



ATSWA

ACCOUNTING TECHNICIANS SCHEME WEST AFRICA

STUDY TEXT

**COMMUNICATION SKILLS
PART I**

ASSOCIATION OF ACCOUNTANCY BODIES IN WEST AFIRCA (ABWA)
ACCOUNTING TECHNICIANS SCHEME
WEST AFRICA (ATSWA)

STUDY TEXT FOR

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

THIRD EDITION

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PREFACE

INTRODUCTION

The Council of the Association of Accountancy Bodies in West Africa (ABWA) recognised the difficulty of students when preparing for the Accounting Technicians Scheme West Africa examinations. One of the major difficulties has been the non-availability of study materials purposely written for the scheme. Consequently, students relied on text books written in economic and socio-cultural environments quite different from the West African environment.

AIM OF THE STUDY TEXT

In view of the above, the quest for good study materials for the subjects of the examinations and the commitment of the ABWA Council to bridge the gap in technical accounting training in West Africa led to the production of this Study Text.

The Study Text assumes a minimum prior knowledge and every chapter reappraises basic methods and ideas in line with the syllabus.

READERSHIP

The Study Text is primarily intended to provide comprehensive study materials for students preparing to write the ATSWA examinations.

Other beneficiaries of the Study Text include candidates of other Professional Institutes, students of Universities and Polytechnics pursuing undergraduate and post graduate studies in Accounting, advanced degrees in Accounting as well as Professional Accountants who may use the Study Text as reference material.

APPROACH

The Study Text has been designed for independent study by students and as such concepts have been developed methodically or as a text to be used in conjunction with tuition at schools and colleges. The Study Text can be effectively used as a course text and for revision. It is recommended that readers have their own copies.

FORWARD

The ABWA Council, in order to actualize its desire and ensure the success of students at the examinations of the Accounting Technicians Scheme West Africa (ATSWA), put in place a Harmonisation Committee, to among other things, facilitate the production of Study Texts for students. Hitherto, the major obstacle faced by students was the dearth of study texts which they needed to prepare for the examinations.

The Committee took up the challenge and commenced the task in earnest. To start off the process, the existing syllabus in use by some member Institutes were harmonized and reviewed. Renowned professionals in private and public sectors, the academia, as well as eminent scholars who had previously written books on the relevant subjects and distinguished themselves in the profession, were commissioned to produce Study Texts for the twelve subjects of the examination.

A minimum of two Writers and a Reviewer were tasked with the preparation of Study Text for each subject. Their output was subjected to a comprehensive review by experienced imprimaturs.

The Study Texts cover the following subjects:

PART I

- 1 Basic Accounting Processes and Systems
- 2 Economics
- 3 Business Law
- 4 Communication Skills

PART II

- 1 Principles and Practice of Financial Accounting
- 2 Public Sector Accounting
- 3 Quantitative Analysis
- 4 Information Technology

PART III

- 1 Principles of Auditing
- 2 Cost Accounting
- 3 Preparation of Tax Computation and Returns
- 4 Management

Although, these Study Texts have been specially designed to assist candidates preparing for the technicians examinations of ABWA, they should be used in conjunction with other materials listed in the bibliography and recommended text.

PRESIDENT, ABWA

STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY TEXT

The layout of the chapters has been standardized so as to present information in a simple form that is easy to assimilate.

The Study Text is organised into chapters. Each chapter deals with a particular area of the subject, starting with learning objective and a summary of sections contained therein.

The introduction also gives specific guidance to the reader based on the contents of the current syllabus and the current trends in examinations. The main body of the chapter is subdivided into sections to make for easy and coherent reading. However, in some chapters, the emphasis is on the principles or applications while others emphasise method and procedures.

At the end of each chapter is found the following:

- Summary
- Points to note (these are used for purposes of emphasis or clarification);
- Examination type questions; and
- Suggested answers.

HOW TO USE THE STUDY TEXT

Students are advised to read the Study Text, attempt the questions before checking the suggested answers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The ATSWA Harmonisation and Implementation Committee, on the occasion of the publication of the first edition of the ATSWA Study Texts acknowledge the contributions of the following groups of people. The ABWA Council, for their inspiration which gave birth to the whole idea of having a West African Technicians Programme. Their support and encouragement as well as financial support cannot be overemphasized. We are eternally grateful.

