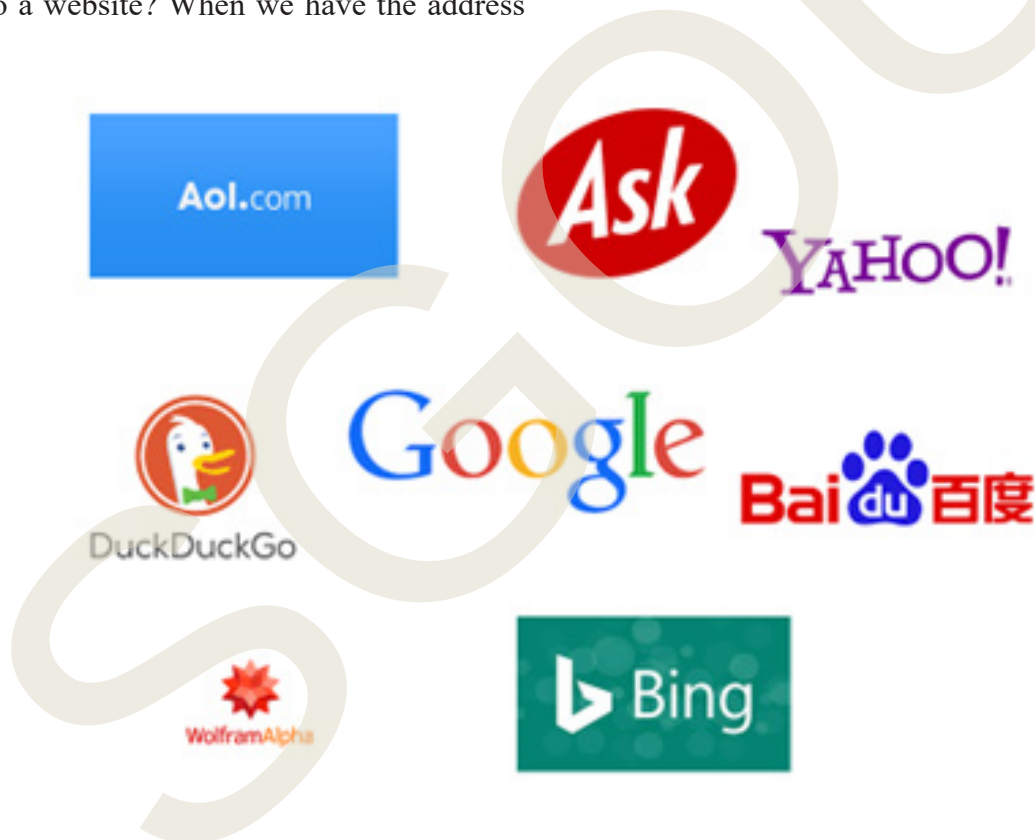


Fig 2.4.2 Search Engines

Is a mobile phone the only possible way for us to read online? No. There are a lot of other options available to us. Some of them are:-

1. Desktop Computer
2. Laptop
3. Tablet
4. Amazon Kindle



Fig 2.4.3 Electronic devices used for Online Reading

Desktop computers, laptops, and tablets are similar to our mobile phones, and we use them to read things online. With internet connectivity, all these devices can be used for online reading. The Amazon Kindle is an electronic gadget similar to our tablet. It is designed and marketed by Amazon, specifically for e-reading. With a Kindle in our hands, we can read e-books, magazines, newspapers, or any other digital media by browsing, buying, or downloading it. Upon having internet connectivity, all these digital media can be accessed from this device through the Kindle Store, which is an online e-book store operated by Amazon for this purpose.

2.4.3 Links And Hypertexts

We are all familiar with using the internet to find information that we require. In order to search for information, we need to visit different websites on the internet.

When searching online for information, have you ever come across the website called Wikipedia? Wikipedia is a website that acts as an online encyclopedia where information from almost all fields is made available. If you are not familiar with this website, have a look at it through this link- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page. What happens when you click on the link? You are directed to the website. A link, otherwise called a hyperlink, is a reference that leads to digital data upon clicking or tapping on it. When you visit the website of Wikipedia, within the text on the page, you can find certain words in blue letters, which function in the same way as a link. These are the links that can redirect you to many different pages when you tap or click on them. Such a text that contains multiple links that lead to other texts is called a hypertext. Hypertext documents are connected to one another by hyperlinks.



Fig 2.4.4 A hypertext document

2.4.4 Online Resources for Reading

If we want to read, there are abundant resources available on the internet. How will we get the right information that we want from this? Once we know the websites that can provide us with the reading materials we desire, it will be easier for us to start reading the things that we have wanted. Out of many online resources available for literary reading, some of the websites are as given below:-

1. Poetry Foundation

Poetry Foundation is an online platform where we get access to English poetry. It has a wide collection of modern and contemporary poems in English or in translation. Audio recordings and broadcasts of poetry are also available on this website. It is a non-profit publisher where all the content can be accessed online for free. Apart from the library of poems, it conducts seminars, readings, and exhibitions.

This foundation also gives awards to poets and poetry. This website can be accessed through the given link- <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/>.

2. JSTOR

JSTOR is a digital library from where we can access books, journals, and essays in the field of humanities and social science. Literary reading materials available on this website are more oriented towards academic research. While some of the articles can be accessed by the public for free, most of the readings demand a subscription in order to access them. Most academic institutions and public libraries are licensed to access JSTOR. This website can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.jstor.org/>.

3. Classic Literature

Classic Literature, as the name suggests, is

a website to find classic literature works. This provides access to classic literature as well as children's picture books. This website can be accessed through the link: <https://classic-literature.co.uk/>.

4. Bartleby.com

Bartleby.com is an online collection of digital texts. It provides access to fiction, poetry, and other contents too. 'Bartleby Learn' provides access to online textbooks and question & answer facilities. 'Bartleby Write' can be accessed to write essays and 'Bartleby Tutor' facilitates online tutoring. This is more helpful for students. They focus on textbook and homework solutions. This website can be accessed through the link: <https://www.bartleby.com/>.

5. Project Gutenberg

Project Gutenberg is an archive of digitized

cultural works. It is the oldest digital library. Most of its collection of e-books is in the public domain and can be accessed by anyone from anywhere in the world through the internet. This website can be accessed through the given link: <https://www.gutenberg.org/>.

6. Poets.org

Poets.org is a website with a collection of poems. It has poems from the seventeenth century as well as poems from recent times. The website focuses on poem by American poets. It provides not only the text of the poems but also further information about the poet and the poem. This website can be accessed through the following link: <https://poets.org/>.

Recap

- ▶ Print reading refers to the practice of reading things printed on paper
- ▶ Online reading is the practice of reading things available on the internet
- ▶ Online reading is also known as digital reading
- ▶ The Internet is a global network of interconnected computer networks
- ▶ Internet browsers can be used to find the information we want from online sources
- ▶ On the internet, information is organised and kept in locations known as websites
- ▶ Every website has its own address, which stays the same all the time
- ▶ Search engine is a special website where we can search for any kind of information
- ▶ Wikipedia provides an online encyclopaedia of information from all fields
- ▶ A hyperlink, is a reference that leads to digital data upon clicking or tapping on it
- ▶ Hypertexts contain multiple links that lead to other texts
- ▶ Hypertext documents are connected to one another by hyperlinks
- ▶ 'Poetry Foundation' is an online platform where we get access to English poetry

- ▶ JSTOR is a digital library that provides access to books, journals, and articles in the humanities and social sciences.
- ▶ Project Gutenberg is an archive of digitized cultural works

Objective Questions

1. What is the practice of reading things on print media called?
2. What is the term that refers to reading things online on the internet?
3. What is the other term for online reading?
4. What is the expanded form of PDF?
5. What is a global network of interconnected computer networks?
6. How do we get the information we need from internet sources?
7. What is a special website where we can search for any kind of information?
8. What is used as a reference that leads to digital data upon clicking or tapping on it?
9. Which is the electronic device that is specially designed for e-reading?
10. What contain multiple links that lead to other texts?
11. What connects hypertext documents?

Answers

1. Print reading.
2. Online reading.
3. Digital reading.
4. Portable Document Format.
5. Internet.
6. By using Internet Browsers.
7. Search engine.
8. A hyperlink.
9. Kindle.
10. A hypertext.
11. Hyperlink.

Assignments

1. Find out more about sources for literary reading. Write in detail about five of them.
2. Explain the process of navigation through the internet with the help of suitable examples.
3. Trace the history of print reading and digital reading in detail.
4. Write a short note on how to develop reading skills using a print resource of your choice.
5. Write a short note on how to develop reading skills using a digital resource of your choice.

Suggested Reading

1. Baron, Naomi S. *How We Read Now: Strategic Choices for Print, Screen, and Audio*. United Kingdom, Oxford University Press, 2021.
2. Wolf, Maryanne. Reader, *Come Home: The Reading Brain in a Digital World*. United States, HarperCollins, 2018.
3. <https://natlib.govt.nz/blog/posts/reading-on-screen-vs-reading-in-print-whats-the-difference-for-learning>
4. <https://www.studyinternational.com/news/print-reading-vs-online-studying/>

BLOCK - 03

Productive or Active Skills

Unit 1

Speaking

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ detail different types of speeches according to delivery
- ▶ describe different types of speeches according to purpose
- ▶ become familiar with various categories of audience
- ▶ get acquainted with techniques for overcoming inhibitions

Prerequisites

Imagine a bustling conference hall. A diverse array of speakers take the stage, each with a unique style and purpose. A seasoned politician delivers an impassioned plea for social reform, her words carefully chosen to persuade and inspire. A young entrepreneur presents his innovative startup idea, his enthusiasm infectious as he demonstrates his product. A celebrated author reads from her latest work, her melodious voice captivating the audience. In the back, a nervous student practices her first public speech, whispering to herself in front of a small mirror.

This scene encapsulates the multifaceted world of public speaking in modern India, where ancient oratorical traditions blend with contemporary communication needs. From the grand speeches of independence leaders to viral TED Talks, from classroom presentations to corporate boardrooms, the ability to speak effectively remains a crucial skill in personal, professional, and public life.

The journey of public speaking in India is as diverse as the country itself. Ancient texts like the Vedas and Upanishads were primarily oral traditions, passed down through generations by skilled reciters. The Buddhist tradition brought forth influential speakers like Gautama Buddha, whose sermons attracted thousands. In more recent history, the independence movement saw the rise of powerful orators like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, whose words mobilized millions.

Today, in an increasingly globalized and digital India, the contexts and platforms for public speaking have multiplied. English, once the language of the colonial elite, has

become a lingua franca in many professional and academic settings. This has created both opportunities and challenges for speakers from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

The rapid spread of digital technology has further transformed the landscape of public speaking. Social media platforms and video-sharing sites have democratized access to audiences, allowing anyone with a smartphone to potentially reach millions. Virtual meetings and webinars have become commonplace, requiring speakers to adapt their skills to these new mediums.

However, the core principles of effective speaking remain timeless. Whether addressing a physical audience or speaking to a camera, speakers must still connect with their listeners, structure their thoughts coherently, and deliver their message with conviction.

For many Indians, particularly those from non-English medium backgrounds or rural areas, public speaking in English can be a daunting prospect. The fear of making mistakes, the pressure to sound “perfect,” and the anxiety of facing an audience can be overwhelming. Yet, as India continues to play an increasingly prominent role on the global stage, the ability to communicate effectively in English has become more important than ever.

This unit explores the art and science of public speaking, drawing on both classical techniques and modern research. We’ll examine different types of speeches and their purposes, from informative presentations to persuasive arguments. We’ll discuss strategies for understanding and connecting with diverse audiences, a crucial skill in India’s multicultural society.

Moreover, we’ll delve into practical techniques for overcoming common obstacles to effective speaking, such as nervousness, lack of confidence, and language barriers. From the “mirror technique” for building self-assurance to strategies for expanding vocabulary and improving pronunciation, we’ll provide tools to help learners become more confident and competent speakers.

As we explore the world of public speaking, we’ll consider not just the mechanics of delivery, but also the ethics and responsibilities of the speaker. In an era of misinformation and polarized discourse, the ability to speak truthfully, clearly, and persuasively is more important than ever.

By developing strong speaking skills, learners can open doors to new opportunities, express their ideas more effectively, and contribute more fully to the ongoing dialogue that shapes our society. Whether addressing a classroom, a boardroom, or a national audience, the power of the spoken word remains a vital force in shaping our world.



Keywords

Public speaking, Types of speeches, Speaking to the mirror, Understanding your audience, Overcoming inhibitions

Discussion

Why are speaking skills important today? The shortest answer is that it is the most effective way to communicate. Speaking is an essentially important method of communication. The four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are all interrelated. A good level of command over each skill is essential to make an excellent communication. The ability to speak perfectly provides the speaker with several advantages. The ability to order words together meaningfully to communicate thoughts, opinions, and feelings provides the speaker with these important benefits:

- ▶ Ability to inform, convince, and direct.
- ▶ Ability to stay different from the rest.

- ▶ Career enhancement.
- ▶ Personal satisfaction.
- ▶ Critical thinking
- ▶ Making new social connections
- ▶ Building leadership skills
- ▶ Developing vocabulary and fluency

Public speaking is an interesting art, and it can become more attractive if the speaker has an objective in mind. Having a direct objective and purpose of speech in mind turns the speech writing process simpler and easier. There are different types of speeches; they all follow the same speech format but serve different purposes. The primary purpose of a speech is to deliver a message to the audience. Speeches have the power of touching hearts as long as they are well designed and presented.

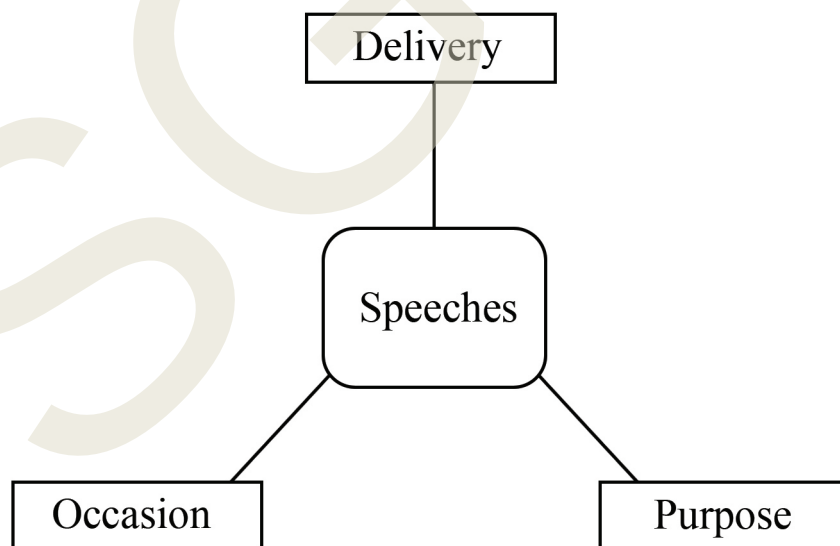


Fig 3.1.1 Speeches

Speaking in public involves more formality than just talking, as you need to present it professionally. That doesn't mean you just need to dress formally, but you need to be presentable by being well-groomed and showing positive body language.

We shall look at the speeches in 3 different ways;

- ▶ Types of speeches according to the delivery
- ▶ Types of speeches according to the purpose
- ▶ Types of speeches according to special occasion

3.1.1 Types of Speeches According to the Delivery

A model speaker always keeps in mind the delivery method that is appropriate for deliv-

ering a particular message. Now look at the classification.

(1) Impromptu Speaking

Impromptu speaking is when you have not planned or prepared to deliver a speech in advance. A short message is presented to the audience without any preparation in advance. These kinds of speeches are spontaneously crafted. As you lack sufficient time for preparation, it is a challenging endeavour for many.

(2) Extemporaneous Speaking

Extemporaneous speaking involves a speaker who has carefully prepared and planned his speech. But it is also delivered at short notice just like in impromptu speaking without the assistance of any notes or text.

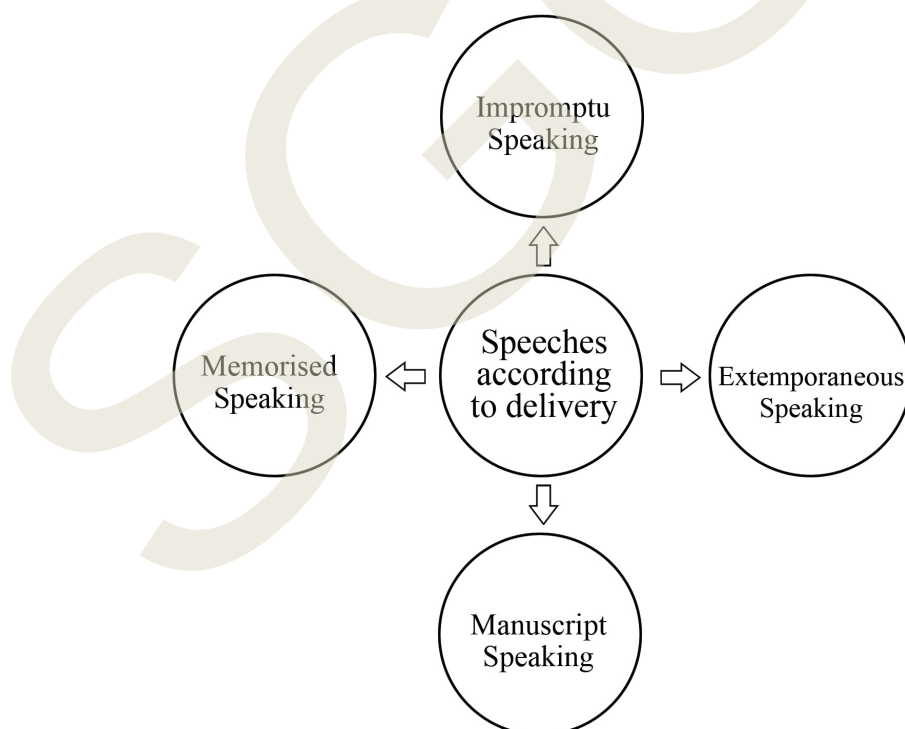


Fig 3.1.2 Speeches according to delivery

(3) Manuscript Speaking

As the name indicates, manuscript speaking is made with the assistance of a manuscript. The speaker pays his/her complete attention on the printed page while delivering this kind of a speech. It is not an effective type of speaking compared to the former ones but it is the easiest. When the original words are necessary to be stated, manuscript speaking is presented. An example for this is, reading an institution's vision statement before launching. There's a greater possibility of losing the interest of the audience as the involvement of the speaker is barely taking place and it may just end up as a reading exercise.

(4) Memorised Speaking

Memorised speaking is the mindless recitation of the specific message that the speaker has added to the memory. Exemplary speeches cannot be memorised because here the speakers speak from memory only if it is required. If the orators choose to read the script from the paper while performing, it will not have any effect.

3.1.2 Types of Speeches According to the Purpose

Every speech has a particular purpose or function. The purpose of some are to please and amuse the audience, and others are aimed at informing the audience. Unless there is a clear purpose behind every speech, it would be a failed design. Based on purpose, there are four kinds of speeches.

(1) Persuasive Speech

In persuasive speech, the speaker tries to persuade or convince the audience with his personal beliefs. The speaker makes an earnest attempt to change the audience's beliefs, values or views on a particular subject. This type of speech is the most difficult because

it is very hard to convince people by changing their perspectives. More than that, it is a laborious task to ask people to challenge their current beliefs and notions. It is the hardest, at the same time the most influential one among other kinds of speeches.

(2) Informative Speech

Informative speeches are a type of speech in which the speaker attempts to inform a particular subject to the audience. The speaker conveys the information about a particular region, person, problem, or any other subject by narrating, explaining, and describing. The speech supplies useful information and knowledge about the subject so that the audience finds it easy to comprehend the matter.

(3) Demonstrative Speech

A demonstrative speech demonstrates a specific action. It explains how a particular action needs to be executed. Being in the format of step by step order, a demonstrative speech focuses on the performance or action of something.

(4) Entertaining Speech

Entertainment speeches are meant for entertaining the audience. Providing pleasure and entertainment which lets the audience laugh is the major purpose of this type of speech.

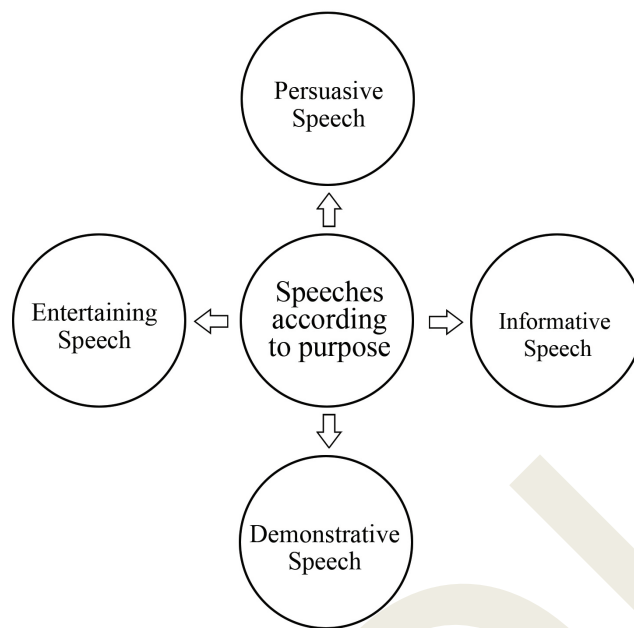


Fig 3.1.3 Speeches according to purposes

3.1.3 Types of Speeches According to Special Occasion

The purpose of special occasion speeches is either to entertain the audience or to commemorate a day or an event. They are prepared to suit a special occasion and no fixed format is available for them. The special occasion could be felicitating a person, bidding farewell to somebody, a birthday party or even a funeral of someone.

The following are the eight common types of special occasion speeches:

(1) Introduction

In order to introduce a speaker who is going to deliver a speech, introductory speeches are prepared. By this, the attention of the audience is invited towards the main speaker. Introductory speeches are usually short and brief.

(2) Presentation

Presentation speeches are delivered at award functions where a person presents an

award or distributes a prize to a person or a group of people. The speech thus turns out to be a moment of recognition to the recipient's achievements.

(3) Toast

It is a brief commendation to a particular person or an event. Toasts are delivered on special occasions to appreciate or honour people.

(4) Roast

Roast is a speech of tribute and humorous teasing on the person who is being honoured. Besides this, the speaker praises the person for his or her noteworthy achievements.

(5) Acceptance

Acceptance speeches are delivered by the person who has just accepted an award or prize. It gives an opportunity to the recipient to express his or her gratitude towards the honour.

(6) Commemorative Speech

These kinds of speeches are presented at

conferences, conclaves, seminars or meetings. A commemorative speech is in the form of an address delivered to the audience to complement or applaud someone or something.

(7) Farewell

Farewell speeches are usually made at those ceremonies when someone leaves an institution or organization or at farewell functions. It is a planned 'good bye speech'.

(8) Eulogy

Eulogies are delivered at funeral and memorial ceremonies to glorify or eulogise the person who has just passed away. The intention behind this type of speech is to express condolences to the dead person's family or relations.