To The Councils of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), and the Institute of Chartered Accountants, Ghana (ICAG), and the Liberia Institute of Certified Public Accountants (LICPA) for their financial commitment and the release of staff at various points to work on the programme and for hosting the several meetings of the Committee, we say kudos.

We are grateful to the following copyright holders for permission to use their intellectual properties:

- The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) for the use of the Institute's examination materials;
- International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) for the use of her various publications;
- International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) for the use of International Accounting Standards and International Financial Reporting Standards;
- Owners of Trademarks and Trade names referred to or mentioned in this Study Text.

We have made every effort to obtain permission for use of intellectual materials in this Study Texts from the appropriate sources.

We wish to acknowledge the immense contributions of the writers and reviewers of this manual.

Our sincere appreciation also goes to various imprimaturs and workshop facilitators. Without their input, we would not have had these Study Texts. We salute them.

Chairman
ATSWA Harmonization & Implementation Committee

A new syllabus for the ATSWA Examinations has been approved by ABWA Council and the various PAOs. Following the approval of the new syllabus which becomes effective from the September 2017 diet a team was constituted to undertake a comprehensive review of the Study Texts in line with the syllabus under the supervision of an editorial board.

The Reviewers and Editorial board members are:

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PAPER 4

COURSE TITLE: COMMUNICATION SKILLS

AIM:

To examine candidates' competence in the use of those aspects of the English Language (both oral and written) that will ensure effective business communication in an organisation.

OBJECTIVES

On completion of this paper, candidates should be able to

- a) Understand the structure and uses of the communication systems, models and networks within and outside the organization;
- b) Read and understand texts on technical concepts relating to the accounting profession;
- c) Answer questions on comprehension and summary passages to test their understanding of a given piece of information;
- d) Know grammatical rules and mechanics that relate to good use of language such as word classes, phrases, clauses, sentences, punctuation marks, spellings, figurative expressions, etc.;
- e) Know the different types of essays, correspondences, speeches and how to write them;
- f) Apply language skills to the communicative activities in an organization.

STRUCTURE OF THE PAPER

This paper is a three-hour paper, divided into three sections:

SECTION A: (40 marks) This shall consist of 40 compulsory questions made up of 20 multiple choice and 20 short answer questions covering the entire syllabus.

SECTION B: (30 marks) The only question in this section shall be compulsory and will be based on either comprehension or summary.

SECTION C: (30 marks) This shall consist of 4 questions, out of which candidates are expected to answer any 2 at 15 marks each.

CONTENTS

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Introduction to Communication Skills | 20% |
| Communication Systems, Models and Networks | |
| a. Definition of communication | |
| b. The role of communication | |
| c. Elements of the communication process | |
| d. Types of communication | |

- e. Differences, Advantages and Disadvantages of types of communication
 - f. Human communication
 - g. Formal communication system
 - h. Barriers and limitations to effective communication
 - i. Communication ethics: conflict in the workplace, types of conflict, conflict resolution, mediation and negotiation.
2. Language Skills and Grammatical rules 20%
- a) Basic language skills
 - i. Listening: Definition, types, barriers to effective listening
 - ii. Speaking: Principles of effective speaking
 - iii. Reading: Definition, types, common faults in reading, reading methods
 - iv. Writing: Paragraphing, outlining, note taking, punctuation
 - b) Grammatical rules
Elements of language: The word, word classes, phrases, clauses, sentences, mechanics, common errors in sentence construction, figurative expressions.
3. Communication in action 60%
- a) Comprehension and summary
 - i. Techniques for answering comprehension questions
 - ii. Principles of effective summary writing
 - b) Essay writing
 - i. Definition, types and characteristics
 - ii. Writing different kinds of essays
 - c) Speech making
 - i. Definition, types and formats of different speeches
 - ii. Different methods of speech delivery
 - iii. Writing of speeches
 - d) Report writing
 - i. Types, classification, format/components
 - ii. Writing reports
 - e) Meetings
 - i. Types, statutory documents and technical terms associated with meetings
 - ii. Officials at meetings
 - iii. Minutes writing
 - f) Correspondence
 - i. Types and characteristics of different correspondences
 - ii. Format of each type of correspondence