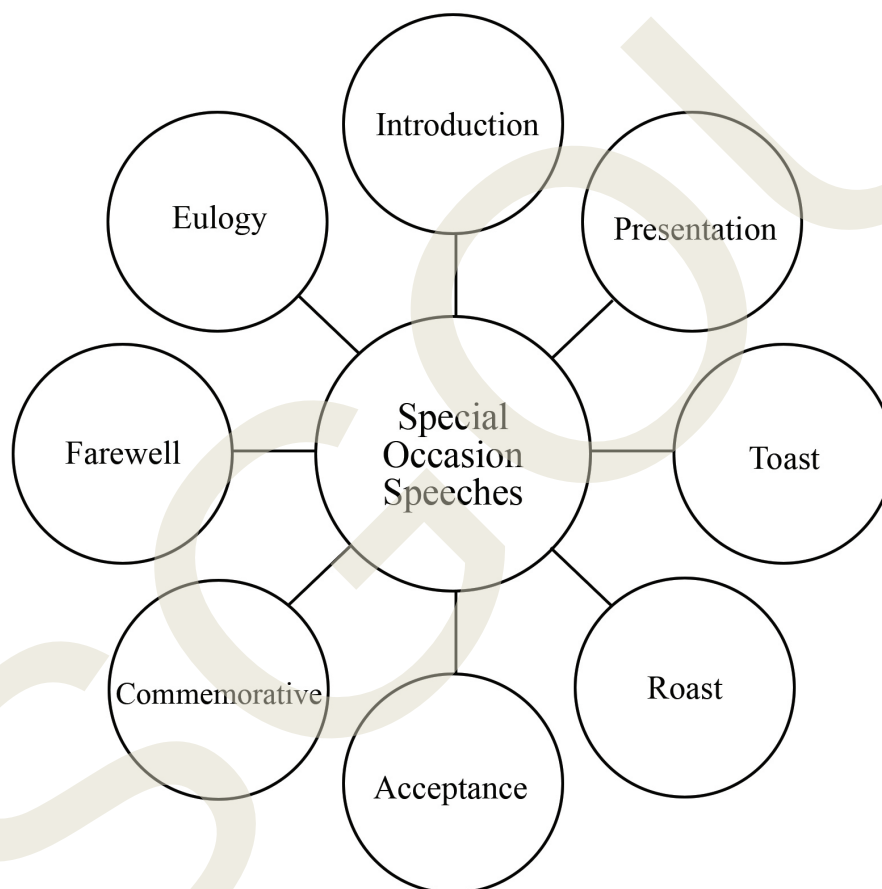


Fig 3.1.4 Speeches according to occasions

Speaking to the Mirror

Imagine that you have made a great deal of effort to prepare the script for a speech which you are going to deliver someday. But you are doubtful about your talent and confused about your confidence. What will be the net result of

the speech which you have prepared? There arises the need for a strong self-confidence. Our teachers and philosophers have spoken eloquently about the necessity of self-confidence in life though how many of us are really conscious about it is a matter of doubt. In the case of speaking skills and the presentation of

a speech in particular, knowing your worth and abilities is a must. Unless you are self-confident on the stage, the very purpose which your speech serves will be lost.

Why is self-confidence important? Believe it or not, it makes you look and sound attractive. Your self-respect is made strong and your self-worth is known to yourself and others through self-confidence. A good mental health and presence of mind is a gift of self-confidence. It enables you to take a stand for yourself so that you will be made self-sufficient and independent. How do we boost self-con-

fidence? There are many ways. It is proved that some psychological exercises can fruitfully develop confidence in us. One of these is the 'Mirror Technique'. As a very simple exercise for everyone, this will help you not only to enhance your confidence but to develop public speaking skills. Many great personalities, preachers, actors, politicians, leaders and public speakers openly admit to speaking to themselves in the mirror to get that confidence before an important programme, interview or meeting.



Fig 3.1.5 Speaking to the mirror

Facing the mirror, you say statements like out of the seven ones mentioned above, you are the only one who is prepared for the speech. The mirror will be your most trusted companion and a credible self-analysis tool. Affirma-

tive statements are positive and uplifting statements that we say aloud to ourselves.

How Do We Go About it?

Stand in front of a mirror and if it is big,

that would be more suitable. Straighten your back and inhale deeply with your chest. Look yourself in the eyes confidently. Let optimism radiate from your face. Put on a light smile so that you look determined to speak up. Start talking to your reflection. Make affirmative statements like these addressing yourself “I believe in myself” and “I can”. Think about the things you want to speak and say that you can do it, and there is nothing that can stop you from fulfilling them. Continue breathing as deep as you can and develop only positive statements and thoughts. Go on like that for at least 5-10 minutes. Then move on to your subject of discussion. Watch your gestures in between.

Now what are the benefits of speaking to the mirror?

Each time you practice the technique, you'll give yourself self-esteem and a motivation boost.

You'll be more positive and optimistic.

You'll start believing in your own capabilities and thus be ready to try new things.

You won't have a sense of inferiority to others anymore.

You'll admire yourself for who you are and will accept your good qualities.

You won't have fear to look people in the eyes.

You'll be more firm and strong.

You'll set higher aims and will be more confident in your chance to accomplish them.

You'll have a greater opinion of yourself.

3.1.4 Understanding Your Audience

How much do you understand your audi-

ence? This is a question all public speakers should answer when preparing the speech. When a speaker is preparing for an audience, he or she usually starts by studying mainly the values, beliefs, and characteristics of the group he/she will be facing. Speakers also consider looking into the ages, gender, and class etc. of the group. It's also a good idea to prepare a list of questions to understand the topics through which an interactive mode can be imitated.

A speaker needs to be prepared to communicate to different types of audiences. Your audience must influence your decisions as a communicator.

Here are a few factors that define the audience-

- ▶ their understanding or familiarity with the subject (e.g., a fellow from medical background or a person in a managerial position in the company or a lay-person),
- ▶ their task or role (what they will do with the information from the speech)
- ▶ their position relative to the organization (whether the audience is a part of any institution/organization/establishment)
- ▶ their position relative to the speaker (whether the audience is peer, superior, or subordinate).

To cut it short, in order to be more successful in achieving your communication goals through public speaking, understanding the audience is very crucial. The following questions will equip you to understand the nature of the audience. They are:

- How much do they already know about my topic of presentation?
- What do they think about my topic?

- What are their needs?

Now what are the benefits of understanding the audience? When you are speaking you want the listeners to understand and respond favourably to what you are saying. An audience is a group of people who assemble together to listen to the speaker. The audience can communicate face to face with the speaker or they can be connected by the information technology through computers, cell phones or other media. The size of the audience may be small

or it can be a large public audience. An important feature of the audience in public speaking situations is the unequal distribution of speaking time. The speaker here talks a lot and the audience listen, often without asking questions or responding with any feedback. On some occasions the audience may ask questions or respond to the speaker by making comments.

Based on the nature of the audience, they can be classified into four types. They are:

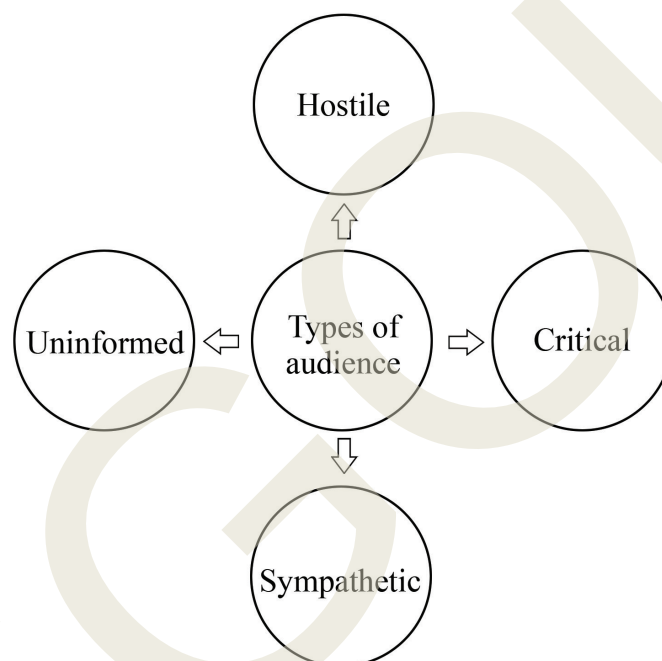


Fig 3.1.6 Types of audience

(1) Hostile Audience

This audience does not like listening to you. This could be due to many reasons, from disinterest in the organisation you are representing, to wishing to get home and watch their favourite programme on television. The indifference of the audience can be overcome by the following strategies,

- ▶ Use humour
- ▶ Engage them by asking questions

during the speech

- ▶ Use plenty of references and facts to support your points
- ▶ Work hard on developing trust and interest of the audience

(2) Critical Audience

This kind of audience can be seen at technical conferences or meetings and they become critical because they would be keen on proving or exposing mistakes in your points.

You can use the following techniques:

- ▶ Present with plenty of evidence with strong references
- ▶ Argue both sides of the matter, evidently stating pros and cons of each
- ▶ Avoid exaggeration and stick to facts.

(3) Uninformed Audience

This is the most common type of audience you will see around. They are not so informed about your presentation topic. We can make them informed by applying techniques like:

- ▶ Start your presentation with questions so that you can understand the level of knowledge on your topic.
- ▶ Spend some time explaining the basics of your topic.
- ▶ Make use of simple language and avoid acronyms or technical terms.
- ▶ Relate information to something which people understand and associate.

(4) Sympathetic Audience

This audience is very positive to you in response as they listen and enjoy their presence with you. They are interested in your talk, curious to listen to your topic and develop an emotional attachment with you. These people are the easiest to convince.

3.1.5 Overcoming Inhibitions

Many of us believe that shyness is the natural enemy of confidence, and it can ruin our performance. It is true. Interestingly, some people hold the opinion that a little shyness in the form of modesty is attractive, but here we are not bothered about that. What we are

talking about here is the type of shyness that prevents you from speaking clearly to people and prohibits you from being open and direct to people you don't know. There is a misconceived notion amongst many shy people that they remain so due to hereditary or other biological reasons. Inhibitions are not innate. Our surroundings can change our nature, and we may respond swiftly when the right situation demands. As human beings, we have the ability to make ourselves be whatever we wish. What is important is to develop the will to change and, more importantly, inculcating the ability to stop labelling yourself as a naturally shy person.

The following steps will enable you to overcome inhibitions while addressing the public while speaking:

- ▶ **Always provide your opinion-** Ensure your involvement in the program/meeting/discussion however big or small they are. This is to avoid a common misconception among people with inhibitions that their opinions are not valuable.
- ▶ **Don't brood over your mistakes and let things go-** Did you make a mistake while sharing wrong information to somebody? Did you send an email or a message wrongly? These small mistakes happen to everyone. Don't concentrate on your mistakes. Instead take these accidents as experiences. What's done is done. So learn from it and just keep moving.
- ▶ **Grab every opportunity to present something-** When a chance comes up before you to present a topic or address a gathering, use it. It will turn out to be the perfect path to enhance your communi-

cation skills and thereby shaping your interpersonal skills. Always set aside a few days beforehand to rehearse. The more you rehearse before the speech the more confident you will become.

- ▶ **Form networks of like-minded people-** People with shy personalities fear that their views may be judged by colleagues. But if you develop a friendship or form a network with people of similar wave-length, you will be more comfortable. You can share your opinions or express yourself

without any inhibitions on such platforms

- ▶ **Get out of your comfort zone-** We should understand that all productive changes in life take place outside our comfort zones. Many of us do not wish to fail. Getting out of the safer zones will help us to taste failure. Moving towards something we fear is an excellent way to destroy fear and inhibitions.

Recap

- ▶ Speech- the most effective way to communicate
- ▶ The primary purpose of a speech is to deliver a message to the audience
- ▶ Types of speeches according to delivery are the impromptu, extemporaneous, manuscript and memorized speaking
- ▶ Types of speeches according to purpose are persuasive, informative, demonstrative and entertaining
- ▶ Types of speeches according to special occasion are introduction, presentation, toast, roast, acceptance, commemorative, farewell and eulogy
- ▶ Self-confidence can be boosted by practising before the mirror
- ▶ Audience can be classified into four types- critical, hostile, uninformed and sympathetic
- ▶ Inhibitions are not innate

Objective Questions

1. What are the four language skills?
2. What is a primary purpose of a speech?
3. What are speeches according to delivery?
4. What are the speeches according to purpose?
5. What are different types of speeches according to special occasions?
6. What is meant by Roast?
7. When are Eulogies delivered?



8. Who is a hostile audience?
9. Who is a sympathetic audience?
10. Name one technique that you can employ when you speak to critical audience.

Answers

1. Speaking, reading, listening and writing
2. To deliver a message to the audience
3. Impromptu, Extemporaneous, Manuscript and Memorised Speeches
4. Persuasive, Informative, Demonstrative, and Entertaining Speeches
5. Introduction, Presentation, Toast, Roast, Acceptance, Commemoration, Farewell, Eulogy
6. It is a speech of tribute and humorous teasing on the person who is being honoured.
7. Eulogies are delivered at funeral and memorial ceremonies
8. An audience does not like listening to you
9. Such audience is sympathetic to the speaker
10. Provide proper evidences

Assignments

1. Read the 'British council' article on the fear of public speaking and note important points. The QR code is given below.



2. An article on improving your voice for presentation is here. Read and note important points. The QR code is given below.



3. Here is the podcast series of the British Council for enhancing your speaking skills. Scan the QR code given below and listen to a unit every day.



4. Practice different role plays to enhance fluency and confidence.

Suggested Reading

1. Carnegie, Dale, and Dorothy Carnegie. *The Quick and Easy Way to Effective Speaking*. Cedar, 1990.
2. Gallo, Carmine. *Talk Like Ted: The 9 Public Speaking Secrets of The World's Top Minds*. Macmillan, 2014.
3. Lucas, Stephen and Paul Stob. *The Art of Public Speaking*. McGraw, 2020.

Unit 2

Audio Chats to Enhance Speaking

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ learn about the self-recording process
- ▶ familiarise with the techniques of audio chats to enhance speaking
- ▶ acquaint with online pronunciation aids
- ▶ study various modes of audio chats

Prerequisites

In today's world, speaking skills hold an important place. Good communication skills are prerequisites in almost all fields of our daily engagement, both in professional and personal lives. In the previous units, you have learnt about the origin and development of communication. Throughout the course of history, we can see that speaking skills are essentially important methods of communication. Additionally, it is the most effective way to communicate. The ability to speak actively and effectively is an important communication skill. Active communication skills will enable you to have more open and useful exchanges where your views can be shared and the other participants' ideas can be heard. A language without speech will be reduced to a mere script.

Speaking skills can be enhanced through different methods- the most important being practice. Shedding inhibitions and fear and gaining confidence in speaking is the first step. Gaining fluency comes next. Thereafter, honing your language and pronunciation skills will pave the way for effective and productive communication.

Keywords

Audio chats, Self-recording, Online pronunciation aids



Discussion

Communication is passing information from one person to another. You must have come across the term audio-visual communication. It is the transmission of information ensuring visual and auditory experiences. Films, television programmes, video chats, etc., are some examples of audio visual communication. Audio communication, on the other hand, is any form of transmission that is based on hearing. Audio communicative forms are seen in such platforms as radio, sound records of songs and sound tracks of movies. The auditory com-

munication depends on signals that reach a single person or a group of people. For example, music is an auditory medium that combines instruments and vocals in an organized and continuous manner for the listener. Human hearing is essential to receive audio transmissions that come from a person or media format. Audible communication originates from the mouth in the form of spoken language. The following illustrations will explain to you some of the advantages and disadvantages of audio communication.

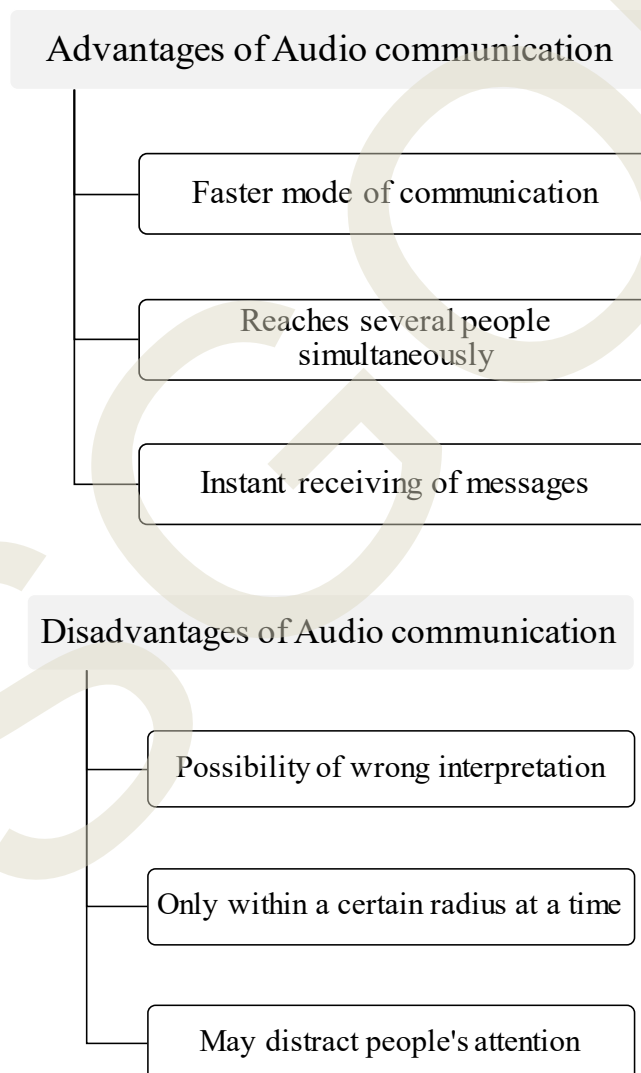


Fig 3.2.1 Advantages and disadvantages of audio communication

3.2.1 Audio Chats to Enhance Speaking

Speaking skills can be enhanced by adopting numerous methods and techniques. Audio chats, in the form of either telephonic conversations or the most modern internet calls, can do a lot in strengthening our speaking skills. The use of VoIP, a recent development in audio communication, is very flexible and cheap. The term stands for Voice over Internet Protocol. It is an alternative way of making phone calls that can be very cheap or completely free of cost. The system is also termed as Internet Telephony, where the 'physical phone' is absent and you can communicate without a telephone handset.

The only requirement here is an internet device which can be a computer, a laptop, a tablet or a smart phone. But the most popular and prevalent form of audio chat is telephone conversation. It is advantageous in many respects as it enables immediate response from the other person and is highly interactive. A telephone conversation facilitates long distance communication and can be used to share confidential information. In the contemporary world, this mode of communication is very common among business firms where they successfully implement it in marketing sections. So, next time you receive a telephone call from a DTH operator reminding you of your subscription due or a call from a bank explaining their new loan schemes, keep in mind this is how telephone marketing is done effectively, by audio chats.

Here are a few etiquettes or 'protocols' to be followed before going for an audio chat or telephone communication.

- It should be noted that both the

persons, the speaker and the listener, should be receptive of what the other person is trying to express. It does not matter what you say and how you say. The underlying point is that the conversation can be meaningful only if both the parties are receptive.

- You should ask the other person whether he or she has enough time to talk or not. This is a good manner in communication.
- Important things to focus while communicating is to be active and respond positively to any kind of disturbances which may arise while the communication progresses. In case of interruptions, let the other person know straight away. Solve the interruption first so that mature and healthy relationships can be built.
- One of the important tricks to enhance your telephone communication skills is to record your voice. Later you can examine your voice, tone, vocal quality, intonation, words, grammatical errors etc. This will be more beneficial when you revisit it again and correct the mistakes.

Look at the illustration below to understand how to be effective in audio conversations.



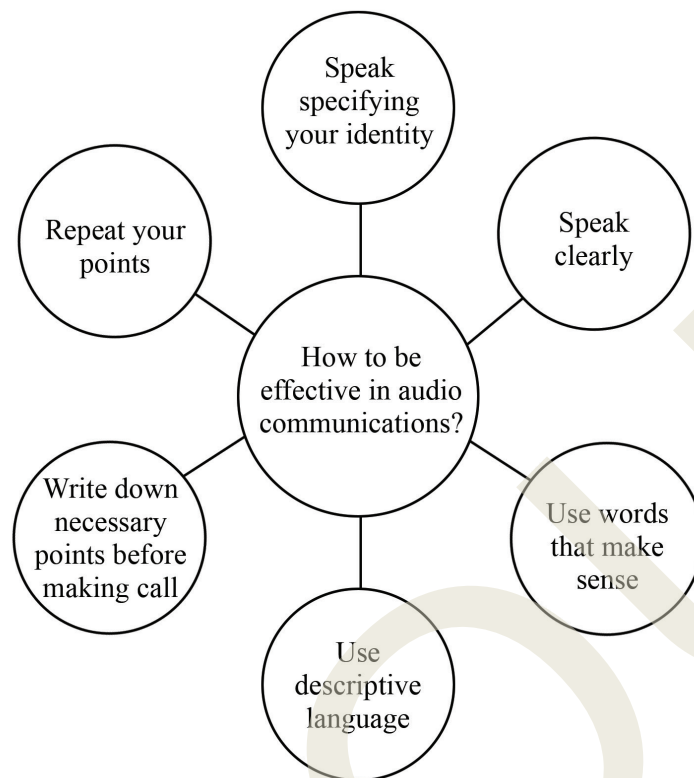


Fig 3.2.2 How to make effective audio conversations

The following are a few common tips to apply to communicate fruitfully over the telephone.

- Remember that the other person has no non-verbal signs or gestures: Unlike in video conferencing, the other person won't be able to catch your smiling, nodding or shaking the head. Visual cues are completely absent and so you are compelled to communicate everything verbally, using appropriate words.
- Watch your tone of voice: People won't always communicate just with their words. Messages on many situations are conveyed in the way or manner of speech. If your voice tone seem disinterest-

ed or bored, then the very effort to establish a good communication will fail. You may not be seen, but much can be communicated through your voice.

- Voicemails/audio clips should be clear and brief: These are not direct communication methods with people, but they serve an important role today. If you plan to deliver detailed information, choose email, not voice mails. If you leave or send a voice message, make sure that your message is to the point without any lengthy descriptions. Ensure that the other person knows how he/she can respond to you, if it is required.

- ▶ Summarise at the end: It is always good to make it clear about what was discussed or agreed during the conversation. This will further put everything understandable by reducing any possible misunderstandings.
- ▶ Ask, if you don't understand: It is always wise to use this idea while communicating via telephone. If the native language is not the communication language, there will be chances of not getting the points the other person wants to share. Or there may also be external factors such as background noise. The reason doesn't matter, just ask for clarification, then the communication will be effective.

3.2.2 The Practice of Self-recording

There are three things to be taken care of while speaking a language: knowing the apt words (vocabulary), arranging the words in the correct order (grammar), and uttering the words properly (pronunciation). Problems associated with all these three can be solved by adopting the self-recording strategy. Self-analysis is a major pathway in learning something new. By doing self-recording, you understand your level of improvement and make multiple attempts of self-correction. Now, why should we record our speaking? Recording own voice and then listening back to it has a number of benefits in communication. It is only when we can listen back to something we have spoken that we get the exact understanding of our manner of speaking, fluency, timing, accuracy etc.

It is very convenient these days to record

yourselves with the help of a smart phone. You can also request your friends and colleagues to record your conversations with them. The recording should not be too long as it may be difficult for you to analyse it later. Five to ten minutes is ideal.

Once the recording is done, you can work on the following points:

- ▶ Observe the speed at which you spoke. Was it suitable for the situation? Was it similar to the pace of the person you were speaking to?
- ▶ Watch on the hesitation phrases (such as hum, Mmm, ahh, etc.) that appeared in your talk. It won't matter much if you use it sometimes, but try to avoid using it too often.
- ▶ Does your intonation suit the emotion of the words that you use? For example, if you are speaking about something good, does your intonation sound positive?
- ▶ Could you respond appropriately to the other person in the conversation? If they raised a question, did you answer it? Similarly, if they shared some new information, did you respond to it with befitting phrases expressing gratitude?
- ▶ Were you giving the other person a chance to express their views and ideas? Or were you just responding to what they said rather than contributing any of your own suggestions?
- ▶ Were you able to listen to the vocabulary you have used? Were those words apt for the situation and person you were speaking



to? Was the vocabulary diverse or could you have added more effective words?

3.2.3 Online Pronunciation Aids

The path, which is suggested in the case of learning pronunciation, is the sooner the better. The learning of pronunciation has to start as early possible. One of the common mistakes made by any international students of English language is that they fail to pay adequate attention to pronunciation. This sense of carelessness is mainly due to the belief that pronunciation is less important compared to other aspects of English language such as vocabulary and grammar.

Pronunciation is essential to proper com-

munication because the incorrect use of pronunciation undoubtedly leads to the message being misunderstood by the recipient. Imagine a situation where a student's grammar and vocabulary is exceptional; he or she may be able to write good English. If that same student doesn't possess the basic knowledge of pronunciation despite having an excellent knowledge of grammar, syntax etc.—his or her communication in English will be a failure. He or she will be able to write in English, but will not be able to make a meaningful sentence when speaking and thus fails to convey message through communication. Thus students studying English as a second language should give all the aspects of language equal importance. Here are a few general steps on how to improve pronunciation.

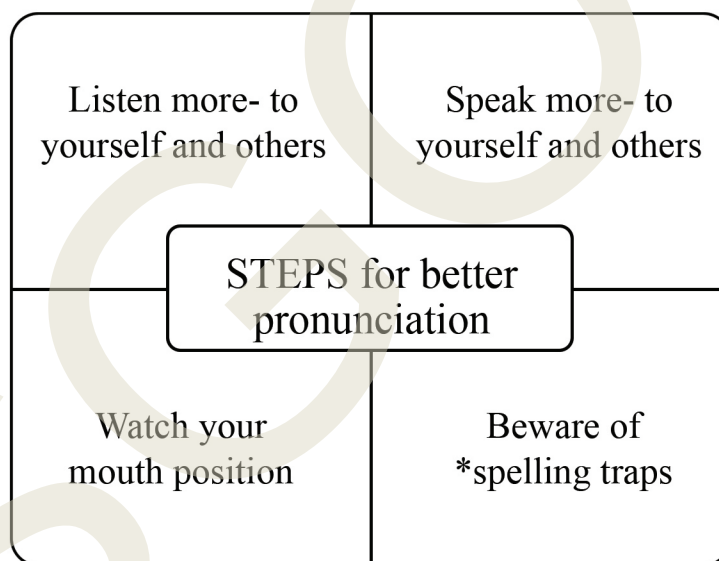


Fig 3.2.3 Steps to improve pronunciation

Spelling traps – These are the traps in which you may fall when you completely rely on the spelling of a word. The focus on spelling will lead one to mispronounce many words in English. You must have understood while studying Phonetics that English is not a phonetic language and hence we often do not say many words the same way it is spelled.

If you want to improve your English pronunciation, internet is a fantastic place to explore. Online pronunciation aids are abundant these days and only a selective approach is required. You have a large number of excellent, free tools and resources to use: videos, audio lessons, podcasts and voice recorders. Podcasts are episodic series of spoken words

and digital audio files that a user can download to a personal device for easy listening. Videos are very useful for learning the positions and movements of the mouth. Audios, such as audio lessons and podcasts, are excellent aids

for improving your listening skills and learning about and hearing word stress in English.

Here are a few effective and useful online platforms for improving pronunciation.

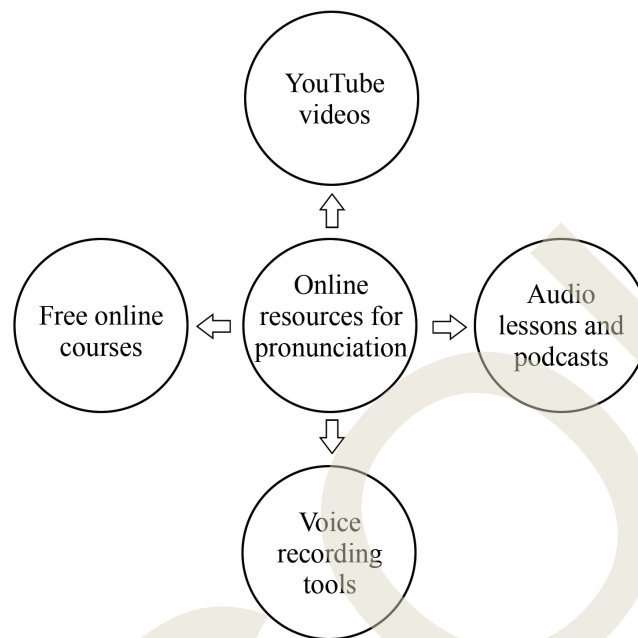


Fig 3.2.4 Online resources for improving pronunciation

Out of the four resources mentioned in the above illustration, two are to be explained in detail below. They are:

(1) YouTube Video Lessons

Video is probably the best resource for improving English pronunciation via online. There are many helpful online videos for correcting your English pronunciation and English accent. The advantage of video resources is that you can see the correct mouth positions clearly, you can repeat sections of lessons that you find difficult and you can find a teacher who suits your style of learning. There are a number of great options with videos on YouTube. You may have an idea about what areas of pronunciation speakers of second language find hard to learn, you can search and

find videos to work on the areas you need to improve.

You can search for the area you want to improve on English Pronunciation video to find YouTube video lessons. For example, you can type word stress or accent in English pronunciation video to find video lessons on word stress. By adjusting the speed in videos on YouTube you can slow down the video to see the mouth movements. There are provisions for downloading your favourite videos and you can watch them later.

Here are a few videos links for you:

1. https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=british+pronunciation

(Pronounce 100most common English

words correctly)

2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7dxc7dLY_mI

(How to pronounce the English alphabet)

3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxQUapA-2w4>

(All 44 English speech sounds in 75 minutes)

4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdtUjWb0O9w>

(50 words you are pronouncing wrongly)

5. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vu6UVwkUgzc>

(Syllables and word stress in English)

(2) Audio Lessons and Podcasts

Many of us these days rely on visual platforms for learning. But there are audio resources as well for better results in pronunciation improvement. One important advantage of audio resources is that they can enhance your listening skills as well. It's a proven fact that students with excellent listening skills can outsmart those who don't have good listening skills. There are many free English pronunciation online lessons in audio formats.

Here are a few links for you from some audio sources.

(1) <https://archive.org/details/EnglishPronunciationPractice/English+pronunciation+-+unit+16+-+phonetic+symbols.mp3>

(Phonetic symbols)

(2) <https://archive.org/details/EnglishPronunciationPractice/English+pronunciation+-+unit+15+-+8+-+commonly+mispronounced+words.mp3>

(Commonly mispronounced words)

(3) <https://archive.org/details/EnglishPronunciationPractice/English+pronunciation+-+unit+13-+7+-+word+stress+-+more+practice+with+common+words.mp3>

(Word stress- practices)

(4) <http://howjsay.com/>

(A free online audio dictionary of English pronunciation)

Podcasts are like radio shows that you can listen to or download from your laptop or mobile device. There are thousands of podcasts on numerous topics that you could imagine. You can use podcast to improve your listening skills, vocabulary, and for learning English expressions, fluency and pronunciation.

Here are a few podcast links for you.

(1) <https://player.fm/podcasts/English-Pronunciation>

(2) <https://beckeraccentreduction.com/free-podcasts/>

(3) <https://tunein.com/podcasts/Language-Learning/English-Pronunciation-Pod-p399963/>

You can also download the following applications, from Google Play in the android platform smart phones.

Recap

- ▶ Audio communication is any form of transmission that is based on hearing
- ▶ Audio chats, in the form of either telephonic conversations or the most modern internet calls, can do a lot in strengthening our speaking skills
- ▶ By doing self-recording, you understand your level of improvement and make multiple attempts of self-correction
- ▶ Pronunciation is essential to proper communication because the incorrect use of pronunciation undoubtedly leads to the message being misunderstood by the recipient
- ▶ The use of various online pronunciation aids is very effective in enhancing pronunciation skills
- ▶ The major online pronunciation resources are video sources like YouTube and audio sources such as podcasts

Objective Questions

1. What are the three things that need to be taken care of while speaking a language?
2. What is meant by spelling traps?
3. What is the main advantage of online lessons?
4. What is meant by communication?
5. What is meant by audio-visual communication?
6. What are the advantages of audio communication?
7. What is VoIP?
8. In which type of communication visual cues are completely absent?
9. What is meant by a Podcast?
10. Why lengthy recordings are not advisable in self-recording technique?

Answers

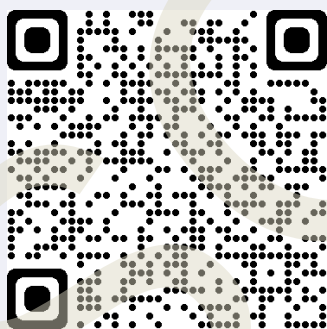
1. Vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation
2. It is a trap that may occur due to over-focus on the spelling as it may lead to mispronunciation
3. It can enhance your listening skills
4. It is passing information from one person to another



5. It is a mode of communication providing both visual and auditory experiences
6. A) Faster B) Reaches several people C) Instant receiving of the message
7. Voice over Internet Protocol
8. Audio chats
9. A Podcast is a programme made available in digital format that can be downloaded and listened to.
10. It may be difficult to analyse such a lengthy file later.

Assignments

1. Self-record your five-minute audio conversation in English with your friend and revisit it, taking down errors, repetitions and lack of clarity in expressions, if any.
2. Choose any twenty five commonly used English words and check if those words are pronounced correctly by us. You can access an online pronouncing dictionary. The link and the QR code are given below.
<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>
 (You can click on the 'speaker symbol' below the respective word for the audio of pronunciation)



3. Discuss the use of Audio Chats to enhance the speaking skills.
4. Detail on the practice of Self-Recording.
5. What do you mean by Online Pronunciation Aids? Elaborate on some of such Online Aids.

Suggested Reading

1. Clay, Marie. *Record of Oral Language: Observing Changes in the Acquisition of Language Structures: A Guide for Teaching*. Heinemann Education, 2015.
2. Power, David. *Introduction to Podcast Technology: Discover the Essential Tools and Techniques You Need to Record, Produce and Launch Your Podcast*. CreateSpace, 2016.
3. Savage, Steve. *The Art of Digital Audio Recording: A Practical Guide for Home and Studio*, Oxford UP, 2011.

Unit 3

The Written Word

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learners will be able to:

- ▶ identify and describe the elements of written communication
- ▶ recognise the various steps involved in writing
- ▶ become familiarised with the use of punctuations in written communication
- ▶ improve their written communication skills

Prerequisites

Several people enjoy devouring books. It is one of the preferred pastimes of many. People start reading at a very young age, whether it is a book, an essay, or even a road sign. We seldom ever stop to consider how it all began because it is so commonplace. We rarely consider the necessity that existed in ancient times and led to the development of the written word.

Today, the majority of us read for enjoyment because books provide us the chance to see new places and try new activities. Human empathy is a powerful tool for connecting us to one another through stories. The invention of writing may be the most significant since the development of language. But when the ancients first began to write, storytelling wasn't what they had in mind. Let's discuss what writing entails.

Keywords

Writing, Drafts, Revision, Editing, Proofreading, Diction, Variety, Punctuations

Discussion

3.3.1 The Written Word

Writing is a form of human communication that uses signs and symbols to communicate language and emotion. Writing is typically used to supplement spoken language or speech in most languages. Writing is a technique created by human culture. Writing is dependent on a system of signs or symbols as in the case of speaking which functions on the basics of linguistic elements such as vocabulary, grammar, and semantics. A text is a product of writing, and a reader is the one who reads a text. Publication, narrative, correspondence, and journaling are a few reasons why people write. The preservation of history, preservation of culture, media transmission of knowledge, and development of legal systems have all benefited from writing.

Writing is a mode of expression that enables people to articulate their thoughts and feelings, develop strong arguments from their knowledge and beliefs, and transmit meaning through well-written prose. Written communication can, in its most sophisticated form, be as vibrant as a piece of art. Writing progresses from simple phrases to complex stories and essays as youngsters master the writing process and add new skills on top of refined ones. Each year, an individual's ability to display more complex writing skills is aided by the growth of their spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and organisation skills.

Writing abilities are a crucial component of communication. When compared to communicating to someone directly or over the phone, writing effectively enables you to convey your message to a far bigger audience.

You might be required to create a report, plan, or strategy for work; a grant proposal or press release for a volunteer position; or you

might want to use a blog to share your thoughts with the world. Of course, if you desire a new job, you must have an excellent CV or bio-data free of spelling and grammar errors.

Since anyone may now be an independent publisher, we are seeing an increasing amount of instances of poor writing both in print and online. Bad writing abilities give out bad initial impressions, and many readers will respond negatively right away if they find a spelling or grammar error. For instance, a spelling error on a commercial website could make visitors question the reliability of the organization and the website.

3.3.2 The Writing Process

No two writers approach the writing process in the same manner. There is no “correct” or “incorrect” method to write. The steps listed here are merely a depiction of the most frequently utilised ones because it may be a highly messy and unpredictable process.

Prewriting

Whatever you do prior to producing a draft of your paper is known as prewriting. It involves contemplation, taking notes, conversing with others, idea-generating, outlining, and information gathering. Examples of prewriting are conducting interviews, library research, and data analysis.

Though prewriting is the initial step in the writing process, coming up with ideas is a continuous process.

Draft

When you write, you organise your thoughts to form sentences and paragraphs. Here, your focus should be on thoroughly articulating and supporting your arguments. Here, you start to link your concepts together as well. No matter how much planning and thinking you do, the



process of transforming your ideas into words alters them; frequently, the words you choose elicit new thoughts or meanings. At this point, don't be concerned with matters like spelling. This first version is often writer-centered because you are expressing what you think and know about the subject.

Revising

Reread what you just wrote. Rearrange the words, sentences, or paragraphs in a way that makes sense. Add or remove sentences as per the requirement. If you feel you need to, conduct more research. Remove terms that are overused or ambiguous. Make sure the writing flows by reading it aloud. Insert transitions to connect sentences.

Editing and Proofreading

Ensure that each sentence is complete, and proper punctuation, capitalization, and spelling are used. Words that are misused or ambiguous should be changed. Spell checking your document is the final thing you should do before getting it printed. Wait till the other stages of this creative process are finished before editing your work.

3.3.3 Writing Plan

Planning

The first step in writing is planning. Your writing is based on the framework of your plan. Understanding the task is the initial step in writing-planning, which is followed by idea generation and systematic organisation.

Be sure you comprehend the project and have a clear plan on how you will manage your time while you complete your assignment before you start writing. Preparation is beneficial since it can assist you in organising your thoughts and prioritising the material you deliver. By means of planning, you will be able

to:

- ▶ conclude with a convincing argument
- ▶ plan out your writing's logical framework and conclusion
- ▶ not worry about all of your intricate arguments, structures, etc. while trying to come up with the appropriate words to convey your ideas
- ▶ dedicate yourself to not diverting from the topic

Organising

Students sometimes struggle to pick out the most crucial details from all the information they generated throughout the planning stage. Students frequently struggle with knowing how to properly use that material in their writings. As a result, after the students have created their writing plans, it is necessary for them to arrange their ideas. Students will, during such a stage of the writing process:

- ▶ describe in more detail the concepts that were provided to them during the planning phase.
- ▶ find out what details, if any, are still required to complete the missing pieces.
- ▶ get that knowledge.
- ▶ put their concepts in a coherent order that makes sense.

Drafts and Revision

Students will write a draft version in the initial writing step that incorporates the concepts developed during the planning stage and subsequently organised in the organisation stage. During the first writing phase, people must coordinate constant cognitive demands like:

- ▶ combining previously planned concepts with fresh ideas
- ▶ keeping in mind the paper's aim and following the standards of grammar
- ▶ taking the target audience into account

Although editing and revising are typically viewed as one procedure, they are actually two related steps. The difference between editing and revising in the writing process is crucial to understand. For example, they must recognise that the process of writing is one that calls for them to use editing marks when they update their writings. Yet, the editing stage could also call for alterations to the content or structure. The following are done through the editing stages:

- ▶ check the grammar of language
- ▶ verify the spelling
- ▶ go through their punctuation.
- ▶ check to see if their concepts are clear and if their objectives have been accomplished.

Editing the draft can be done in two ways, self-editing and peer-editing. Self-editing is the process of revising one's own writing. The editor should read the text loud and pay attention to the sentence structure and word choice. He or she ought to listen as well to see if any words have been omitted. Be aware that some people could find it challenging to spot errors during self-editing.

When a peer reviews a paper, peer-editing takes place. The reviewer might be better able to identify the concepts that are challenging to comprehend. Through peer editing, reviewing one's own paper, discussing thoughts and

viewpoints, and collaborating with a peer, a person might obtain extra insight.

It is vital to differentiate between the editing and revising stages, as mentioned previously. The writer might think about the quality of composition, content, and clarity throughout revision. In order to decide how well the edits and comments can contribute to bettering one's papers, one should consider the editing ideas offered by their peers and those they themselves came to through self-editing. For instance, they could:

- ▶ use suggestions and comments
- ▶ change the text's order and make any necessary modifications.
- ▶ develop concepts
- ▶ write their essays again

A person can decide to use or not use each and every comment they get. They should decide how to incorporate and build upon these new ideas after deciding which suggestions to use. They should go through this method at least once again before submitting a final output to make sure the new concepts have helped them achieve their goals and have made their papers clearer.

3.3.4 The Well-Written Sentence

A well-written sentence must not just be grammatically correct but also have clarity and should be interesting. Clarity refers to communicating to the reader what the author wanted to convey; interest refers to how well it reads and draws our attention with its simplicity, freshness, sound, and rhythm. These virtues are largely dependent on the sentence structure or the choice of words. It achieves this by focusing on conciseness, emphasis, rhythm, and variety.

Concision

Clarity of goal determines how concise something is. It should not be mistaken with utmost brevity. A short sentence may be a combination of five words, however if the same meaning can be said in seventy, the sentence

is not considered to be concise. But, a sentence of seventy words is hardly brief; it qualifies as concise if the point can be expressed in no more than that. You can prevent some types of wordiness by adhering to a few basic sentence-construction standards.

Examples of Concise Writing

Too Wordy	Concise
At the beginning of Gogol's life he is really confused. His parents are not from America, they are Bengali. This is complicated by the fact that Gogol cannot identify with Americans. Add that to the fact he has trouble identifying as Bengali and you have an identity crisis.	Gogol's identity crisis is rooted in his inability to fully associate with his parents' Bengali culture or his American companion's lifestyle.

Emphasis

During writing, repetition of important words and phrases or careful word placement to give some words extra weight and prominence serve as the emphasis. Usually, the final part of a sentence is the most emphatic.

Eg: I *myself* solved the problem.

Rhythm

Punctuation and word stress patterns in sentences determine the rhythm of writing. Short sentences make your information more concise, whereas long ones sound more formal. Your writing becomes monotonous when each sentence has the same pace and structure.

Eg: The *pot* is *hot*.

A *man* is in the *van*.

Variety

Writers frequently make the mistake of thinking that using short, straightforward sentences of a similar length and style will make the content clearer for the reader, but this really produces fragmented, unsophisticated paragraphs that do not attract the reader's attention. By changing sentence structure and style, skilled authors add variety to their writing. The use of a variety of sentence types helps in lessening repetition and emphasises key ideas in the text. For instance, a good way to hold the reader's attention in a paragraph is to insert a brief rhetorical question between longer sentences. The paragraph has more rhythm and intrigue when the fragmented sentences are combined into one longer sentence.

Sentence Variety Checklist

- Repetition with skill
- Part of speech variation
- Types of sentences
- Use transition words
- Mix up sentence lengths

Diction

In writing, diction refers to a writer's choice of words. The quality of a piece of writing is significantly influenced by word choice. A writer can convey a point more readily and clearly by using carefully chosen words. But, using the wrong words can lead to readers misinterpreting your message by readers. Additionally, it might even confuse the reader. There are two types of diction: formal diction and informal diction.

Formal Diction: This type of diction calls for the use of formal language, which is reserved for use in formal contexts. This kind of diction uses complex vocabulary and adheres to grammatical conventions. Individuals write articles, speak to audiences, give formal presentations, and even address news conferences using this kind of diction. In addition, formal language is also used in professional text, commercial documents, and legal documents. In casual contexts, formal language is generally avoided.

Informal Diction: The term "informal diction" describes the use of everyday, conversational phrases when speaking or writing. It is what people use to communicate with friends and coworkers in real life. When composing personal letters and emails to friends and

family, you can use informal diction. When writing novels, short tales, and poetry, some authors also employ informal language.

Meaning: There are two possible meanings for words: the connotative meaning and the denotative meaning. Denotation relates to the word's straightforward, conventional meaning and use. Contrarily, connotation refers to how a term is applied in a certain context, including the word's numerous applications, associations, and linkages.

In everyday English, we frequently play with denotations and connotations. As an easy illustration, when someone uses the ironic slang term "prettttty," we know that they aren't talking about anything that is in any way attractive. The term "pretty" denotes its opposite in context: something that is so ugly that calling it "pretty" is purposefully absurd. When we employ connotative language, we let the surrounding context determine the meaning of the sentence.

Strong word choice may evoke images, feelings, and more in the reader in both poetry and prose, and the associations and connotations that words carry with them are very important in this.



Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal
Ring up	call	look into	investigate	point out	indicate
lead to	cause	look like	resemble	put in	insert
leave out	omit	lots of	much	put off	postpone
let	permit	make out	discern	put up	tolerate
link up	connect	make up	fabricate	put up with	tolerate
lively	energetic	mend	repair	put/set down	deposit
look at	examine	need to	required	rack up	accumulate

Fig 3.3.1 Formal and informal words list

Clarity and Simplicity in Writing

Clear and uncomplicated writing is good writing. Two questions to ask yourself about each sentence as you edit for clarity are: what am I truly attempting to convey? have I been as precise as I possibly can about that?

Here are some suggestions for improving the clarity of your writing.

1. *Speak It Out Loud*

Sometimes a teacher would point out a confusing passage in a student's essay and ask her to clarify what she meant. She responds well, and the teacher says "That's terrific. Add that to your writing."

"Seriously?", she asks in response. "Can I write it exactly like that?"

"Of course, it can be written exactly like that."

To clarify a piece, try discussing it to a

friend. Talk aloud to yourself if your friends are becoming weary of hearing about your personal statement.

2. *Double-check your Meaning*

Sometimes a confusing passage reveals a lack of thought rather than a communication breakdown. How frequently we really do not know what we mean and don't even recognise that we don't know what we mean is startling. Individuals often claim that they "simply can't describe it" when, in reality, they are unsure of what they are actually attempting to communicate.

Writing clearly mirrors thinking clearly. Uncertain thinking frequently manifests in writing.

You'll need to clarify your meaning before attempting to edit the writing. Speaking aloud is helpful once more. Delete the passage if it turns out that you are not making a significant point.

3. *Speak Plainly*

Complex is simple. Simple is difficult. Reduce your thoughts to their bare minimum. Unless there is a good reason, use simple, unambiguous language.

Figurative Language

A writer would employ figurative language to convey a meaning other than the literal meaning in order to infer a distinct notion or thought.

It is not always the case that when someone says it is a million degrees outside, they actually mean it is a million degrees outside. Instead, the author is attempting to establish the notion that the weather is extremely hot. Figurative language is being used in this sentence.

Figurative language is used to enhance or embellish the writing. To put it another way, writers often use language to convey a message that is not literal. Writing obtains impact as a result of using this.

Some of the mostly used figures are similes, metaphors, personifications, idioms, allusions, etc.

Collocations

Even if you've never heard of collocations, we are willing to wager that you use them frequently. Predictable word sequences are known as collocations. When used, one anticipates that they will flow naturally and make sense to the reader or listener. They may consist of

two or more words and may belong to almost any word class (e.g., nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives).

It's possible for people learning English as a second language to find that their progress stops once they reach a specific competency level. Collocation usage done correctly can be a terrific method to ramp up the pace once more.

Examples are:

Ask a favour

Make a list

Pay a visit

Go insane

Punctuations

The tool that helps us organise our thinking and make it simpler to analyse and express our thoughts is called punctuation. Period, comma, apostrophe, quotation, question, exclamation, brackets, braces, parenthesis, dash, hyphen, ellipsis, colon, and semicolon are all acceptable forms of punctuation in English. The usage of some punctuation is explained in this section.

Comma: Commas are typically used to combine two independent clauses with conjunctions and to improve clarity. They launch series and introduction phrases. Moreover, they are employed to distinguish independent and dependent clauses. The Oxford comma is the comma preceding a coordinating conjunction in a sequence.

Eg: *At the end of the movie, two new actors appeared all of a sudden.*

I enjoyed the coffee, and I liked the tea.

I have a mobile phone, a laptop, and a tablet.

Commas can be used in sentences to denote interjections.



Eg: *The old man said the boy was a thief.*

The old man, said the boy, was a thief.

The old man is speaking in the first sentence. The boy is speaking in the second.

Apostrophe: Possession and contractions are indicated using apostrophes. Moreover, they are employed to indicate a quotation mark in text that has already been quoted.

Eg: *It was Mary's pen that the boy wrote with.*

"Tom said, 'If you come here, it would be better.'"

Quotation: When anything is directly copied from another work or was uttered, quotation marks are used to let the reader know. If a word that is employed in a particular context or otherwise deserves special attention, it should also have quotation marks around it. In colloquial contexts, quotations can also be employed to indicate irony.

Eg: *Leela said, "Is this my new car?"*

The doctor claims, "The use of tobacco will lead to cancer."

Question and Exclamation: To denote interrogative and exclamatory statements, use question and exclamation signs. These two punctuation marks aren't typically employed in academic writing. Every question becomes rhetorical in the absence of discourse, thus it would be preferable to reword it as a statement.

Hyphen: The most frequent usage of hyphens is to join two compound terms.

Eg: *mother-in-law, long-term, sun-dried*

Dash: Dashes are generally not used, however they signify a divergent thinking within a thought. The "en" dash and the "em" dash are the two different types of dashes. En dashes have a similar appearance to hyphens but serve a different function. An easy way to remember that en dashes are shorter and em dashes are longer is to think of them as being the length of a n and m, respectively.

Eg: *I think that the boy is a fool— but doesn't everybody think that boy is?*

When necessary, dashes can take the place of commas and semicolons. They can take the place of commas to indicate unnecessary details and semicolons to indicate examples. Dashes should not be used frequently in your writing despite their versatility. Dashes are versatile and simple to overuse, which reduces rather than improves the clarity of your text.

Parenthesis (), Brackets [], Braces {}

Non-essential details that can be omitted from sentences without changing their meaning are noted in parenthesis. When a writer is omitting or elaborating within a quotation in academic writing, brackets are most frequently used. Anytime an ellipsis or explanation is used, the writer inserts a bracket within the quote and then closes the bracket to continue the sentence.

Seldom used, braces are used to essentially create a list within a list.

Eg: *Jack (the man who owns the shop in the street) is Janet's brother.*

The woman claims, "He [the actor in the movie] is an example of a versatile actor."

Before leaving the building I need to check it {the doors, windows, and the gas connection}, unplug all the electronics, and give the key to the security Officer.

Ellipsis: Ellipsis indicates that a word or words have been omitted. The symbol features four dots (...) rather than three if the omission also takes place the end of a sentence.

Colon: The statement "consider what follows" is made with colons. The text that comes after the colon must somehow justify, validate, or characterise what came before it. Make sure the clause that follows the mark can stand on its own in order to use a colon effectively (unless it is a list). Your writing does not have to be a complete sentence after the colon because everything that comes before it must be.

Eg: *The policeman asked me three questions: what is your name, what are you doing here, where is your house .*

Semicolon: Two related main clauses can be linked with a semicolon.

Eg: *The baby dirtied the whole after after her play; her mother had to clean it up.*

You can also use a conjunctive adverb, such as however, moreover, nevertheless, furthermore, consequently, or thus to unite two related main clauses. Moreover, conjunctive adverbs can be used after a comma.

Eg: *The baby dirtied the whole after after her play; consequently, her mother had to clean it up.*



Recap

- ▶ Writing uses signs and symbols to communicate language and emotion
- ▶ Writing enables people to articulate their thoughts and feelings
- ▶ The writing process involves prewriting, preparing draft, revising, editing and proofreading
- ▶ The writing plan includes planning, organising, writing drafts and revising
- ▶ Editing the draft can be done in two ways, self-editing and peer-editing
- ▶ A well-written sentence should have clarity and be interesting
- ▶ It should be concise
- ▶ Emphasis is repeating the same word to give importance to it
- ▶ Punctuation and word stress patterns in sentences determine the rhythm of writing
- ▶ The usage of variety improves the effectiveness of written communication
- ▶ Diction is a writer's choice of words
- ▶ Meanings are of two types: the connotative meaning and the denotative meaning
- ▶ Clear and uncomplicated writing is a good writing
- ▶ Figurative language is used to convey a meaning other than its literal meaning
- ▶ Predictable word sequences are known as collocations
- ▶ Punctuations help us organise our thinking and make it simpler to analyse and express our thoughts

Objective Questions

1. What determines the conciseness of a sentence?
2. What is the term used to describe the repetition of important words and phrases in a sentence?
3. What is the regular repeated pattern of sound called?
4. What are the two types of dictions?
5. What is a word's straightforward and conventional meaning called?
6. What is used by writers to embellish or enhance the writing?
7. Give an example of a collocation.
8. Which is the punctuation that is typically used to combine two independent clauses with conjunctions in order to improve clarity?
9. Which punctuation indicates possession and contractions?
10. What is the name given to the longer dash?

Answers

1. Clarity
2. Emphasis
3. Rhythm
4. Formal diction and Informal diction
5. Denotative meaning
6. Figurative language
7. Ask a favour
8. Comma
9. Apostrophe
10. Em dash

Assignments

1. Several of these sentences need to be completely redone. Others use words that need to be simplified or clarified. Do your best to read every word and every sentence.
 - a. Having a conversation with my friend and reflecting on her life and how it has impacted mine has increased my desire to take action to assist those who make poor decisions.
 - b. Many Indian mothers I've met with struggle to strike a balance between career and family.
 - c. I will be a formidable contender in the area of international law after I have mastered the three Middle Eastern languages that are most commonly spoken.
 - d. I will be able to use my understanding of the US and my desire to advance the rights of children in my future work as an advocate.
 - e. I would not have first considered a career in transportation, but I figured working abroad would broaden my horizons by giving me the self-assurance to choose my own path.
2. Write an essay on the steps involved in the writing process.



Suggested Reading

1. Brooks, Cleanth. *Fundamentals of Good Writing*. Harcourt, 1950.
2. Harmon, William and Hugh Holman. *A Handbook to Literature*. Pearson, 2006.
3. Kane, Thomas. *The New Oxford Guide to Writing*. Oxford University Press, 1988.
4. Peter Clark, Roy. *Writing Tools*. Little Brown, 2006.



Conventions of Social Media Writing

Learning Outcomes

Upon the completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ analyse the significance of writing on social media
- ▶ evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using social media and sharing social media messages
- ▶ become aware of the various tools that can be used in social media writings
- ▶ learn to write social media messages effectively

Prerequisites

Our entire lives have been digitalised. We have quick access to every service. Be it instruction, administration, taxi booking, purchasing goods and services, ordering food, receiving health advice, directions, or amusement. The way we socialise has undergone one of the biggest transformations in our daily lives as a result of the internet. The development of social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram has altered how we go about living our daily lives.

In reality, we can reach our family and friends with a single text or video call. Social media is not just a place to engage with your friends and family anymore. Much more than that is involved. It has evolved into a space where you may express your opinions, upload images, videos, and tales from a small portion of your life. In actuality, the majority of people began using the internet to sign up for social media sites. Some of these social media users were unaware of the various uses for this incredible tool we call the Internet.

Big business groups were aware from the beginning that social media is a great way to target relevant people who might become their future consumers. No medium is as effective as social media for marketing, promoting, and advertising a brand's



goods and services. Social media offers a great platform for businesses to build human relationships with potential clients that are based on trust and dependability. We will talk about strategies for making your content writing for social media particularly productive in this unit.

Keywords

Social media, Content, Audience, Linguistic checks, Tools, Shares, Possibilities, Problems

Discussion

Social media makes it easier for people to communicate with one another online. Social media encompasses a wide range of applications and platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube, that let users share content, communicate online, and create communities. More than 4.7 billion individuals, or nearly 60% of the world's population, use social media.

Social media started out as a tool to communicate with friends and family, but it was quickly broadened to serve a variety of needs. MySpace became the first network in 2004 to have one million active users each month. Businesses flocked to these platforms as social media grew in the years that followed, with the introduction of Facebook and Twitter because they could instantly reach an audience on a global scale.

Social media can take many different forms, including video sharing, social gaming, business networking sites, virtual worlds, review sites, and more. Individuals use a variety of social media platforms to connect with potential employers, locate people around the world with similar interests, and share their opinions on social networks. Politicians and governments use social media to interact with voters and citizens.

Social media is an important platform for

businesses. Businesses utilise the platform to locate and interact with customers, promote and advertise products, track consumer trends, and provide customer care or support. The potential of social media to gather data enables organisations to concentrate on marketing initiatives and market research. This aids in the promotion of goods and services by making it possible to offer potential clients targeted, timely, and exclusive deals and coupons. Through social media-connected loyalty programmes, social media can also aid in developing client relationships.

Media outlets increasingly employ social media writing, which has developed into a specialised kind of communication, to share both “breaking news” and other types of material. It enables them to connect with a sizable and varied audience around the world. A social media post typically includes a brief teaser to grab readers’ attention along with a link to the story’s website. The exchange of news, information, and opinions has become commonplace on social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Writing content specifically for social media audiences, typically across many key social media platforms, is known as social media content development. Long-form LinkedIn essays, quick captions for reels, and anything else that comes between might all fall under this category.

Before I start, I'd like to ask you a question. Do you remember the last article you started reading on a blog, social media post, or ebook but couldn't finish because you couldn't connect, leaving it unfinished? Do you understand why that occurred? The author of the social media post was unable to draw in and hold the reader's interest due to poor content structuring.

Writing for social media is distinct from producing content for blogs and websites since it calls for in-depth familiarity with the audiences, trends, and inside jokes of various social media platforms. A brand's social media presence must include social media writing. A campaign or your overall social media marketing plan could be made or broken by it. When done well, social writing directly affects engagement and conversions and supports long-term corporate objectives. Writing creatively for social media requires careful planning and organisation.

The following are the ideal content for social media:

- ▶ Why are you doing this?
- ▶ How exactly would this benefit the audience?
- ▶ What exactly are you offering?

Write in the manner as described. Tell them your reason behind writing it, how you can help them with their targets, and then what you're offering it. Never introduce your message to your audience by detailing what you are offering. This is because they are unfamiliar with you and have no interest in your goods or services.

While discussing the why and how, you speak more from the heart, taking into account the requirements of your audience and dealing with human behaviour. When telling a

narrative, pay attention to why. Without an understanding of your audience, storytelling is impossible.

3.4.1 How to Write Creatively for Social Platforms?

You must establish a framework using the following steps: Knowledge, Consideration, and Decision

Knowledge: Be the one to solve the issue. The audience is looking for answers to their difficulties or perhaps they are just curious to hear the answer. To find the answers they need, they are looking for content like blogs, captions, ebooks, video clips, etc.

A creative writer is useful at this point. You can write breath-taking blog articles, captions, video scripts, and much more that can assist you in engaging with your audience if you have some brilliant talents in creative writing for social media.

Consideration: Your consumers will be curious to learn more about what you do and your method of operation if your content is engaging and compelling since they now understand why you're doing it.

Decision: A creative writer should create compelling content that allow the consumers to make the final decision—to purchase the good or service that the business offers.

3.4.2 Linguistic Checks: Online Tools to Help

The most captivating portion of the story that can motivate readers to read the entire piece should be included in a social media post. Some media companies have agreements with some social media platforms to make all of their material available to readers. Your writing needs to be strong and successful in order to ensure that you connect with a large audi-



ence. Creating social media content has two main objectives: reaching your audience and producing the desired result. Accuracy, proper language and punctuation are crucial in writing for social media. A thoughtless mistake could damage your brand's reputation.

Write succinctly by condensing your thoughts or presenting less information, but never by changing the words' actual spelling or grammar. It's acceptable to substitute "info" for "information" when speaking. However, avoid replacing words with numbers and letters, such as "4" for "for" or "u" for "you."

In writing social media material well, it is best to emphasise avoiding text abbreviations and other short forms of language that we use in casual style of discussion. By using such abbreviations, you reduce the legibility of the context.

The use of such short forms also serves to discourage consumer engagement by giving readers the impression that the writer is careless and unreliable. Punctuation improves the fluidity with which readers consume content written for social media and is used in whole sentences. But, it's equally important to cut out superfluous language from your writing to prevent the content from becoming monotonous and boring.

The grammar, word choice, and sentence structure of a great piece of content writing for social media are always relevant. Grammar errors are a surefire way to turn off potential consumers. Making grammar your main focus while writing material for social media is crucial. Grammar is a fundamental component of good writing which indicates the professionalism of the company you are writing for. It makes it simpler for readers to comprehend the information and ultimately take desired actions like completing a purchase.

Exclamation marks being used excessively throughout a piece of writing for social media platforms is one of the most frequent errors made by writers. Exclamation marks often attracts potential readers but overusing them in a serious business approach like social media marketing comes across as extremely unprofessional.

For a piece of content writing for social media, it is strongly advised to utilise the right words and link them together in appropriate phrases in order to deliver the message in an engaging and enjoyable manner.

Here are some online tools that will help you in creating error free contents:

1. **Grammarly:** It is good for creating content in clear, effective and correct language. Grammarly will immediately propose a new word, sentence, or piece of punctuation when it notices a writing improvement. Additionally, it will instantly assess the tone and style of your material and suggest modifications you may apply with a single click.
2. **Hemingway App:** It helps in simple and concise writing. Hemingway app helps you write more interestingly and effectively. It highlights excessively complex words and phrases, lengthy sentences, pointless adverbs, passive voice, and many other things. You receive a readability score as well.
3. **ZenPen:** It's a simple writing space where you can shut out all distractions and focus on what matters.
4. **Lately + Hootsuite:** It aids in producing social media captions automatically from other text (e.g. blog posts). It is a platform for social media marketers, which uses AI to create content. When Hootsuite is integrated, it identifies the key words and phrases which increase

audience engagement and generates content based on those insights automatically.

5. **Ginger-** You can write material with this word processing programme, and you'll get feedback in real time while you do so. As an alternative, Ginger provides a grammar checker and sentence rephrasing system to offer you suggestions on how to make your writing better.

3.4.3 Facebook Posts and Blog Articles

Social networking is undeniably growing in popularity in India. Social media first gained popularity in India sometime around 2008, and it is now a significant aspect of online interventions in the daily lives of Indians.

According to estimates, more than 83 million Indians have access to the internet today. Amazingly, India has more internet users than the entire populations of the UK, France and Switzerland. With the increasing use of broadband in Indian homes and the introduction of faster 5G internet, we may expect this number to increase over the next few years.

The user has a wide range of alternatives on social media. Hence, the classification can be classified into six main categories:

Forms of Social Media

- **Social Networking Sites:** These are websites that let you connect with people who share identical interests and upbringing. Typically, they include a profile, a number of user-interaction options, the ability to create groups, etc. Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn are the most widely used so-

cial networking sites.

- **Bookmarking Sites:** Websites that let you save, organise, and handle links to numerous websites and online resources are known as bookmarking sites. Most of these websites let you “tag” your links so that they will not be difficult to find and share. Stumble Upon and Delicious are the most well-liked bookmarking sites.
- **Social News:** Services that let users “vote” on news items and post links to articles or other news items. Since the items with the highest votes are presented prominently, voting is the fundamental social component. Which news stories get more supports are decided by the community. The most well-known are Reddit and Digg.
- **Media Sharing Websites:** Services that let you post and share different types of items such as images and videos. The majority of services include extra social features like profiles, subscriptions, likes, shares, comments, etc. YouTube and Flickr are the most well-liked media sharing sites.
- **Microblogging:** These are services that concentrate on brief updates that are sent to everyone who has signed up to receive them. The most used microblogging site is Twitter.
- **Blog Comments and Forums:** Participants in online forums demand discussions by posting remarks. Similar to other comments, blog comments are attached to blogs and frequently

discuss the subject of the blog article. Like RSS Feeds, there are numerous well-known blogs and forums.

Despite the fact that these are all distinct forms of social media, there may be overlaps across the different platforms. The “status update” feature on Facebook includes microblogging aspects, while the commenting systems on Flickr and YouTube are comparable to those on blogs. There are many social media applications too, which have many overlapping features.

Although all these are social media platforms, what works for Facebook won’t always work for Twitter or Instagram. Each social media network has a unique set of features and a unique interface. It is crucial to keep this variance in mind while producing a piece of content for social media. On Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media platforms, the same content should be presented in a different ways even if it has the same message and value.

Here are a few things to take into account while writing social media messages:

Short but Intelligent Writing: The essential component of producing social media content is developing concrete, concise, and fascinating content that not only grabs the interest of prospective consumers but also effectively conveys the value of the company. The headline is the most important part of this text.

While people are scrolling through their newsfeed on social media, headlines need to be attractive and concise enough to catch their attention. The remainder of the article’s body should be engaging, interesting, and instructive enough to pique readers’ interest in the goods and services of a certain brand. An

effective piece of social media content writing is an important technique to drive traffic to a brand’s websites and blogs and raise consumer involvement.

There are character limits on certain social media networks, but not on others. Therefore, we often keep our social media copy brief.

- ▶ 280 characters on Twitter.
- ▶ In Facebook there is no word restriction, so try for 1-2 brief sentences.
- ▶ In Instagram also there is no word restriction, but try to limit your posts to one or two sentences. You are welcome to use an emoji.

Engagement: Social media messaging, more than other types of communication, must inspire the audience to interact with the material. A number of tactics, such as promptly responding to audience input, holding competitions, and asking the audience to answer a question, can boost engagement. Engagement on social media significantly rises when images and videos are included, as well as when popular subjects are included. This calls for serious thought and investigation, which will pay off if the popular hashtags are picked appropriately.

Consistency: The central message must be expressed consistently and with a single voice on all social media channels. Also, the message must convey the brand’s image; in other words, it must support the brand’s “feel” or personality.

Get on Board with the latest Social Media Trends: It is highly advised to incorporate components of recent social media trends into your piece of content writing for social media in order to attract potential clients. You really must incorporate infographics, memes, GIFs, videos, and other eye-catching displays

of information in your article if you want to enhance reader engagement.

By creating content in this way, you may help social media users relate to your offerings and gain more confidence in your writings. Also, it's critical to remember that using graphics to convey your ideas on social media platforms will help you achieve your goal.

Avoid Plagiarism: The most important thing that every content writer should keep in mind is to exclusively create original content. What makes a content writer successful is their creativity. It increases their standing in the marketplace and further determines how valuable they are to their company.

Understanding the distinction between drawing inspiration from other writers and outright plagiarism is also crucial. So, it is essential to produce unique content for social media in order to accomplish the desired result and stay out of conflict with the law.

Use References: If you cite the sources of the material used in a piece of content writing for social media, its credibility and audience reach drastically enhance. It increases the legitimacy of the writing and creates the impression that the content has been carefully crafted.

Along with raising readers' interest, curiosity, and investment, it also lays the path for much higher consumer engagement across the brand's whole digital ecosystem.

Edit Thoroughly: Editing is a final stage in all writing types that determines its quality. Whenever you've written a piece of content specifically for social media, you should sit down and read it aloud. Put yourself in the position of the social media users who are scrolling through their news stream and stumbling into your article as you read it. Is the information interesting enough? How easy is it for you to

read the text, in your opinion?

Is it grammatically sound and doesn't it sound the same too often? Continue reading it and keep asking the crucial questions to yourself. Request comments from readers after asking them to rank your article. Make necessary modifications as well. Now that you have finished creating the best piece of content, you can publish it.

3.4.4 Forwards and Shares: Possibilities and Problems

As users forward and share posts they find interesting, social media platforms gain a large audience. The main reasons behind sharing or forwarding contents to individuals or groups are to provide other people with interesting and valuable stuff, to make our inner emotions, thoughts and perspectives known to others, to increase the depth of our relationship with others, self-gratification and to show our support towards causes or issues.

Using social media is getting harder and harder every day for various reasons. Social media gives us the ability to express ourselves freely, but it also poses a serious problem because it could violate a person's basic right to privacy. The majority of people are unaware of the issue social media causes, and it has so many negative aspects. Cyberbullying, online crimes, poor academic performance, poor professional performance, and issues in personal relationships are all caused by social media. The most significant issues encountered as a result of using social media are spam, malware, misuse of personal information, account hacking, photo morphing, addiction to social networking sites, and abuse of personal information. In order to reduce the risks of hacking and cybercrime, people should be informed of the benefits and drawbacks of social media and strive to use it more safely.



Social media websites regularly present to us trending news that may or may not be real. Many individuals frequently share the messages to other WhatsApp groups or post the content on Facebook without verifying the information. The peace prevailing in the community and society may be threatened by such false messages. Users risk creating an untenable scenario if they continue to forward information without verifying its accuracy. Those willing to take advantage of society's weaknesses will control it.

Hacking is one of the most frequent dangers or difficulties associated with using social media. Hacking is a type of criminal act in which an individual gains access to a user's account and steals all of their personal data. Hackers deploy a variety of traps, including programs, small files, and other tempting materials, to carry out their attacks. Social media users face a significant problem from hackers. Hacking often poses danger to national peace and security.

Privacy and security concerns are the most significant and difficult aspects of using social media. Social media users are currently very concerned about the privacy issue on these platforms. Social media being open platforms anyone can quickly access other people's personal information.

Being able to upload or share anything on social media sites makes upholding ethics a difficult problem. Maintaining ethics on a personal level is a difficult task in the modern world.

The risks and difficulties of using social media can be diminished by a variety of security measures. The danger can be reduced by using the following security measures:

Using separate user names and unique passwords for each social media account: If a person has many social media accounts, each should have its own username and password. This tactic can lessen the risk of identity theft.

Social media usage necessitates strong privacy settings: A user's privacy settings can control a variety of things, including who can see their profile, what they can see, and how they can access their personal data. Individual information is protected from unwanted use by privacy settings.

Use your device's password or lock code: Those who frequently access social media sites should make use password or lock code of their devices, whether it be a laptop, tablet, or smartphone. The password of the device prevents unauthorised users from accessing social media.

Recap

- ▶ Relevance of social media
- ▶ Social media writing tips
- ▶ Online tools that help in writing social media contents effectively - Grammarly, Hemingway App, ZenPen , Lately + Hootsuite, Ginger
- ▶ Different types of popular social media - Social Networking Sites, Bookmarking Sites, Social News, Media Sharing Websites, Microblogging, Blog Comments and Forums
- ▶ Tips to writing effectively
- ▶ Character limits in various websites
- ▶ The possibilities and problems of sharing and forwarding posts
- ▶ Security measures for preventing hacking and misuse

Objective Questions

1. Name an online tool that helps in creating error-free social media content.
2. What are the services that concentrate on brief updates that are sent to everyone who has signed up to receive them called?
3. Mention one threat faced in using a social media platform.
4. What are the websites that let one save, organise, and handle links to numerous websites and online resources called?
5. What is the character limit in Twitter?
6. Reddit is an example of which social media website?
7. Name a social networking website.
8. What kind of websites allow you to tag your links?
9. Name the writing space where you can shut out all distractions and focus on what matters.
10. Mention a social media platform that allows users to write without character limits.



Answers

1. Grammarly
2. Microblogging sites
3. Hacking
4. Bookmarking sites
5. 280
6. Social news website
7. Facebook
8. Bookmarking websites
9. ZenPen
10. Instagram

Assignments

1. Provide a brief comment on your usage of social media and your future plans regarding its usage.
2. What kinds of disadvantages do social media use present? Explain.
3. Analyse a small business's or non-profit organization's social media operations and make suggestions for its development.
4. What are the major conventions of social media writing?
5. Which are the major tools for linguistic checks. Discuss their pros and cons.

Suggested Reading

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BLOCK - 04

Communication and Technology

Unit 1

Evolution of Printing and Language Technologies

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learners will be able to:

- ▶ understand the origins of technology in language and writing
- ▶ be familiar with some of the examples of using technology in language
- ▶ know the technologies used in print and publication
- ▶ observe the impact of social media platforms on language learning
- ▶ develop an understanding of new possibilities for using technology in language

Prerequisites

Emily's fingers traced the edge of the ancient clay tablet, her eyes wide with wonder. The Sumerian cuneiform symbols, etched over 4,000 years ago, seemed to dance before her eyes. She leaned in closer, trying to decipher their meaning.

Suddenly, her concentration was broken by a vibration in her pocket. Emily pulled out her smartphone, squinting at the bright screen in the dim museum light.

"Where r u? Movie starts in 10!" her friend's text read.

Emily chuckled, struck by the irony. Here she was, marveling at one of the earliest forms of written communication, while instantaneously receiving a message from across the city.

As she typed a quick reply, her thumbs flying over the glass surface, Emily couldn't help but reflect on the journey these two objects represented. From painstakingly etched clay to lightning-fast digital signals, human communication had come a long way.

She glanced back at the tablet one last time before leaving the exhibit. The ancient scribe who had carved those symbols could never have imagined the sleek device in Emily's hand, just as Emily could barely fathom what communication might look like 4,000 years from now.

This stark contrast between ancient and modern communication methods highlights the incredible evolution of language and technology throughout human history. From the development of writing systems to the invention of printing, and now to the digital age, each advancement has transformed how we share knowledge and connect with one another. As we explore the journey of human communication, we'll uncover the fascinating story of how language and technology have shaped our world and continue to evolve in exciting new ways.

Keywords

Technology, History, Language, Publication, Advantages, Social media.

4.1.1 Origins of Technology in Language and The Evolution of Writing

The origins of technology in language can be traced back to the earliest forms of human communication. From the development of writing systems to the invention of the printing press, technology has played a critical role in shaping the way we communicate and use language.

4.1.1.1 Historical Background

The earliest forms of human communication were oral, with people using spoken language to communicate with one another. However, as societies became more complex, there was a need to record and transmit information more permanently. This led to the development of writing systems, which first appeared in Mesopotamia around 3500 BCE. Over time, writing systems evolved and became more sophisticated, with the invention of the alphabet by the

Phoenicians in the 11th century BCE being a significant development. The alphabet allowed for the representation of spoken language simply and efficiently, which made reading and writing more accessible to a larger population. The ancient civilisations of Mesopotamia and Egypt developed the earliest writing systems. These writing systems were pictographic and consisted of symbols that represented objects, people, or ideas. For example, in Egyptian hieroglyphics, a picture of a bird could represent the sound "ba."

Over time, these writing systems evolved and became more sophisticated. In Mesopotamia, for example, the Sumerians developed cuneiform, a writing system that used wedge-shaped marks made in clay tablets. Cuneiform was used to record a variety of information, including laws, religious texts, and trade records. The development of the alphabet by the Phoenicians in the 11th century BCE was



a significant advancement in the use of writing systems. The Phoenician alphabet consisted of 22 letters, each representing a single sound in the language. This made the representation of spoken language simple and efficient, which caused reading and writing to become more accessible to a larger population.

The spread of the Phoenician alphabet had a significant impact on the development of other writing systems, including the Greek, Latin, and Cyrillic alphabets. The Greek alphabet, for example, was adapted from the Phoenician alphabet and used to write the Greek language. The invention of paper in China in the second century CE further advanced the use of writing systems. Prior to the invention of paper, writing was done on materials such as papyrus, parchment, or silk. Paper was cheaper and easier to produce than these materials, which led to a significant increase in the production and dissemination of written works.

The development of printing technologies in Europe in the 15th century further advanced the use of writing systems. Johannes Gutenberg's invention of the printing press allowed for the mass production of books, which made them more widely available and affordable. This led to a boom in literacy rates and the spread of knowledge throughout Europe.

The English alphabet, also known as the Roman alphabet, is derived from the Latin alphabet, which was developed by the ancient Romans. The Latin alphabet itself was based on the Etruscan alphabet, which was used by the Etruscan civilization in ancient Italy. The Latin alphabet consisted of 23 letters, with no distinction between uppercase and lowercase letters. Over time, the Latin alphabet was adopted by various other languages, including Old English, which was spoken in England in the 5th century CE.

Old English used the Latin alphabet with

some modifications, such as the addition of several letters to represent sounds that were not present in Latin. For example, the letter “þ” was added to represent the “th” sound, as in the word “think,” and the letter “ð” was added to represent the voiced “th” sound, as in the word “this.” During the Middle Ages, the Latin alphabet was further modified to include the letters “j” and “v.” Prior to this, the sounds represented by these letters were represented by the letters “i” and “u.” The letter “j” was used to represent the “y” sound, as in the word “yes,” and the letter “v” was used to represent the “v” sound, as in the word “vine.” In the 16th century, the English alphabet was standardized to include the 26 letters that are used today, with the addition of the letters “w” and “u.” The letter “w” was added to represent the “w” sound, which had previously been represented by the letter combination “uu.” The letter “u” was added to distinguish it from the letter “v,” which had previously been used to represent both the “v” and “u” sounds.

In addition to the 26 letters of the English alphabet, there are also various diacritical marks and special characters used to represent specific sounds or to modify the pronunciation of certain letters. For example, the letter “é” is used to represent the “ay” sound in words borrowed from French, such as “café.” The development of the English alphabet is a complex process that spans centuries and involves the modification and standardization of various alphabets. Today, the English alphabet consists of 26 letters and is used to write the English language as well as numerous other languages around the world.

The development of writing systems thus has had a significant impact on the use of language. From pictographic systems to the invention of the alphabet and the development of printing technologies, writing systems have played a critical role in the dissemination and

preservation of knowledge.

4.1.1.2 Examples of Technology in Language

One example of technology in the language is the use of speech recognition software. This technology allows for spoken words to be transcribed into written text, which has numerous applications in fields such as healthcare and education. Another example is the use of translation software, which allows for the translation of text from one language to

another. This technology has been particularly helpful in breaking down language barriers and promoting cross-cultural communication. Yet another example is the use of digital media, such as social media and blogs, to share ideas and communicate with a wider audience. This technology has allowed for individuals to express their opinions and connect with others in ways that were not possible before.

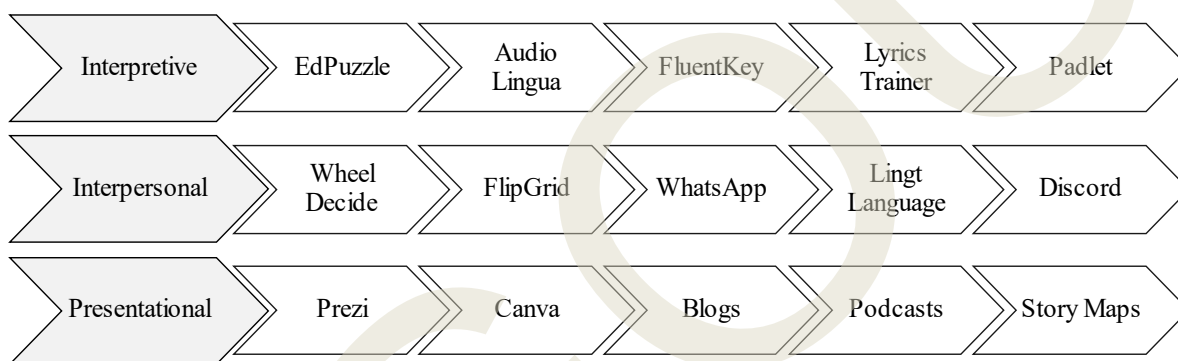


Fig 4.1.1 Technology Tools for Language Learning

4.1.2 Print and Publication

The origins of technology in language can be traced back to the earliest forms of human communication. From the development of writing systems to the printing press to modern technologies like speech recognition software and digital media, technology has had a profound impact on the way we communicate and use language. As technology continues to evolve, it is likely that we will see even more innovations that will transform the way we use language and communicate with one another. Print and publication are essential aspects of modern society, enabling the dissemination of

information and knowledge on a mass scale. In this write-up, we will explore the various aspects of print and publication, including their history, the technologies used in their production, and their impact on society.

4.1.2.1 History of Print and Publication

The earliest printing forms can be traced back to ancient China, where woodblock printing was developed as early as the 7th century. This involved carving an image or text into a wooden block, inking it, and pressing it onto paper. The use of moveable type, where indi-

vidual letters and characters could be rearranged to form words and sentences, was first developed in China in the 11th century and later in Europe in the 15th century by Johannes Gutenberg.

In the 19th century, the invention of lithography by Alois Senefelder enabled the printing of high-quality images and text using a flat stone or metal plate. The invention of the printing press revolutionised the production of books and other printed materials, enabling mass production on a scale that was previously impossible. This led to an explosion in literacy rates and spreading knowledge and ideas throughout Europe and beyond. Lithography is based on the principle that water and oil do

not mix. The image is first drawn or transferred onto a flat surface, typically a limestone block or a metal plate. The surface is then coated with a mixture of gum arabic and nitric acid, which makes the image water-repellent. Ink is then applied to the surface, which adheres to the image but not the surrounding areas.

The surface is then dampened with water, absorbed by the non-image areas. This creates a barrier between the ink and the non-image areas, preventing the ink from spreading beyond the intended image area. The ink is then transferred onto paper, either by pressing the paper onto the surface or by passing it through a press.

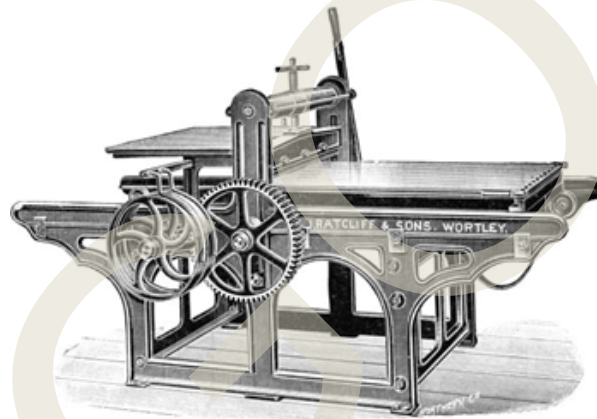


Fig 4.1.2 A model of Lithography by Alois Senefelder

Lithography was particularly important in the 19th century, as it allowed for the reproduction of high-quality images and text on a large scale. This made it possible to produce books, magazines, and newspapers with high-quality illustrations and images. The process was also used for printing posters, maps, and other large-format materials. The invention of lithography also had a significant impact on the art world. It allowed artists to produce high-quality prints of their work, which could be distributed more widely and at a lower cost than traditional methods such as engraving or etching.

4.1.2.2 Technologies Used in Print and Publication

Offset and Digital Printing

Today, print and publication rely on various technologies, from traditional offset printing to digital printing and e-publishing. Offset printing is the most common form used for books, magazines, and other printed materials. It is a widely-used printing technique that has been in use since the early 20th century. It involves the transfer of ink from a printing plate to a rubber blanket, which then applies the ink to the printing surface. The process is called “offset”

because the ink is not transferred directly from the printing plate to the paper, but is offset or transferred onto a rubber blanket first.

The traditional offset printing process involves the following steps:

Pre-press: This is the initial stage of the printing process, where the design is prepared for printing. This may involve the creation of a digital file, the preparation of printing plates, and the selection of paper stock and ink.

Printing plates: The design is transferred to printing plates, which are typically made of aluminium or plastic. Each plate corresponds to one colour of ink, so a four-colour printing job would require four plates.

Ink and fountain solution: Ink is applied to the printing plates, which adhere to the image areas. A fountain solution is applied to the non-image areas, which helps to repel the ink.

Printing: The printing plates are mounted on a printing press, which applies pressure to transfer the ink from the plates to a rubber blanket. The rubber blanket then transfers the ink to the paper. The process is repeated for each colour until the final printed piece is complete.

Today, offset printing is widely used for commercial printing jobs, such as brochures, books, and magazines. It can produce high-quality prints at a relatively low cost and can reproduce a wide range of colours and tones. While digital printing technologies have largely replaced offset printing in recent years, the former remains a popular and effective printing method for large-scale jobs. The traditional offset printing process has been refined over the years to improve efficiency, quality, and speed, making it an important part of the printing industry. Digital printing involves directly transferring digital files onto a printing substrate, such as paper, using specialised

printers. The process has grown rapidly in popularity since the 1990s and has become an important part of the printing industry.

The digital printing process involves the following steps:

1. Pre-press: The first step is creating a digital file, either from scratch or by scanning a physical image. The file is then edited and prepared for printing using specialised software.

2. Printing: The digital file is sent to a digital printer, which prints the image directly onto the substrate using specialised inks. Digital printing technologies include inkjet, laser, and electrostatic printing.

3. Finishing: After printing, the substrate may undergo finishing processes such as cutting, binding, or laminating to create a finished product.

Digital printing offers several advantages over traditional printing methods, which include:

Speed: Digital printing can produce prints much faster than traditional printing methods, with no need for printing plates or setup times.

Cost-effectiveness: Digital printing is often more cost effective than traditional printing methods for smaller print runs, as there are no setup costs or minimum order quantities.

Customisation: Digital printing allows for greater customisation of print jobs, with the ability to print variable data and personalised content.

Quality: Advances in digital printing technology have led to improved print quality, with the ability to reproduce a wide range of colours and tones.



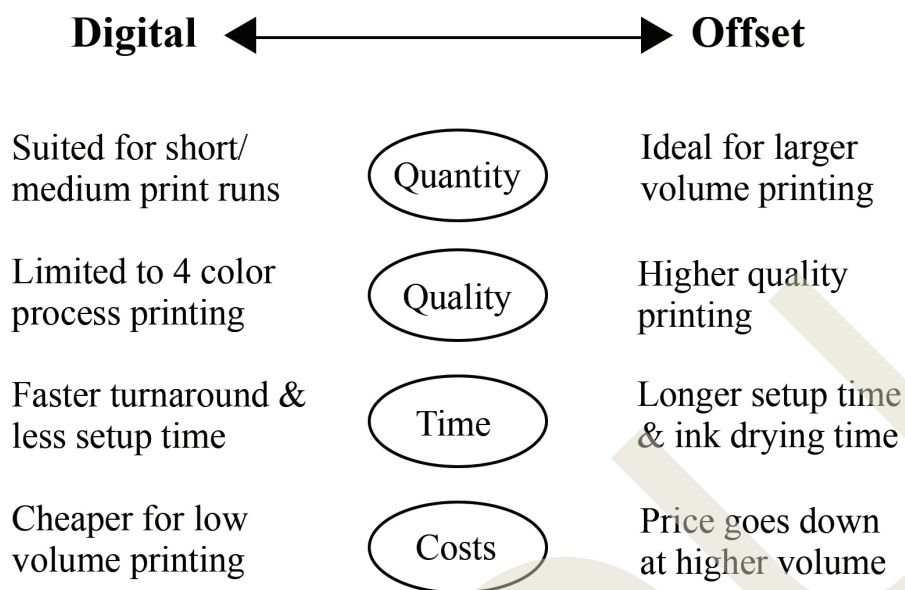


Fig 4.1.3 Digital vs. Offset Printing

Digital printing is used for a wide range of applications, including commercial printing, photo printing, packaging and labels. It is also used for on-demand printing, such as print-on-demand books, allowing for small print runs and rapid delivery times. Thus, digital printing is a versatile and cost-effective method that has recently gained popularity. Its ability to produce high-quality prints quickly and cost-effectively makes it an important part of the printing industry.

Electronic Books

E-books, or electronic books, are digital versions of books that can be read on various electronic devices. They can be downloaded and purchased online from various e-bookstores, such as Amazon's Kindle store, Apple's iBooks store, and Barnes & Noble's Nook store. They are designed to be read on electronic devices like smartphones, tablets, and e-readers. They can be downloaded and accessed from various platforms and operating systems, including iOS, Android and Windows. This means

that readers can access their e-books virtually anywhere, anytime, as long as they have an internet connection.

For example, a reader who wants to read a novel on their commute to work can download the e-book onto their smartphone and read it during their journey. Alternatively, a student who needs to read a textbook for a class can download the e-book onto their tablet and study on the go.

E-books also offer a range of interactive features not available in print books. For example, some e-books include hyperlinks to additional resources, multimedia content such as videos and audio, and social media integration, allowing readers to share content with friends and followers. In addition, e-books can be customised to suit the reader's needs. For example, readers can adjust the font size and font type to make the text easier to read. Some e-readers even offer built-in dictionaries, highlighting, and note-taking features, allowing readers to easily look up unfamiliar words or take notes

as they read.

The e-publishing process involves the following steps:

1. **Content creation:** The first step in e-publishing is creating digital content. This can include writing, editing, and formatting content specifically for electronic publication.
2. **Digital conversion:** Once the content is ready, it needs to be converted into a digital format that can be read on electronic devices. This may involve converting text files into formats such as PDF, EPUB, or MOBI, depending on the target device.
3. **Distribution:** Once the content is in digital format, it can be distributed through various channels such as e-bookstores, websites, and social media platforms. E-publishers may use distributors or self-publishing platforms to reach a wider audience.
4. **Marketing:** E-publishers must also market their content to attract readers. This can include online advertising, social media promotion, and search engine optimisation.

E-publishing has several advantages over traditional print publishing, including:

1. **Cost-effectiveness:** E-publishing eliminates the costs of printing, shipping, and storing physical copies, which can result in lower production costs and higher profits.

2. **Convenience:** E-publishing allows readers to access content on their electronic devices anytime and anywhere, without the need for physical books or magazines.

3. **Accessibility:** E-publishing can make content available to a wider audience, including readers with disabilities who may require specialised reading devices or software.

4. **Interactivity:** E-publishing allows for including interactive features such as hyperlinks, multimedia, and social media integration, enhancing the reader's experience.

Thus, e-publishing has revolutionised the publishing industry by providing an alternative to traditional print publishing. Its advantages of cost-effectiveness, convenience, accessibility, and interactivity have made it an attractive option for authors, publishers, and readers alike.

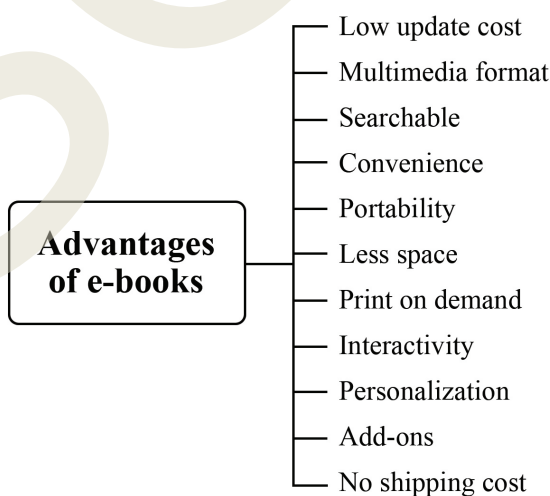


Fig 4.1.4 Advantages of e-books

4.1.2.3 Impact of Print and Publication

The impact of print and publication on society has been profound, enabling the dissemination of knowledge and ideas on a mass scale. Books, magazines, and newspapers have played a critical role in education, entertainment, and spreading news and information. They have also significantly impacted the economy, providing jobs and generating revenue for the printing and publishing industries. The development of e-publishing has also opened up new opportunities for writers and publishers, enabling them to reach a wider audience and publish their work more quickly and easily.

However, print and publication have also faced challenges in the digital age, with the rise of the internet and e-books. Many traditional print publications have struggled to compete with online media, and the future of print and publication remains uncertain.

Hence, print and publication are essential aspects of modern society, enabling the dissemination of knowledge and ideas on a mass scale. From the earliest forms of woodblock printing to the digital age of e-publishing, print and publication have played a critical role in education, entertainment, and spreading news and information. While the future of print and publication remains uncertain, these industries will undoubtedly continue to play an important role in society for years to come.

4.1.4 Technology in the Current Language Use

Today, technology plays a significant role in language learning, translation, and communication. Language learning apps and software provide accessible and interactive language instruction to users worldwide. Online translation tools like Google Translate enable quick

and easy translation of text and speech in multiple languages. A variety of language learning apps and software can help you learn a new language or improve your skills in a language you are already familiar with. Here are some popular options:

Duolingo: Duolingo is a free language learning app that offers a gamified approach to learning languages. It offers courses in over 40 languages, including interactive lessons, grammar explanations, and vocabulary exercises.

Rosetta Stone: Rosetta Stone is a language learning software that offers immersive language instruction using speech recognition technology. It offers courses in over 20 languages and includes interactive lessons, games, and exercises.

Babbel: Babbel is a language learning app that offers courses in 14 different languages. It offers interactive lessons, grammar explanations, and vocabulary exercises. Babbel also provides personalised feedback on your progress.

Memrise: Memrise is a language-learning app that uses various techniques to help you remember vocabulary and grammar rules. It offers courses in over 20 languages and includes interactive lessons, games, and exercises.

Busuu: Busuu is a language learning app that offers courses in 12 different languages. It provides interactive lessons, grammar explanations, and vocabulary exercises. Busuu also provides personalised feedback on your progress and allows you to practice your speaking skills with native speakers.

FluentU: FluentU is a language-learning app that uses authentic videos, news, and TV shows to help you learn a language. It offers courses in six languages and includes interac-

tive lessons, games, and exercises.

Pimsleur: Pimsleur is a language learning software that uses an audio-based approach to language learning. It offers courses in over 50 languages and includes interactive lessons and

exercises.

Many other language learning apps and software are available, but these are some of the most popular and highly rated options.

Name of the App	System	Skill
Rosetta Stone	IOS/Android	Vocabulary Acquisition
FluentU	IOS/Android	Speaking, Vocabulary Acquisition.
MindSnacks	IOS/Android	Vocabulary Acquisition
Memrise	IOS/Android	Vocabulary
Open Language	IOS/Android	Speaking
Busuu	IOS/Android	Speaking
Duolingo	IOS/Android	Vocabulary
Magoosh English Video Lessons	iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch	Grammar
Supiki English Conversation Speaking Practice	iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch	Speaking

Table 4.1.1 Mobile apps for language learning

Social media platforms and messaging apps have also transformed the way we communicate in different languages, allowing people from different parts of the world to connect and share information in real time. Social media

platforms and messaging apps are popular for staying connected with friends, family, and colleagues. Here are some of the most popular options:

4.1.4.1 Social Media Platforms

Social media platforms are highly relevant for English language learning due to the vast amount of content available in English, as well as the opportunities for interaction with native and non-native English speakers. By following pages and groups dedicated to language learning, students can access various materials, such as videos, articles, and podcasts, specifically designed to improve their language skills. Additionally, social media allows learners to practice their English in a more relaxed and informal setting, where they can engage in conversations, ask questions, and receive feedback from other learners and native speakers. Thus, social media platforms offer a convenient and effective way for English language learners to supplement their formal language education and improve their language proficiency. The following are some of the widely used social networking sites and apps which can be effectively

used for a user's language learning and development.

1. **Facebook:** Facebook is a social media platform that allows users to connect with friends and family, join groups and communities, and share photos and videos.

2. **Twitter:** Twitter is a social media platform that allows users to share short messages called tweets. Users can follow other users and see their tweets in their timelines.

3. **Instagram:** Instagram is a social media platform that is primarily focused on sharing photos and videos. Users can follow others and see their photos and videos in their feeds.

4. **LinkedIn:** LinkedIn is a social media platform focused on professional networking. Users can connect with colleagues and potential employers and share their professional achievements and experiences.

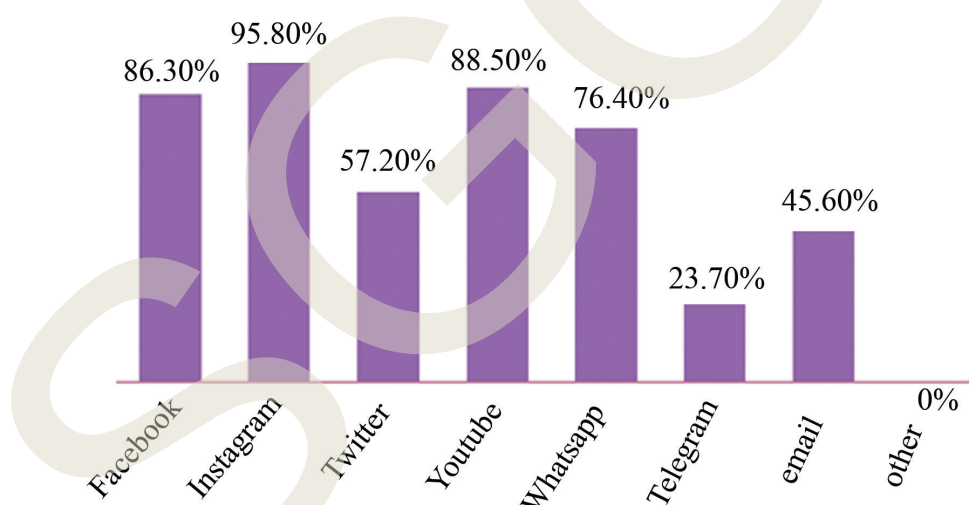


Fig 4.1.5 The use of social media by students for English language learning

Source: Google

4.1.4.2 Messaging apps and language development

Messaging apps have become important for English language learning due to their convenience and accessibility. Through messaging apps, learners can easily connect with other

English speakers worldwide, practice their language skills, and receive immediate feedback. They can also use the apps to communicate with language exchange partners or tutors, who can provide personalised support and guidance. Additionally, messaging apps offer a variety of features that can enhance language

learning, such as voice and video calls, which enable learners to practice their pronunciation and listening skills directly. Overall, messaging apps provide a flexible and interactive way for English language learners to improve their communication skills, gain confidence, and connect with a global community of learners and speakers. Some of the widely used messaging apps are the following.

WhatsApp: WhatsApp is a messaging app that allows users to send text and voice messages and make voice and video calls. It also offers end-to-end encryption for secure messaging.

Facebook Messenger: Facebook Messenger is a messaging app that is integrated with the Facebook social media platform. Users can send text and voice messages and make voice and video calls.

iMessage: iMessage is a messaging app that is built into Apple devices. Users can send text messages, voice messages, and make voice and video calls to other Apple users.

WeChat: WeChat is a messaging app that is popular in China. It allows users to send text and voice messages, make voice and video calls, and pay for goods and services.

Telegram: Telegram is a messaging app that offers end-to-end encryption for secure messaging. It allows users to send text and voice messages and make voice and video calls. Telegram also provides channels for broadcasting messages to large groups of users. Many other social media platforms and messaging apps are available, but these are some of the most popular options.

4.1.4.3 Speech Recognition and NLP

Additionally, speech recognition technology and Natural Language Processing have improved the accuracy of voice assistants and other language-based technologies. Speech recognition technology and Natural Language Processing (NLP) are two closely related fields of artificial intelligence that significantly impact how we interact with technology.

Speech recognition technology refers to the ability of machines to recognise and interpret human speech. This technology works by analysing the patterns and sounds in human speech and converting them into text or commands that computers can understand. Speech recognition technology is used in various applications, such as voice assistants, dictation software, and language translation services.

Natural Language Processing, on the other hand, refers to the ability of machines to understand and interpret human language. This technology works by analysing the structure and meaning of human language and converting it into a form that computers can understand. Natural Language Processing is used in various applications, such as language translation, sentiment analysis, and text summarisation.

Speech recognition technology and Natural Language Processing are often used to create more advanced applications, such as voice assistants that can understand and respond to complex commands or chatbots that provide customer service in natural language. These technologies have the potential to revolutionise the way we interact with technology and make it more accessible and intuitive for everyone.



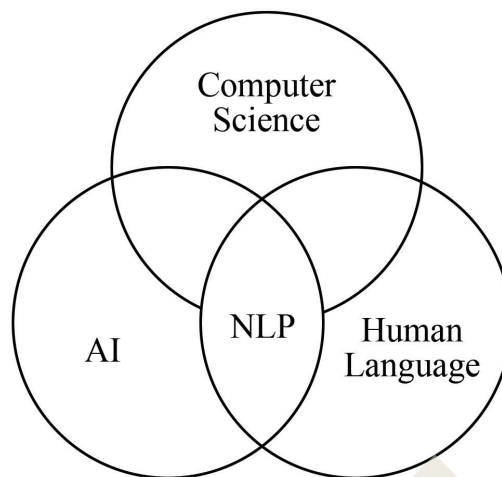


Fig. 4.1.6 An overview of Natural Language Processing

Speech recognition technology and natural language processing are often used to create more advanced applications, such as voice assistants that can understand and respond to complex commands or chatbots that provide customer service in natural language. These technologies have the potential to revolutionise the way we interact with technology and make it more accessible and intuitive for everyone.

4.1.5 Future Possibilities of Technology in Language

The use of artificial intelligence in language learning and translation has already made significant advancements, with platforms like Duolingo and Babbel providing personalised language instruction using AI algorithms. These platforms use machine learning to adapt to the user's learning style and pace, making the learning experience more efficient and engaging. Additionally, AI-powered translation tools such as Google Translate and DeepL are becoming increasingly accurate, providing more nuanced translations and improving cross-cultural communication.

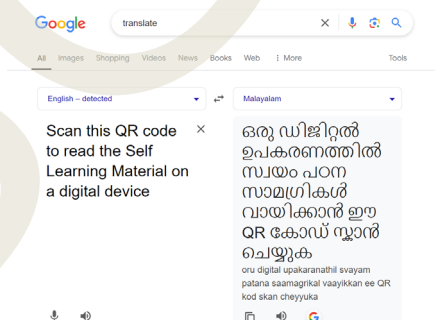


Fig 4.1.7 The functioning of Google Translate

Virtual and augmented reality technologies are also transforming language learning and cross-cultural communication. These technologies allow users to immerse themselves in different language and cultural environments,

providing an interactive and engaging way to learn and practice language skills. For example, language learners can practice speaking skills by interacting with virtual native speakers, while travellers can navigate foreign cities

and communicate with locals using augmented reality translation tools.

In addition to language learning and translation, speech recognition and natural language processing technologies are also advancing, making it easier to communicate with language-based technologies. Virtual assistants like Siri and Alexa use natural language processing to understand and respond to spoken commands, while speech recognition technology is improving the accuracy of voice-to-text transcription and dictation.

4.1.6 Systems of Sound and Motion Recording

Sound and motion recording are powerful tools for language communication. They enable us to capture and convey information using audio and visual media, making it possible to communicate across distances and time. Here, we will explore the application of systems of sound and motion recording in language communication.

4.1.6.1 Language Teaching and Learning

Sound and motion recording have been used in language teaching and learning for many years. Recorded audio and video materials can provide learners with a wealth of authentic language input, allowing them to practice listening and comprehension skills. Video recordings can also provide learners with visual cues to aid in comprehensions, such as body language and facial expressions.

In addition, recording and analyzing learners' own speech can be a valuable tool for improving pronunciation and fluency. By comparing their own speech to native speaker models, learners can identify areas for improvement and work to refine their skills.

4.1.6.2 Language Preservation and Documentation

Sound and motion recording can be used to preserve and document endangered or minority languages. By recording the speech of native speakers and preserving it for future generations, we can ensure that these languages do not disappear completely. Additionally, recordings can be used for linguistic analysis and research, helping to document the grammatical structure and vocabulary of a language.

4.1.6.3 Interpreting and Translation

Sound and motion recording can be used to aid in interpreting and translation. For example, if a conference or meeting is held in one language, it can be recorded and then translated or interpreted later. This can be particularly useful for situations where there are many speakers or technical or specialised language is used.

4.1.6.4 Business communication

Sound and motion recording can also be used in business communication. For example, recorded presentations and webinars can be shared with colleagues and clients who were not able to attend in person. Videoconferencing can also enable remote communication, allowing colleagues and clients to communicate across distances in real time.

4.1.6.5 Public Speaking and Broadcasting

Finally, sound and motion recording are essential tools for public speaking and broadcasting. Whether it is a podcast, a radio show, or a televised speech, recordings can be used to share information and ideas with a wide audience. Recordings can also be edited and manipulated to create a polished final product.

In conclusion, sound and motion recording



systems are valuable tools for language communication. They can be used for language teaching and learning, language interpretation and preservation, business communication,

public speaking and broadcasting. As technology continues to advance, we can expect to see even more innovative uses of these systems in the years to come.

Recap

- ▶ The origins of technology in language can be traced back to the development of writing systems in ancient civilisations such as Mesopotamia and Egypt.
- ▶ The invention of the alphabet by the Phoenicians in the 11th century BCE
- ▶ The development of printing technologies in Europe in the 15th century led to a boom in literacy rates and the spreading of knowledge throughout Europe.
- ▶ Offset printing is a widely used printing technique that involves transferring ink from a printing plate to a rubber blanket, which then applies the ink to the printing surface.
- ▶ Digital printing involves directly transferring digital files onto a printing substrate using specialised printers.
- ▶ Digital printing is faster and more cost-effective.
- ▶ E-books are digital versions of books that can be read on electronic devices, and they offer a range of interactive features not available in print books.
- ▶ Technology has a significant role in language learning, translation, and communication today, with language learning apps and online translation tools being widely used.
- ▶ Popular language learning apps include Duolingo, Rosetta Stone, Babbel, Memrise, Busuu, FluentU, and Pimsleur.
- ▶ Social media platforms and messaging apps are also important tools for language learning, with popular options including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, iMessage, WeChat, and Telegram.

Objective Questions

1. What was the earliest form of human communication?
2. Where did the writing systems first appear?
3. In which century was the English alphabet standardised by including the 26 letters?
4. Who invented lithography?
5. What is one advantage of digital printing over traditional printing methods?
6. Name one e-book store.
7. What is one advantage of e-publishing?
8. Name one popular language-learning application.

Answers

1. Oral
2. Mesopotamia
3. 16th century
4. Alois Senefelder
5. Cost-effectiveness
6. Amazon's Kindle store
7. Accessibility
8. Duolingo

Assignments

1. Explain the historical background of the development of writing systems. What were the earliest forms of human communication, and how did they evolve into written language?
2. Describe the development of the English alphabet, including its origins in the Latin and Etruscan alphabets. How has the English alphabet been modified over time, and what led to the standardisation of the 26 letters used today?
3. Discuss examples of technology in language, such as speech recognition software and translation software. What are the applications of these technologies in fields like healthcare and education?

4. Explain the advantages of e-books over print books and how e-publishing has revolutionised the publishing industry.
5. Discuss the impact of print and publication on society and the challenges faced by traditional print publications in the digital age.
6. Describe how technology plays a significant role in language learning, translation, and communication, and provide examples of popular language learning apps and software.

Suggested Reading

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Unit 2

The Intersection of Language and Technology

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the units, the learners will be able to:

- ▶ know how electronic and digital technology has transformed communication.
- ▶ understand the relationship between language and cyberspace with the evolution of the internet.
- ▶ observe how digital communication evolved into a wide range of symbols.
- ▶ understand how the internet has made language and communication learning more accessible.
- ▶ observe the relationship between language and ICT with both positive and negative implications.

Prerequisites

Before diving into the topic of the intersection of language and technology, it is important to have a basic understanding of both language and technology. Language is a complex and multifaceted system of communication that involves both verbal and nonverbal forms. It is a fundamental aspect of human experience and is used to convey ideas, emotions, and cultural norms. Additionally, language is constantly evolving and changing, making it an exciting area of study.

On the other hand, technology refers to the application of scientific knowledge to solve practical problems. It encompasses a wide range of tools and techniques that are used to enhance human capabilities, including communication. Technology has transformed the way we interact with each other and the world around us, enabling us to connect with people and information from all over the globe. In recent years, the development of new technologies has created new opportunities for exploring the intersection of language and technology, leading to exciting developments in areas such as machine translation, speech recognition, and natural language processing.



With these basic understandings in place, it is important to explore the ways in which language and technology intersect. In particular, it is essential to examine the impact of technology on language use and how language shapes the development and implementation of new technologies. By studying this intersection, we can gain a deeper understanding of the complex and dynamic relationship between language and technology and how it influences our daily lives. Ultimately, this knowledge can be applied to create more effective and inclusive technological solutions that support and enhance human communication.

Keywords

Language, Digital, Technology, Cyberspace, ICT, Abbreviation, Social media

4.2.1 Evolution of Electronic and Digital Technology

The evolution of electronic and digital technology has been one of the most significant developments of the modern era. Starting with the invention of the first electronic device in the late 1800s, the technology has since progressed rapidly, paving the way for a wide range of advancements in fields such as telecommunications, computing, and entertainment.

One of the most notable effects of electronic and digital technology has been the transformation of communication. The advent of the telegraph, telephone, and radio in the early 20th century enabled people to communicate over long distances almost instantly. The development of television in the mid-20th century brought visual communication into the mix, and the emergence of the internet in the 1990s has revolutionised communication on an unprecedented scale, making it possible for people to connect and communicate across

the globe in real-time.

Digital technology has also transformed the way we do business. The introduction of computers in the 1970s paved the way for a more efficient and productive workplace. With the development of the internet and other digital technologies, businesses have been able to streamline their operations, reach wider audiences, and conduct transactions online, leading to the emergence of e-commerce and other digital business models.

Moreover, digital technology has revolutionised research by enabling scientists and researchers to analyse data and carry out simulations that were once impossible. The development of supercomputers has been instrumental in this regard, allowing scientists to simulate complex phenomena and develop new technologies in a range of fields, including medicine, engineering, and physics.

Access to information has also been trans-

formed by electronic and digital technology. The internet has made it possible for people to access a vast amount of information on virtually any topic, from anywhere in the world. This has had profound implications for education, research, and the dissemination of knowledge, making it easier for people to learn, stay informed, and share ideas. Here are some examples of the evolution of electronic and digital technology:

Personal Computers: The personal computer revolutionised the way people work, communicate, and access information. The first personal computer, the Altair 8800, was introduced in 1975. Since then, computers have become smaller, faster, and more powerful. Today, people use personal computers for a wide range of tasks, from writing documents and sending emails to playing games and streaming videos.

Mobile Devices: The introduction of smartphones and tablets has made it possible for people to access the internet, social media, and other digital content on the go. These devices are now an integral part of our daily lives, providing instant access to information, entertainment, and communication.

Internet: The internet has transformed the

way we access and share information. It allows us to connect with people from all over the world, access a vast array of resources, and collaborate with others on projects and ideas. The internet has also revolutionized the way we shop, bank, and conduct business.

Social Media: Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have changed the way we interact with each other and share information. They allow us to connect with friends and family, share photos and videos, and stay up to date with the latest news and trends.

Cloud Computing: Cloud computing has made it possible for people to store, access, and share data and applications online. This technology allows us to access our files and software from anywhere in the world, as long as we have an internet connection.

Artificial Intelligence: Artificial intelligence (AI) is a rapidly developing field that has the potential to revolutionize many industries. AI technology can be used to automate tasks, make predictions, and analyze data. Examples of AI applications include virtual assistants such as Siri and Alexa, self-driving cars, and facial recognition technology.



Fig 4.2.1 Evolution of digital technology

Overall, the evolution of electronic and digital technology has had a significant impact on our lives, transforming the way we communicate, work, and access information. As technology continues to evolve, it will be interesting to see how it continues to shape our world in the years to come.

4.2.2 Language and Cyberspace

Language and cyberspace have a unique and intricate relationship that has been evolving since the advent of the internet. The internet has provided a platform for individuals to create new forms of communication and has fundamentally transformed the way we use language. In today's digital age, language has taken on a new dimension as it is now used in cyberspace in various forms, including written, audio, and visual communication.

The rise of online communication platforms, such as email, instant messaging, and social media, has significantly impacted the way we interact with each other. These platforms have given people from different parts of the world the opportunity to communicate in real-time, breaking down the barriers of time and distance. With this development, language has become more casual and conversational, with a greater emphasis on brevity and speed. As such, the impact of the internet on language cannot be underestimated, as it has given rise to new forms of language, such as emojis, hashtags, and memes, which have become an essential part of online communication.

4.2.2.1 Emoticons

Emoticons are combinations of keyboard characters that are used to represent facial expressions or emotions. Emoticons are graphical representations of facial expressions or emotions that are used to convey meaning in digital communication. They are typically made up of combinations of keyboard charac-

ters, such as letters, numbers, and symbols, and are used in a variety of digital platforms, such as email, instant messaging, and social media.

Emoticons were first used in the early days of the internet as a way to convey emotions in text-based communication. They quickly became popular and have since evolved into a wide range of different emoticons that are used to express a variety of emotions, such as happiness, sadness, surprise, and anger.

Some of the most popular emoticons include:

:) - Smiling face

:(- Sad face

:D - Grinning face

;) - Winking face

:P - Sticking out tongue

:O - Surprised face

:/ - Skeptical or unsure face

<3 - Heart symbol representing love or affection

Emoticons can also be combined to create more complex expressions or emotions. For example, a smiley face with tears of joy :) is used to indicate laughter or amusement with a hint of sentimentality. Thus, emoticons are a fun and creative way to express emotions in digital communication, and have become an integral part of online culture.

4.2.2.2 Emojis

Emojis, on the other hand, are graphical representations of emotions and objects that are used in digital communication. Emojis are standardised across different platforms, so an emoji on an iPhone will look the same as an emoji on an Android phone or a computer.

Emojis can be used to express a wide range of emotions and ideas, from happy faces and hearts to animals and food.

Emojis are graphical symbols or icons used to express emotions, ideas, and concepts in digital communication. Unlike emoticons, which are made up of keyboard characters, emojis are standardised images that can be used across different platforms, such as smartphones, computers, and social media. Emojis were first developed in Japan in the late 1990s and have since become increasingly popular around the world. They are designed to be easily recognisable and can be used to express a wide range of emotions, from happiness and sadness to anger and frustration.

Some popular emojis include:

😊 happy	:)	😜 crazy tongue	:p
😕 confused	:s	😭 crying	:'(
😱 shocked	:o	😐 dead	x
😶 silence	:	😞 defeated	:('
😂 laughing	:d	😈 devil	(6)
😉 wink	:)	😏 flirty	:x
😓 sad	:/	😠 grumpy	>('
👉 coin	(\$)	😊 happy blush	:\$
⭐ star	(*)	❤ heart	<3
👼 angel	(a)	😍 in love	(l)
😡 angry red	(@)	😘 kiss	(k)
😮 awe	:0	😏 naughty wink	;P

Emojis can be used to add humor, personality, and context to digital communication, and can help convey meaning more effectively than words alone. For example, a simple thumbs up 👍 can indicate agreement or approval, while a face with rolling eyes 🙄 can indicate annoyance or sarcasm. Here are some examples of how emojis can be used in conversations:

I'm so excited for the concert tonight! 🎉 🎵

In this example, the speaker is expressing excitement for a concert using a party popper emoji and a musical notes emoji.

Thanks for helping me with my project! 🙌 🙏

Here, the speaker is using a thumbs up emoji and folded hands emoji to show gratitude and agreement.

Ugh, I have so much homework tonight! 😩 💻

In this example, the speaker is using a weary face emoji and a computer emoji to express frustration about having a lot of homework to do.

I'm thinking about going for a run this afternoon. 🏃 ☀

Here, the speaker is using a running emoji and a sun with face emoji to indicate that he is thinking about going for a run on a sunny day.

I can't wait to try the new restaurant downtown! 🍴 👁

In this example, the speaker is using a fork and knife emoji and a pair of eyes emoji to express anticipation for trying a new restaurant.

Platform Vendor	Emoji
Apple	
Google	
Microsoft	
Samsung	

Table 4.2.1 Laughing emoji in different platforms

Emojis can add nuance and emotion to digital communication and help to convey meaning more effectively. However, it is important to use them appropriately and in the right context, as they can sometimes be misinterpreted or misunderstood. Overall, emojis have become an important part of digital communication and have helped to bridge the gap between written and spoken language in online communication.

4.2.2.3 Text abbreviations

Text abbreviations are shortened versions of words or phrases that are commonly used in digital communication to save time and space. Text abbreviations, also known as SMS shorthand or texting language, are commonly used in digital communication to save time and space when typing messages. Here are some examples of text abbreviations:

LOL - Laughing Out Loud

This abbreviation is used to indicate that something is funny. Example: “That joke you told me was hilarious, LOL!”

BRB - Be Right Back

This abbreviation is used to let the recipient know that the sender will be away for a short period of time. Example: “I need to grab a quick snack, BRB.”

OMG - Oh My God

This abbreviation is used to express surprise or shock. Example: “OMG, I can’t believe I got an A on that exam!”

IDK - I Don’t Know

This abbreviation is used when the sender is unsure of something. Example: “IDK what time the movie starts, can you look it up?”

AFAIK	As Far As I Know	LMAO	Laughing My A** Off
AMA	Ask Me Anything	LMK	Let Me Know
BAE	Before Anyone Else	LOL	Laughing Out Loud
BFF	Best Friends Forever	NBD	No Big Deal
BRB	Be Right Back	NM	Not Much
BTW	By The Way	NVM	Nevermind
FBO	Facebook Official	NSFW	Not Safe For Work
FF	Follow Friday	OH	Overheard
FOMO	Fear Of Missing Out	OMG	Oh My God/Gosh
FTW	For The Win	OMW	On My Way
FYI	For Your Information	PODT	Photo Of The Day
GTG	Got To Go	PPL	People
ICYMI	In Case You Missed It	QOTD	Quote Of The Day
IDC	I Don't Care	ROFL	Rolling On The Floor Laughing
IDK	I Don't Know	SMH	Shaking My Head
ILY	I Love You	TBH	To Be Honest
IMHO	In My Humble Opinion	TBT	Throwback Thursday
IMO	In My Opinion	TL;DR	Too Long; Didn't Read
IRL	In Real Life	WTF	What The F***
JK	Just Kidding	YOLO	You Only Live Once

Table 4.2.2 Some social media acronyms

BTW - By The Way

This abbreviation is used to introduce a related piece of information. Example: “BTW, did you hear that Sarah got a new job?”

TTYL - Talk To You Later

This abbreviation is used when the sender is ending the conversation and plans to talk again in the future. Example: “I have to go now, TTYL!”

IMO - In My Opinion

This abbreviation is used when the sender is expressing their personal opinion. Example: “IMO, the new restaurant in town is the best one yet.”

LMK - Let Me Know

This abbreviation is used when the sender wants to receive information from the recipient. Example: “Can you LMK if you’re coming to the party tonight?”

Text abbreviations can be helpful in digital communication, but it is important to use them appropriately and in the right context, as they can sometimes be confusing or misinterpreted. They are often used in texting or instant messaging, where speed and brevity are important. These forms of digital communication are constantly evolving and new ones are being created all the time. They allow for quick and efficient communication and can add humour and personality to digital conversations. How-

ever, it is important to use them appropriately and in the right context, as they can sometimes be misinterpreted or misunderstood.

Additionally, online communication has also led to the creation of new forms of language, such as “netspeak,” which incorporates elements of different languages and dialects.

4.2.3 Impact of the Internet on Language

The internet has also had a significant impact on the way we learn and use language. Online language learning platforms have made it easier than ever for people to learn new languages, and online translation tools have made it possible for people to communicate with others who speak different languages. Online translation tools are websites or apps that allow users to translate text from one language to another. These tools use machine translation technology, such as artificial neural networks, statistical models, or rule-based algorithms, to generate translations. Additionally, the internet has led to the creation of online communities, where people can share and learn about different languages and cultures.

The rise of cyberspace has also led to the creation of new opportunities for the preservation and revitalisation of endangered languages. Online platforms have made it possible for people to connect with others who speak the same language, even if they are on opposite sides of the world. This has led to the creation of online language communities that allow people to share resources, stories, and other information related to their language and culture.

However, the use of language in cyberspace is not without its challenges. The anonymity of the internet has led to the creation of online hate speech, cyberbullying, and other forms of online harassment. Additionally, online com-

munication can also be prone to misinterpretation, as nuances in tone and body language are lost in online communication.

Thus, language and cyberspace have a complex and evolving relationship. The internet has created new forms of communication and has had a significant impact on the way we use language. As we continue to navigate the ever-changing landscape of cyberspace, it will be essential to be mindful of the impact that online communication has on language and the way we communicate with each other.

4.2.4 Language and ICT

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have revolutionised the way we use language, from the creation and dissemination of information to the way we communicate with one another. The relationship between language and ICT is multifaceted and has both positive and negative implications.

On the positive side, ICT has made it easier than ever for people to communicate across vast distances and different languages. Email, instant messaging, and social media platforms have made it possible for people to communicate with one another in real-time, regardless of geographic location. Translation software and apps have made it easier for people to communicate in different languages, reducing language barriers.

ICT has also made it easier to create and disseminate information. Online platforms like blogs, wikis, and websites have made it possible for anyone with an internet connection to create and share information with a global audience. Online libraries and digital archives have also made it easier for people to access information in different languages.

However, the increasing use of ICT also raises concerns about the impact it has on language use and culture. The use of text mes-

saging and social media platforms has led to the development of a new language style, with text abbreviations, emojis, and slang terms that are unique to digital communication. This new style of language may have a negative impact on traditional language use and may contribute to a decline in the use of standard language forms.

Additionally, the widespread use of ICT may lead to a homogenisation of language and culture, as people are exposed to the same information and media regardless of geographic location. The internet may also contribute to the erosion of linguistic and cultural diversity, as dominant languages and cultures are amplified through online media.

Activity	Response Rate	
	Frequency	Percentage
Using online dictionaries	145	97.3%
Listening practice	143	96.1%
Searching for online English materials	135	90.5%
Using <i>Google</i> translation	133	89.2%
Speaking practice	125	83.9%
Writing practice	122	81.9%
Reading practice	110	73.3%
Using web-based flashcards to learn vocabulary	74	56.5%
Discussing assignments with friends via emails	69	46.3%
Discussing assignments with teachers via emails	67	44.8%
Sharing English learning in a forum	64	43.00%

Table 4.2.3 ICT use for English language learning purposes

Thus, the relationship between language and ICT is complex and multifaceted. While ICT has brought about many positive changes in the way we communicate and share information, it also raises concerns about the impact it has on language use and cultural diversity. As we continue to use and develop new ICT technologies, it is essential to be mindful of their impact on language and culture and to strive for a balance between the positive and

negative effects.

4.2.4.1 Technical Terms Commonly Used in ICT

There are many technical terms used in ICT, and some of the most commonly used ones include:

Algorithm: A set of instructions or rules used to solve a problem or complete a task.



Cloud computing: A type of computing that involves using a network of remote servers to store, manage, and process data.

Cybersecurity: The practice of protecting computer systems, networks, and sensitive information from unauthorised access, theft, or damage.

Encryption: The process of converting data into a secret code or language to protect it from unauthorised access.

Firewall: A security system that monitors and controls incoming and outgoing network traffic to protect against unauthorised access.

HTML: Hypertext Markup Language, the standard language used to create web pages and web applications.

JavaScript: A scripting language used to create dynamic and interactive web content.

Operating system: The software that manages and controls computer hardware and software resources.

Server: A computer system that provides data or services to other computers or devices on a network.

Virtual reality: A computer-generated environment that simulates a physical environment or experience.

These are just a few of the many technical terms commonly used in ICT. As technology continues to evolve and new innovations emerge, new terms and concepts will continue to be introduced.

4.2.5 The Internet: Aspects of Efficiency and Economy

The internet has revolutionised the way we communicate, work, and access information. Its efficiency and economy have been critical

factors in its widespread adoption and success. Efficiency refers to the ability of the internet to deliver data and services quickly and reliably. The internet is designed to facilitate the rapid transfer of data between computers and devices, which has enabled real-time communication, collaboration, and access to information. This efficiency is due to the underlying technology, including high-speed data connections, fiber optic cables, and advanced routing protocols.

Economy refers to the cost-effectiveness of using the internet to access information and services. The internet has significantly reduced the cost of communication and information-sharing, making it accessible to a wider audience. For instance, sending an email is much cheaper than sending a traditional letter, and accessing online resources is often less expensive than buying physical copies. Additionally, online shopping has made it possible to find products at lower prices than traditional brick-and-mortar stores.

Moreover, the internet has enabled new business models that leverage economies of scale and scope, reducing costs and increasing efficiencies. For instance, cloud computing allows businesses to access computing resources on-demand, eliminating the need to invest in expensive hardware and software infrastructure.

Thus, the internet's efficiency and economy have made it an indispensable tool for communication, business, education, and entertainment. Its ability to deliver data quickly and at low cost has enabled new models of collaboration and innovation that have transformed the way we live and work.

4.2.6 Applying Social Media for Language Enhancement

Social media has transformed the way

people interact and communicate, and language learners can benefit significantly from these platforms to enhance their language skills. Social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube offer an abundance of language-learning resources, including online language courses, language exchange programs, and authentic language content. These resources can help learners improve their language proficiency, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Here are a brief explanation of some ways social media can be used for language enhancement.

Language exchange: Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram allow language learners to connect with native speakers of the language they are learning. Language exchange involves finding a language partner with whom you can practice speaking, writing, and listening to the language. Language exchange can be done through messaging, voice chat, or video calls.

Language learning communities: There are various online communities on social media

platforms where language learners can connect and learn together. For instance, Facebook groups, subreddits, and Twitter chats are examples of online communities where learners can interact and share resources.

Language learning apps: Social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram have become popular for language learning because they offer short videos that can be used to teach vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

Language challenges: Social media challenges like the #30DayLanguageChallenge or the #LanguageExchangeChallenge are fun and interactive ways to practice a language. These challenges usually involve setting language goals and tracking progress over a set period.

Language-related content: Social media platforms offer a wealth of language-related content such as language learning blogs, podcasts, and YouTube channels. By following these resources, learners can access useful tips, strategies, and learning materials to improve their language skills.

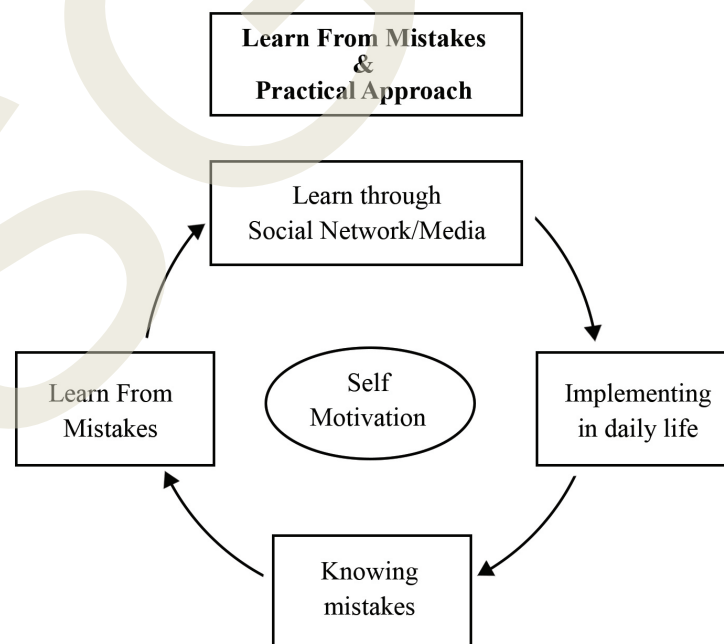


Fig 4.2.2 Self-motivation and language learning through social media

In this way, social media platforms provide a wide range of opportunities for language learners to enhance their skills. By connecting with native speakers, joining language learning communities, using language learning apps, participating in language challenges, and following language-related content, learners can use social media as a valuable tool for language learning and improvement.

4.2.7 File Formats and Mutual Conversions

File formats are the way digital information is stored and transmitted on electronic devices. Different file formats are designed for specific purposes, such as text, images, audio, and video. Some of the most commonly used file formats include JPEG, PDF, MP3, and MP4. Converting between file formats is necessary when files need to be shared or used on different devices or software applications that may not be compatible with the original file format. Here are some common file formats and their uses:

JPEG: This file format is commonly used for digital images and photographs. JPEG files are compressed, which reduces their file size but can also reduce their quality.

PDF: The Portable Document Format (PDF) is a file format used for digital documents. PDF files are commonly used for documents such as manuals, reports, and ebooks, as they preserve the formatting and layout of the original document.

MP3: The MP3 file format is used for digital audio files. MP3 files are compressed, which allows for smaller file sizes without significant loss in audio quality.

MP4: The MP4 file format is used for digital video files. MP4 files can contain both audio and video, and are commonly used for online

video streaming and playback on portable devices.

Converting between file formats can be done using software applications designed for this purpose. These applications can convert files from one format to another, allowing for greater compatibility between devices and software applications. Some common file conversion tools include Adobe Acrobat for PDF conversion, CloudConvert for audio file conversion, and Handbrake for video file conversion.

Thus, understanding file formats and their uses is essential for efficient and effective digital communication. Mutual conversion between file formats can be done using specialised software applications, enabling greater compatibility between devices and software applications.

4.2.8 Search Tools and Techniques

Search tools and techniques are methods used to find relevant information on the internet or in electronic databases. Effective search tools and techniques can save time and improve the accuracy of search results. Here are some commonly used search tools and techniques:

Search Engines: Search engines are web-based applications that allow users to search for information on the internet. Popular search engines include Google, Bing, and Yahoo. Users can enter keywords or phrases related to their topic of interest, and the search engine will provide a list of relevant web pages.

Boolean Operators: Boolean operators are words or symbols used to refine search results. They include AND, OR, NOT, and parentheses. For example, searching for “dog AND cat” will only return results that contain both the words “dog” and “cat.”

Advanced Search: Advanced search options

allow users to narrow down search results by specifying certain criteria, such as language, date range, or file type. This can be useful for finding specific information types or limiting search results to more recent or relevant content.

Subject-specific Databases: Subject-specific databases are electronic databases that contain information on a specific topic or subject area. Examples include PubMed for medical research and JSTOR for academic research. These databases often provide more specialised and in-depth information than general search engines.

Social Media Search: Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram can also be used to search for information. Hashtags and keywords can be used to find relevant content, and advanced search options can be used to refine results.

In conclusion, search tools and techniques are important for finding relevant information on the internet and in electronic databases. Understanding how to use search engines, Boolean operators, advanced search options, subject-specific databases, and social media searches can improve the efficiency and accuracy of the search process.

Recap

- ▶ The evolution of electronic and digital technology has transformed the way we communicate, work, and access information.
- ▶ Electronic and digital technology has enabled people to communicate instantly across long distances.
- ▶ The internet has enabled people to connect and collaborate with others on projects and ideas.
- ▶ Social media has changed the way we interact with each other and share information.
- ▶ Language and cyberspace have a unique relationship with the internet, giving rise to new forms of language such as emoticons, hashtags, and memes.
- ▶ The relationship between language and ICT is complex and has positive and negative implications.
- ▶ Many technical terms are used in ICT, and some of the most commonly used ones include algorithms, cloud computing, cybersecurity, etc.
- ▶ The internet's efficiency and economy have been critical factors in its widespread adoption and success.
- ▶ Its efficiency refers to the ability of the internet to deliver data and services quickly and reliably, and its economy refers to the cost-effectiveness of using the internet.

Objective Questions

1. Which was the first personal computer that was introduced in 1975?
2. What is an example of an AI application?
3. What is the combination of keyboard characters that are used to represent facial expressions or emotions known as?
4. What is the emoticon for a surprised face emotion?
5. What are graphical representations of emotions and objects used in digital communication known?
6. How is the emoji for thinking-face used?
7. What is a type of computing that involves using a network of remote servers to store, manage, and process data is known as?
8. What is the file format used for digital audio files known as?
9. What are words or symbols used to refine search results known as?
10. Give an example of subject-specific databases.

Answers

1. Altair 8800
2. Alexa
3. Emoticons
4. :O
5. Emojis
6. 🤔
7. Cloud computing
8. MP3
9. Boolean operators
10. JSTOR

Assignments

1. Discuss the evolution of electronic and digital technology and its impact on communication, business, research, and access to information. Highlight some of the significant advancements in electronic and digital technology.
2. Explain the relationship between language and cyberspace and how the internet

has transformed language.

3. What are emoticons? Discuss their origin, evolution and their role in digital communication. Provide examples of how emoticons are used in various digital platforms.
4. Discuss the impact of the internet on language use, learning, and preservation. How has the internet contributed to online language communities, and what challenges does online communication pose to language use?
5. Analyse the multifaceted relationship between language and ICT. Discuss the positive and negative implications of ICT on language use and cultural diversity.

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Unit 3

Authenticity, Linguistic Errors, Laws and Misuse in Social Media

Learning Outcomes

Upon the completion of this unit, the learners will be able to:

- ▶ explain the unique characteristics of new media, such as interactivity, convergence, accessibility, and audience power.
- ▶ identify the possibility of linguistic errors in communication through new media and explain how miscommunication can occur.
- ▶ understand the concept of Cyber Law and its purpose, which is to provide legal protection to individuals and organisations using the internet.
- ▶ delineate the role of cyber laws in the IT sector.

Prerequisites

Priya's heart raced as she stared at her phone screen. The post she had shared an hour ago had gone viral, with thousands of likes and shares. She felt a rush of excitement but also a twinge of unease. The post claimed a popular celebrity had been arrested for tax fraud. Priya had seen it on a friend's timeline and shared it without thinking twice. Now, comments were pouring in, some praising her for "exposing the truth," others demanding proof. As Priya scrolled through the responses, she noticed a comment from a verified news account: "This information is false. The celebrity in question has not been arrested." Panic set in. Priya had unintentionally spread fake news to thousands of people.

This scenario highlights the complex landscape of social media communication in today's digital age. It touches on several critical issues that users face daily: the rapid spread of information, the challenge of distinguishing fact from fiction, and the potential consequences of sharing unverified content.

In a world where anyone can be a publisher, questions of authenticity and responsibility become paramount. How do we ensure the accuracy of what we share? What are the linguistic nuances that can lead to misunderstandings in digital communication? And what legal frameworks exist to govern our online behaviour?

As we think about this digital terrain, it's crucial to understand the power and pitfalls of social media. This unit will explore these themes, equipping you with the knowledge to be a more informed and responsible digital citizen.

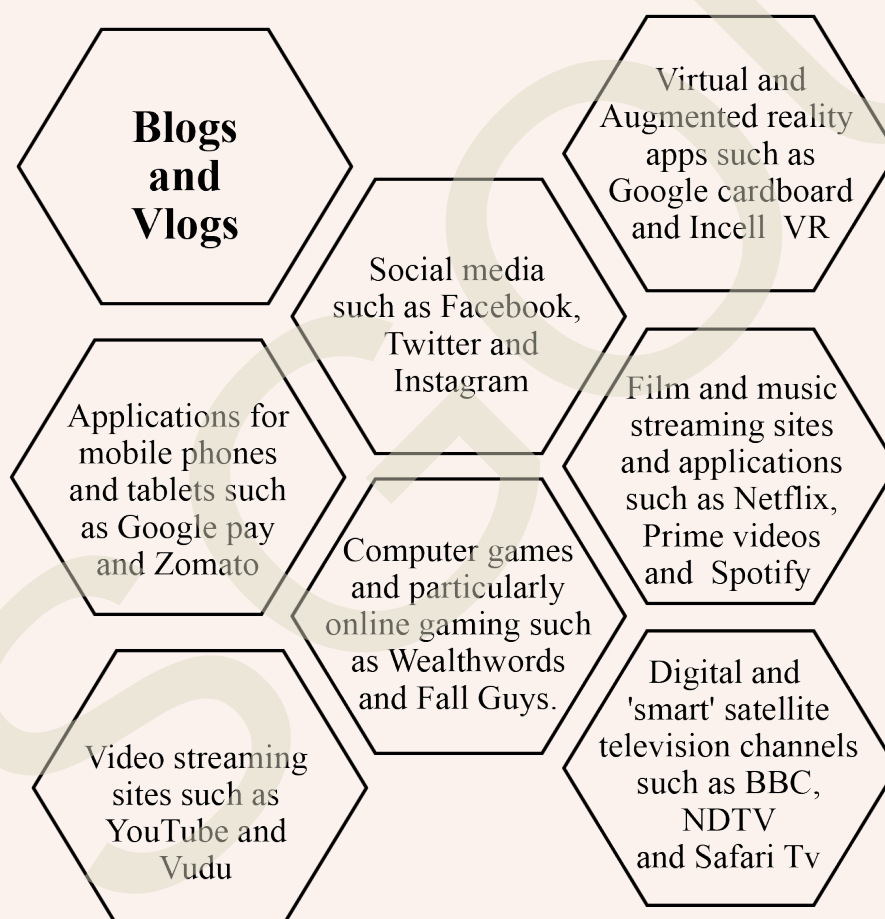


Fig 4.3.1 Various new media platforms and tools

Keywords

Authenticity, New media, Linguistic, Errors, Cyber laws, Misuse, Abuse, Incyber space

Discussion

One of the notable aspects of new media is that it includes social networks, which have become very popular these days. Social networking sites or applications such as Facebook and Snapchat allow people, groups, and organisations to connect and share information such as pictures and texts. There are also virtual communities where a network of people from all parts of the world share information and exchange ideas across an online community. The members of the community are able to share similar interests or goals, such as an

online travel community or followers of a sports blog. Communities are usually hosted on social networking platforms such as Instagram, Facebook groups, and WhatsApp groups. Now what makes the new media unique and special among us? The following will explain to you the reasons:

(1) Interactivity: New media forms often make it possible to have more interaction than with old media. The audience feels engaged. For example, on a digital platform like that of a news channel or a radio program, you have access to tweet or live comment.

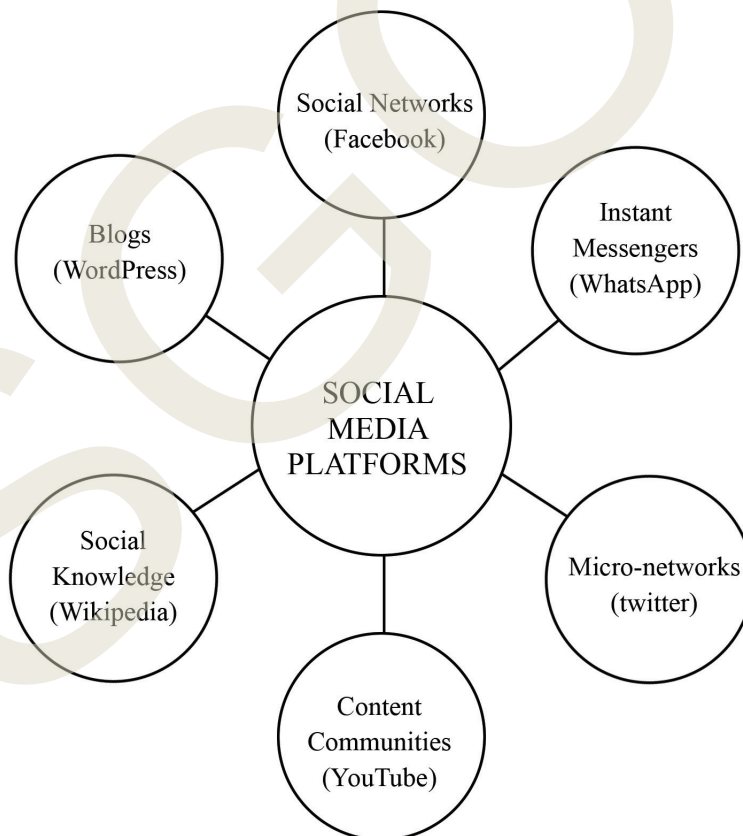


Fig 4.3.2 Various types of social media platforms

(2) Convergence: With a device in your hand, you can access a wide range of media. Mobile phones are not just for making calls or sending messages; they can also be used for watching TV programs, listening to music, social networking, using e-libraries, and browsing websites.

(3) Accessibility: One characteristic of new media is its widespread availability and low cost. When people have access to high-speed internet data and low-cost devices, they can instantly access a broad array of media content. In such a “free service” world, media producers’ main source of revenue is subscription charges and advertisements

(4) Audience power: The appropriate term to describe every media consumer is “user.” Users have the power to influence media content by choosing which programs to watch and on which platform to view them. In the domain of new media, there is plenty of scope for interaction, discussion, and self-broadcasting, which makes users more powerful and influential.

Social media platforms play a dominant role in our social lives. The diagram 4.3.2 illustrates various types of social media platforms, with examples provided in the brackets.

4.3.1 Authenticity of new media

Technological sophistication has made media access much easier today. Our relationship with the outside world is now defined by the cell phones and other smart gadgets that we carry with us. However, when these devices allow individuals to go beyond the role of just receiving information or consuming entertainment to becoming broadcasters in the absence of an editor, issues can arise. Have you thought about it before posting a comment on Facebook or broadcasting a story on Instagram?

Are you aware that in the cyberspace, you

are the editor of your own material? How many of us are conscious that every post we publish in new media is distributed in a larger public space? Many of us receive numerous forwarded messages on our social media applications, and we forward them to others without a second thought. On many occasions, we fail to ensure the authenticity of the content before forwarding it. Many of us blindly believe comments, views, and manipulated information as authentic. The same platform that revolutionised our lives can also make us susceptible to doubt, confusion, and fallacy.

Evaluating the credibility of media content on new media platforms has become an important issue for media users. Conventional media platforms, such as newspapers, radio, and television channels, have editorial bodies that ensure the authenticity and validity of the content they publish or broadcast. These platforms have mechanisms in place to promote transparency. However, the situation on social media, which is an important part of the new media landscape, is quite alarming these days. It becomes dangerous when the content leads to violence, breaking social harmony and public order. We have all read many reports of communal and ethnic clashes ignited by rumors and false news spread through social media. How does this happen? This question leads us to serious issues regarding the authenticity and credibility of social media. Verbal abuse, incitement to violence, and vulgar comments that tarnish the modesty of people, especially women, are rampant in our cyberspace. If you open a local daily, you will come across reports of such misuse of new media every day.

While the privilege to broadcast strengthens the idea of self-expression among individuals, it also raises questions of authenticity. It is difficult to verify the truth behind the media content we receive every minute. The plethora of new media fills our gadgets with news, views,



comments, propaganda, and lies. The greatest challenge we face is to find the authenticity behind every scenario presented in different formats.

4.3.2 Possibility of linguistic errors

Our lives today are flooded with miscommunication. Social media and other forms of communication have contributed greatly, but they also have their drawbacks. People fail to learn how to communicate correctly. While we can communicate more conveniently with people who are not in our proximity, there is also a risk of misinterpreting messages. However, we can instantly gather information from every corner of the world and establish long-distance relationships.

Misunderstanding and misinterpretation are very common in the messages and texts we encounter in our day-to-day lives. Such misinterpreted ideas distort the actual intentions of others. What we say in person is much different from what we say through text messages, not just by the words, but by the tone we use. When we interact in person, the advantages of body language and eye contact help us make communication more effective. These elements are absent in textual communications, leading us to many errors. Coupled with linguistic errors, the very goal of communication backfires. Here are a few examples of common errors that appear on social media.

- ▶ **Sentence starters and Endings:** The writings on social media reflect a violation of the basic rule of the English language, which states that every sentence should start with a capital letter and end with a full stop symbol, a question mark, or an exclamation mark.
- ▶ **Using Apostrophes to Make Words Plural:** There is a widespread misconception among

many users that the use of apostrophe makes a word plural. Instead of typing *potatoes*, they text *potatoe's*.

- ▶ **Confusing 'to' and 'too':** The incorrect usage of these two words is very common. "To" is a preposition used to indicate direction or motion. For example: *I study from 8 to 11*. It can also be used at the beginning of a sentence, for example: *To the store, I went yesterday, To be or not to be, that is the question*.
- ▶ **'Too' is an adverb** describing something excess or more. For example: *There are too many people in the hall*.
- ▶ **It's and Its:** Many people confuse "its" and "it's". "It's" is often incorrectly used to indicate possession, but actually "it's" is a contraction of "it is". On the other hand, "its" is the possessive form of the third-person singular pronoun. For example: *The cat licked its master*. To clarify, here is an example of "it's" being used correctly: *It's a rainy day*.
- ▶ **Your and you're:** We use 'your' when indicating possession or belonging. For example: *What is your occupation?* 'You're' is a contraction of 'you are'. For example: *You're an intellectual*. Remember that 'your' is possessive, while 'you're' is a contraction for 'you are'.
- ▶ **Then and than:** Although 'than' and 'then' may look similar, they actually have different meanings and functions. The key difference between the two is that 'than' is a conjunction, while 'then' is an

adverb. Remember that ‘than’ is used to compare two things, while ‘then’ is used to indicate a sequence of events. For example: *If you get the salary, then you will be happy. Mangoes are cheaper than apples.*

- ▶ I and me: ‘I’ is a nominative pronoun and is used as the subject of a sentence or clause whereas ‘me’ is an objective pronoun and occupies the position of an object. For example: It’s between you and I (False) / It’s between you and me (Right).
- ▶ “i.e.” and “e.g.”: “i.e.” is an abbreviation for the Latin phrase ‘id est’, which means ‘that is’. It is used to clarify the meaning of something that has been previously stated. For example: I study about plants (i.e. plants that are grown in gardens).
- ▶ On the other hand, ‘e.g.’ is an abbreviation for the Latin phrase ‘exempli gratia’, which means ‘for example’. It is used before a list of examples or to introduce an example of the previous statement. For example: I study about plants (e.g. Tropical Hibiscus).
- ▶ Alot and a lot: ‘Alot’ is a common misspelling of ‘a lot’. It should always be spelled as two separate words. The phrase ‘a lot’ means ‘many’ or ‘a large amount’. For example: *Veena reads a lot during her leisure time* (correct), *Veena reads alot during her leisure time* (wrong).

4.3.3 Cyber laws

Cyber law refers to any law that applies to the internet and internet-related technologies. It is a recent development in the legal system, as internet technology advances at a rapid pace. The purpose of cyber law is to provide legal protection to individuals and organizations using the internet. Both individuals and organisations require protection in the cyberspace. Literacy in cyber law is just as significant as literacy in technology. While you may be well-versed with the functions of the smartphone you use, it is important to also understand the legal consequences of any misuse of the internet. Cyber law is sometimes referred to as the “law of the internet.”

Cyber law encompasses important domains such as cybercrime and cybersecurity. By ensuring perfect cybersecurity, individuals and organisations can protect themselves from cybercrime. Cybersecurity aims to address weaknesses in computers, other ‘smart’ devices, and networks. A cybersecurity policy is necessary to provide guidance in this field, which is why such policies have been put in place. The policy is intended to protect those who are vulnerable to cybercrime. Countries around the world are seeking new ways to tackle cybercrime and promote awareness of cybersecurity. In 2000, the Government of India passed the Information Technology Act, which provides legal recognition for transactions conducted via electronic exchange of data, electronic means of communication, and electronic commerce transactions.

There are three main categories of cybercrimes that one needs to know about. They are given in the following diagram:



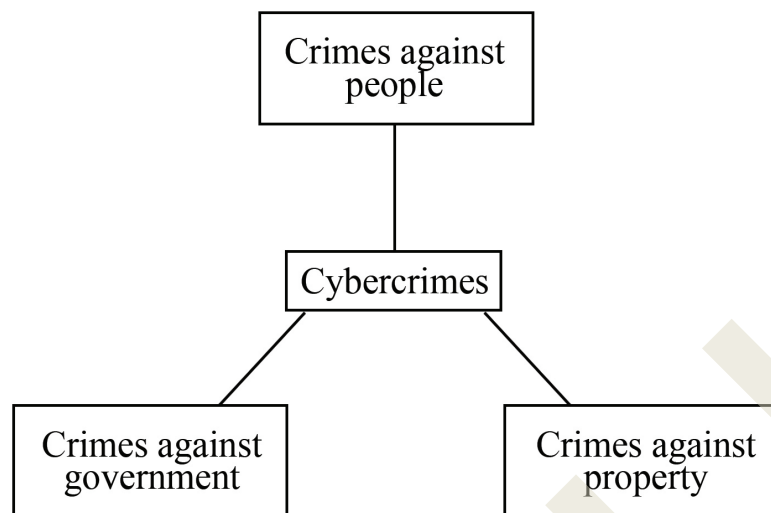


Fig 4.3.3 Three types of cyber crimes

- **Crimes against People:** Occurring at online spaces, these crimes affect the lives of the people. Cyber harassment and stalking, distribution of child pornography, spoofing, credit and debit card fraud, phishing, and cyber bullying are a few examples of commonly occurring cyber-crimes against people. You will study such terms in detail in the next section titled ‘Misuse and abuse in cyberspace.’
- **Crimes against Property:** There are crimes that occur against the property of individuals or organizations. Some examples of such crimes include DoS attacks, virus transmission, hacking, copyright infringement, and violations of Intellectual Property Rights.
- **Crimes against Government:** The cybercrime committed against a government or state is treated as an attack on that country’s sovereignty and is considered an act of war. Cyber terrorism, cyber warfare, and accessing confidential and classified information are all

treated as crimes against the government.

The cyber-forensic experts reveal that most cyber criminals work by forming networks in which they associate and coordinate with each other. Unlike the real world, these criminals do not engage in clashes with each other for power or control. Instead, they operate jointly to improve their skills and even assist their crime partners with new opportunities. This situation reminds us that the usual tactics of fighting crime cannot be executed against cyber criminals.

The challenge for law enforcement agencies is always great to keep pace with the cyber criminals. This is mainly due to the sudden change in the format of the character of the cybercrimes. The nature of crimes changes quickly, day by day. This scenario forces commercial establishments, organisations, corporations, and governments to search for other ways to safeguard their existence. The cyber criminals involved in crimes are not always led by ego or expertise. They want to use their knowledge to earn their gains at the speed of light. They are making use of their skills to cheat and exploit people because it is easier than earning money by working hard through

honest means.

4.3.4 Role of Cyber laws in IT Sector

Information technology has expanded into every field throughout the world, and computers with their related technology have become a necessity in each and every sector. Cyberspace provides equal opportunities to all for economic growth and human development. As the number of cyberspace users multiplies and the range of online interaction expands, cybercrimes, such as violating online contracts, committing online criminality and offenses, and others, have increased. Consequently, strict laws have been adopted by cyberspace authorities in various countries to regulate criminal activities related to cyber use. Cyber laws also aim to provide better administration of justice to the victims of cybercrimes, and these laws become stricter when it comes to crimes such as cyberterrorism.

In the last decade of the 20th century, there was a massive leap in globalisation and computerisation, with more nations gradually computerising their governance and e-commerce showing extensive growth. Until then, a big part of international trade and transactions was carried out through documents being transacted through post and fax only, and records and documents were mainly paper records and various formats of hard copies. With a great deal of international trade being transacted through electronic communication and email becoming very common, electronic records became inevitable. Electronic records, i.e., data stored on a computer or an external storage, thus turned out to be an indispensable part of all modern transactions.

Against the backdrop of all these changes and developments, the Government of India enacted its Information Technology Act in the year 2000, which became effective on October 17, 2000. The preface to the act states its

objective: “to provide legal recognition for transactions carried out by means of electronic data interchange and other means of electronic communication, commonly referred to as ‘electronic commerce,’ which involve the use of alternatives to paper-based methods of communication and storage of information, to facilitate electronic filing of documents with the Government agencies, and further to amend the Indian Penal Code, the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, the Bankers’ Books Evidence Act, 1891, and the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.”

The act intends to address the following issues:

- ▶ Legal Recognition of Electronic Documents
- ▶ Legal Recognition of Digital Signatures
- ▶ Offenses and Violations
- ▶ Justice Dispensation Systems for cybercrimes

The first cyber legislation in the country, i.e., ITA 2000, has led to numerous extensive debates, elaborate reviews, and pragmatic criticisms. Some of the sections in the act faced charges of being either too stringent or too lenient in provisions. Thus, there emerged an urgent need for an amendment in the current IT act. Towards the end of 2008, a new act with necessary amendments was passed without much debate in the parliament. This act was made effective from 27 October 2009. The following are some of the key features of ITAA 2008 (Information Technology Amendment Act 2008):

- ▶ Priority to data privacy
- ▶ Focus on Information Security
- ▶ Defining cyber café
- ▶ Inclusion of cybercrimes such as child pornography and cyber ter-



- rorism
- ▶ Authorizing an Inspector to investigate cyber offences (as against the Deputy Superintendent of Police earlier)
- ▶ Recognising the role of ICERT(Indian Computer Emergency Re-sponse Team)
- ▶ Introduced section 66A which penalized sending “offensive mes-

- sages”
- ▶ Introduced section 69, which gave-authorities the power to monitor any computer resource

The IT act of 2000 originally contained 94 sections divided into 13 chapters and 4 schedules. The table below contains some of the important sections, offenses and penalty given in the act.

SECTION	OFFENCE	PENALTY
65	Tampering with computer source documents	Imprisonment up to 3 years or fine upto Rs 2 lakh or both
66 A	Sending offence messages through communication service, etc	Imprisonment up to 3 years or fine upto Rs 5 lakh or both
66 B	Dishonestly receiving stolen computer resource or communication device	Imprisonment up to 3 years or fine upto Rs 1 lakh or both
66 C	Identity theft	Imprisonment up to 3 years or fine upto Rs 1 lakh or both
66 D	Cheating using computer resource	Imprisonment up to 3 years or fine upto Rs 1 lakh or both
66 E	Violation of privacy	Imprisonment up to 3 years or fine upto Rs 2 lakh or both
66 F	Cyber terrorism	Imprisonment up to life
67	Publishing or transmitting obscene material in electronic form	Imprisonment up to 5 years or fine upto Rs 10 lakh or both
67 A	Publishing or transmitting of material containing sexually explicit act	Imprisonment up to 7 years or fine upto Rs 10 lakh or both
67 B	Publishing or transmitting of material depicting children in sexually explicit act	Imprisonment up to 5 years or fine upto Rs 10 lakh or both Imprisonment up to 7 years or fine upto Rs 10 lakh or both on second conviction
72	Breach of confidentiality and privacy	Imprisonment up to 2 years or fine upto Rs 1 lakh or both
73	Publishing electronic signature certificate false in certain particulars	Imprisonment up to 2 years or fine upto Rs 1 lakh or both
74	Publication for fraudulent purpose	Imprisonment up to 2 years or fine upto Rs 1 lakh or both

Table 4.3.1 Important sections of the IT act of 2000

4.3.5 Misuse and Abuse of Cyber-space

Cyberspace is the global network of information technology infrastructures, telecommunications networks, and computer processing systems. It is the space where all the internet transactions occur. Have you ever thought

about why laws like the ones mentioned above are necessary? The answer is simple. It is the misuse and abuse of the cyber space that forces the law enforcement agencies to frame laws with adequate punishment. Here is a table for you which will briefly explain some commonly occurring abuses in the cyber space.

Email spoofing	When someone sends an email to you that appears to be from another person
Phishing	Extracting personal sensitive information from the victims such as credit card details or net banking details
Cyber stalking	An individual uses the internet to systematically harass or threaten someone
Cyber bullying	An individual uses the internet to harm or frighten someone sending them unpleasant messages
Voyeurism	An individual watches, shares or captures the image of a person without his/her permission for sexual gratification
Credit card skimming	When someone uses an illegal device to collect the information from the magnetic stripe on your ATM, debit, or credit card
Cyber hacking	Any type of misuse of a computer to break the security of another computing system to steal data, corrupt systems or files
Denial of service attack (DoS attack)	An intentional cyberattack carried out on networks, websites, and online resources to restrict access to its legitimate users
Malware attack	A type of cyberattack in which malware or malicious software performs activities on the victim's computer system, usually without his/her knowledge
Spamming	The use of electronic messaging systems like e-mails to send unwanted bulk messages indiscriminately
Software piracy	The unauthorized distribution of software with the help of internet
Salami slicing attack	Cyber-criminals steal money or resources a bit at a time so that there's no noticeable difference in overall size
Cyber terrorism	The politically motivated use of computers and information technology to cause widespread fear in society

Table 4.3.2 Commonly occurring cyberspace abuses

Recap

- ▶ New media is an umbrella term that encompasses any digital form of media.
- ▶ Misunderstandings and misinterpretations are very common in messages and texts within the realm of new media.
- ▶ The purpose of cyber law is to provide legal protection to people using the internet.
- ▶ In the year 2000, the government of India enacted its Information Technology Act.
- ▶ The Information Technology Amendment Act was passed in 2008 and came into effect in 2009.
- ▶ Cyberspace refers to the global network of information technology infrastructures

Objective Questions

1. Write one reason that makes the new media unique.
2. Is the following sentence true or false?: *It's between you and I*
3. What is the term for accessing a wide range of media in a device called?
4. What is another term for Cyber Law?
5. When did the Indian government pass the Information Technology act?
6. How many sections are originally contained in the IT act of 2000?
7. What does the section 66 B of IT act 2000 deal with?
8. What is the term used to denote the use of internet to harm or frighten someone sending them unpleasant messages?
9. What is extracting personal sensitive information from the victims in the cyber domain is known as?
10. What is the term used for any type of misuse of a computer to break the security of another computing system to steal data, corrupt systems or files ?
11. What is the expansion of the term ICERT?
12. Name one issue that Information Technology Act 2000 of the Indian Government addresses.

Answers

1. Interactivity
2. False
3. Convergence
4. Law of the internet
5. 2001
6. 94
7. Identity theft.
8. Spamming
9. Phishing
10. Hacking
11. Indian Computer Emergency Response Team
12. Offenses and Violations

Assignments

1. Collect the reports of various cybercrimes/online cheating from newspapers and find out the most frequently reported offenses among them.
2. Observe your social media accounts and instant messaging applications for a period of one week and find out the number of forwarded fake news/fake messages.
3. Prepare a handful of security guidelines for the users of internet/mobile banking.
4. Prepare a note on the topic 'Social Media Etiquette'.
5. Write a detailed note on the Impact of Social Networking on Interpersonal Communication Skills.
6. Explaining the role of authenticity in Social Media Content.
7. Find out the meaning of the following terms related to cyber world.

Cloud	Firewall	Worm
Deepfake	OTP	POS machine
Captcha	Hashtag	Avatar
Feed	FOMO	Meme

Suggested Reading

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Unit 4

Best Practices in Social Media

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learners will be able to:

- ▶ identify the etiquettes to be followed while using social media platforms
- ▶ understand the appropriate and ethical conduct on social media platforms to ensure cyber security
- ▶ gain awareness on the health hazards while using digital tools
- ▶ observe the physical and mental issues while working on digital tools or using social media platforms

Prerequisites

Sarah scrolled through her social media feed, her fingers moving almost on autopilot. A friend's vacation photos, a celebrity scandal, a political rant from a distant relative - all blurred together in an endless stream of information.

Suddenly, she paused. A post from her teenage cousin caught her eye: "I'm done with everything. Nobody cares anyway."

Sarah's heart raced. Was this a cry for help? Should she comment? Call? What if she misinterpreted it?

As she debated her next move, Sarah realised how powerful - and potentially dangerous - social media could be. She wondered: In this digital age, what's the right way to engage online?

As we navigate this digital landscape, understanding best practices for social media use becomes increasingly crucial.

Keywords

Social media, Contributions, Electronic gadgets, Health issues, Use, Misuse.



4.4.1 Contributing to Social Media

Social media has become an integral part of our daily lives, enabling us to connect and communicate with others, share information and content, and build communities around shared interests. Contributing to social media means actively engaging with these platforms and making meaningful contributions that add value to the community. In this section, we will explore some best practices for contributing to social media and how you can effectively engage with these platforms.

4.4.1.1 Understand Your Audience

Before you start contributing to social media, it is important to understand your audience. Who are you trying to reach? What are their interests and preferences? What type of content do they engage with? By understanding your audience, you can tailor your content to their needs and preferences and increase your chances of engagement with them.

4.4.1.2 Consistency is Key

Social media platforms reward consistency, so it is important to establish a regular posting schedule that your audience can rely on. Whether it is daily, weekly, or monthly, consistency helps to build trust and establish a relationship with your audience. It is also important to post at the right time of day, when your audience is most active on the platform.

4.4.1.3 Engage with Your Audience

Social media is a two-way street, so it is important to engage with your audience by responding to comments and messages, asking questions, and encouraging feedback. This helps to build a sense of community and encourages your followers to continue engaging with your content.

4.4.1.4 Add Value to the Conversation

When contributing to social media, it is important to add value to the conversation. This means sharing content that is interesting, informative, or entertaining, and that your audience will find valuable. You can also share your own unique perspective on a topic or provide insights into a particular issue.

4.4.1.5 Be Authentic

Authenticity is key when contributing to social media. Be yourself, share your own experiences, and avoid trying to be someone you are not. Your audience will appreciate your honesty and authenticity and will be more likely to engage with your content.

4.4.1.6 Use Multimedia

Multimedia, such as photos, videos, and graphics, can help to make your content more engaging and shareable. Be sure to use high-quality images and videos, and add captions or descriptions to help your audience understand the content.

In this way, contributing to social media can be a fun and rewarding experience, but it requires effort and commitment. By understanding your audience, being consistent, engaging with your audience, adding value to the conversation, being authentic, and using multimedia, you can effectively contribute to social media and build a strong online presence.

4.4.2 Appropriate and Upright Conduct on Social Media Platforms

Do you remember your school days, when you were asked to behave in a particular way? We do not behave similarly in our classroom and on the playground. In school, we have

etiquette that we are supposed to follow, and wearing a uniform is one of them. We are asked to be punctual, to greet our teachers when they come to class, and to behave properly with our friends and teachers. A particular way of behaviour is expected from us not only in school but also in different places like police stations, airports, banks or hospitals. Proper conduct is essential in every place. Even at home, we do not behave the same when we are alone and when there is a guest. We follow certain unwritten rules even at home. The same is true for social media. We are expected to behave in certain ways while using social media platforms.

Try to recollect your experience when you first started using social media. Were you aware of its functioning or the way in which you were supposed to behave on a social media platform? Did somebody teach you about the things that should be kept in mind while using it? As a netizen, it is essential for you to be aware of the appropriate way in which you should use social media. Let us discuss them in detail here.

When we talk to someone in person, we try to keep certain things in mind, like not being offensive or hurtful, keeping our tone polite, and not being rude. These are the manners that we have learned and developed as we grew up. Similarly, on social media platforms, we have to use language in such a way that it is not offensive or hurtful to someone's feelings. We have to be polite and not rude, not only offline but online too. No matter what online platform we are on, be it a personal chat or a public comment, we have to think of the emotional impact it can have on the people who read or see it. With people, online or offline, we should interact with respect. If we ensure polite behaviour on different online platforms, we can avoid cyber-crimes like cyber-bullying, harassment, stalking, etc. Abusive comments or messages

or posts on social media can affect the mental health of the person who falls victim to it. So, it is necessary to follow upright conduct on such platforms. Along with that, we have to be aware of the safety measures available to us on online platforms. If we are getting bullied or stalked, we are provided with the option to block and report the person who is engaged in such malpractices. On higher levels, complaints can be made to the cyber cell as well. This way, our cyber safety can be ensured.

There are numerous risks involved in using social media, one of which is the safety of your personal information. When you sign up for any social media platform such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or any other platform, you are required to agree to certain terms and conditions of that particular application. By doing so, they ensure the privacy of your personal information, which means that your information is secure with them and will not be shared with a third party unless you choose to do so. This is the upright conduct expected from the owners of these various applications. It is therefore our responsibility to exercise caution when providing any type of information on any social media platform. These platforms provide us with options to keep our data safe. On the one hand, we can share things in public mode, where anyone can access it. On the other hand, we can ensure that only our friends or followers have access to our posts. In the age of the internet, privacy has become a precious commodity, and we should be clear about the information that should be made available on a social media platform. It is also our responsibility to keep our login credentials for any of our social media accounts secure with us.

In addition to safeguarding our information, we must also be concerned about the data of others. We are all too familiar with fake news that spreads like wildfire on social media. This can be avoided if we remain vigilant while



using online platforms. We must refrain from oversharing information and from sharing things that are not credible. Before sharing anything, we must ensure that the information is viable and comes from a trustworthy source. We must also avoid sharing things that are capable of spreading hatred, discriminatory thoughts, or violence. A single post with toxic content can have a significant impact on a platform where things can be shared with millions of people within seconds. Therefore, we must be extremely cautious when sharing any piece of information. Appropriate and ethical conduct on social media platforms by everyone can ensure the cybersecurity of all.

4.4.3 Electronic Tools and Health Hazards

We are already familiar with the term social media. Have you ever imagined a day without your smartphone, laptop, or tablet? How hard would it be for you? Would you be able to spend your day productively without your electronic gadgets? The answers to these questions lead us to the term electronic tools. What are electronic tools? How do they influence our daily routine? There are many different platforms on our electronic gadgets that help us run our daily life smoothly. In today's world of technology, our days start and end with Instagram stories, tweets, news reports, online lectures, online purchases, Skype calls, WhatsApp chats, Google meets, etc. At the tip of our fingers, we have access to any kind of information that we want to acquire. We get them through different applications like Twitter, Instagram, Skype, Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube. These are the different electronic tools available on our phones or computers that keep us updated about the things happening around us. We also have online platforms like Amazon and Flipkart to purchase products online, which will be delivered to our homes. Platforms like these make our daily life much

easier and smoother.

No matter what, everything around us has a positive and negative side to it. As we are already aware of the positives of electronic tools, let us discuss the negatives. As the title of this section suggests, there are numerous health hazards that we have to deal with while handling electronic tools. In our schools, we have had discussions about the positive and negative impacts that science has on us. Despite all the negatives, we cannot live without scientific advancements. Similar is the situation with electronic tools. Technological improvements are always for human beings to make their life easier. They lighten our efforts in many ways. Therefore, it is necessary for us to be aware of the health hazards that they pose so that we use them in a safe and healthy manner. Let us discuss them in detail.

4.4.4 Effect of Electronic Tools on Mental Health

What do you mean by mental health? It refers to the emotional well-being of an individual. Now, how do electronic tools affect our mental health? It has both positive and negative impacts on our health. Man is a social being. It is with the help of electronic tools that we stay socially connected in this new era of virtual communication. But, as we know, excess of anything is not good. Uncontrolled use of social media platforms may result in serious health issues like mental stress, depression, anxiety, isolation, etc.

Electronic tools have become inevitable in our personal and professional life. We get tangled up in these electronic tools to keep pace with the world. But, what will happen if we fail to keep it under our control? Technology has made life more competitive as well as swift. The work pressure it can create on an individual is huge. Consider a situation where

an individual spends most part of the day in front of the computer and still cannot succeed in work. This can make the individual anxious and mentally stressed. And what if it continues for many days? This can lead to mental depression which can even lead to suicidal thoughts. Situations like this can be prevented only if we find time for ourselves outside the virtual world. A break from these electronic tools is essential for us to maintain our mental stability.

Our phones can keep us engaged effortlessly for a long time, which can put our healthy family relationships at risk. We have all seen situations where each member of a family is sitting in a different corner of the house, absorbed in their electronic gadgets. In our effort to keep pace with virtual life, we often become stressed and develop a fear of missing out (FOMO), which can lead us to question our own abilities. Although we may resort to electronic tools to distract ourselves when we feel mentally down or stressed, this can ultimately lead us to loneliness and boredom. Instead, we should allow ourselves to find healthier ways to manage our stress.

Sometimes, we spend an entire day sitting on the couch, bent down to our phones, which creates a situation of alienation where we are detached and isolated from the people around us. We become self-absorbed, and all we have are virtual connections that keep us glued to different electronic tools. While electronic tools can connect us to people all around the world, it is essential for individuals to have a space outside the virtual world to stay mentally fit.

In the previous unit, we discussed cyberspace and cyber laws. Why do cyber laws exist? They are designed to prevent cyber-crimes like cyber-bullying. Have you ever come across any news about cyber-bullying? Have you ever imagined the mental state of the

person who falls victim to it? Individuals who have faced cyber-bullying go through so much mental trauma and uncertainty. It takes time to heal them with medical aid, and in some cases, the effects can last a lifetime. The detrimental effects of gaming, leading to violence and suicide, have made headlines in recent times.

Although there are laws to ensure cyber safety, it is the duty of every netizen to abstain from such ill practices.

4.4.5 Effect of Electronic Tools on Physical Health

Even though electronic tools largely affect the mental health of a person, it has an effect on physical health as well. Nowadays, since electronic tools lead our life forward, be it at home or working place, we spend more time on our electronic gadgets. Have you ever felt physically unwell after using your phone or laptop or tablet for a long time?

In workspaces like IT-Parks, have you noticed that employers provide facilities for physical workouts for the employees? Why do they provide such facilities? This is given so that people get a break from their tiring daily routine in front of the computer. They need physical workouts to keep their bodies fit. After sitting a long time in front of our computer, we tend to develop physical discomforts like backache, pain in the eyes, headache, lack of sleep, etc. But without these electronic gadgets and tools, it is impossible to run our lives. So, what we need is a solution to overcome these illnesses. This is why it is advised that the time spent on electronic tools should be controlled and proper time should be dedicated to emotional get-aways and physical workouts.

Many of us use spectacles while spending time in front of a screen. This helps us protect our eyes up to an extent. A morning walk or an evening walk can make us feel fresh. Similarly,



talking to our friends or family, listening to music, singing, dancing, outdoor activities like gardening, etc. can keep us happy and relaxed. This is a quality time that we find for ourselves.

These are the kind of solutions that we have for staying healthy and safe while using electronic tools.

Recap

- ▶ As a netizen, it is crucial to be aware of the appropriate ways to use social media.
- ▶ Our language on social media should not be offensive or hurtful to others.
- ▶ There are many risks associated with social media, such as the safety of personal information and the privacy of others' data.
- ▶ Prolonged use of electronic media can invite various physical and mental illnesses.
- ▶ To exhibit appropriate and upright conduct on social media platforms, one should:
 - Use polite language and avoid abusive or rude language.
 - Refrain from cybercrimes like cyber-bullying, harassment, or stalking.
 - Be cautious when sharing personal information on social media platforms.
 - Avoid sharing toxic and unreliable content
- ▶ Electronic tools such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Whatsapp, and Youtube put forth advantages to an individual along with health hazards.
 - Mental Health Hazards- Mental stress, depression, anxiety, isolation, boredom, mental trauma, suicidal tendency, etc.
 - Physical Health Hazards- Backache, pain in the eyes, headache, lack of sleep, etc.

Objective Questions

1. What is one of the best practices for contributing to social media?
2. What is a set of unwritten rules that dictate proper behaviour in different situations and places known as?
3. Name an example of cybercrime.
4. What options do online platforms provide against individuals who engage in cyber-bullying, harassment, or stalking?
5. What is the risk involved in using social media?
6. Is there a method to keep personal information safe on social media?
7. What should we do before sharing anything on social media?
8. Write an example of digital social networking platform?
9. Mention any one health hazard associated with using electronic tools.

Answers

1. Understand your audience.
2. Etiquette
3. cyber-bullying
4. To block and report
5. Loss of privacy
6. By keeping login credentials secure
7. Ensure information credibility.
8. Facebook
9. Depression

Assignments

1. Prepare a list of common misuses found in the social media platforms.
2. Make a poster about healthy social media habits.
3. What is our responsibility when using social media?
4. How can we avoid the spread of fake news on social media?
5. What are electronic tools and how do they influence our daily routine?
6. What is the importance of taking a break from electronic tools?

Suggested Reading

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