- iii. Differences between and among the different types of correspondences
- iv. Writing letters, memoranda, circulars, newsletters, press releases, e-mails, etc.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

1. ATSWA Study Text on Communication Skills
2. Ajayi, Wale and Idakwo, V (2006): *Communication in English*, Ilaro: Marvel Books
3. Soola, Oludayo (1998): *Business Communication*, Ibadan: Kraft Books Limited
4. Erasmus-Kritzinger, L E., Bowler, A and Goliath, D (2001): *Effective Communication*, Western Cape: Afritech

REFERENCE BOOKS

1. Little, Peter: *Communication in Business*, London: Longman
2. Eyre, E C (1979): *Effective communication Made Simple*, London: W H Allen
3. J E Metcalfe and Castle: *Correct English*, Surrey, England: Clarion
4. Sybil James, Isaac Ode and OludayoSoola: *Introduction to Communication for Business and Organisations*, Ibadan: Spectrum Publishers.

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION

1.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to

- Define communication;
- Explain roles of communication.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Communication has been variously defined by different Communication experts; but can simply be described as the interchange of information between or amongst two or more persons. Communication is not limited to the art of speaking or writing. It also covers body language, personal manners and the way these are exhibited in style and effect. In this chapter, we would introduce you to the basic concepts of communication and prepare you for the key ideas you are likely to meet in subsequent chapters. The layout for this chapter is as follows:

- Section 1.2 defines and explains the term “Communication.”
- Section 1.3 examines roles of communication.

1.2 DEFINITION AND MEANING OF COMMUNICATION

The word “communication” is derived from the Latin word “communis”, which means “common.” Individuals involved in communication by this definition, attempt to ensure a common basis for understanding the message that is communicated between or among them. According to the American Society of Training Directors, a good communication is “the interchange of thought or information to bring about mutual understanding and confidence or good human relations.”

Mary Ellen Guffey defines communication as “the transmission of information and meaning from one individual or group to another.” Communication, therefore, is anything that can make a message much more meaningful to the one being communicated with. Communication is a two-way process and is not complete without a feedback. Feedback ensures that communication is more effective because

it confirms receipt and adequate understanding of the intended message.

In a nutshell, communication is

- A process of transmitting thought, ideas, attitudes and feelings from one person to another
- The sharing and imparting information
- The giving of understandable information and the receiving and understanding of the message
- The transmitting of messages and the linking of people

1.3 ROLES OF COMMUNICATION

Communication has been described as a very vital tool in the process of managing people. It is a daily occurrence at the workplace and in our daily lives. Broadly speaking, the six major goals of communication are to

- (a) facilitate recipient's level of understanding (education);
- (b) elicit receiver's response;
- (c) create good relations;
- (d) create organisational goodwill,.
- (e) inform, and
- (f) entertain

(a) To improve recipient's level of understanding (education)

When the sender sends a message, it is obvious to him (sender) what meaning the message is intended to convey. What is not clear, however, is whether the receiver would understand the message as the sender intends it to be. The expected receiver's understanding of a message is the most critical goal or objective of the communication process. A message that is unable to elicit the appropriate receiver's understanding may be ambiguous because it could be interpreted anyhow by various parties if they were the recipients.

ILLUSTRATION1.1

For example, if a manager were to leave a note on the table of his driver with the message: "we are travelling" it is obvious that the message will mean very little to the recipient as both manager and driver will not attain shared meaning. The issues likely to arise in the mind of the driver are many, such as: Where are we travelling to? What time are we travelling? What

date are we travelling? How long are we going to be away? What preparations do I need to make on the company car if we are travelling in the official vehicle? The manager's message does not in anyway address any of these issues. In the above circumstance, the manager's message may simply not achieve its objective.

(b) **To elicit receiver's response**

Once a message is received, the receiver will respond by one of several actions, depending on his (that is, receiver's) understanding of the message. In direct conversation, the receiver has the benefit of seeking clarification on the import of the message and the sender could also take advantage of the face-to-face interaction to explain any ambiguities in his message. In written communication, however, this is not possible and the message may thus elicit varying interpretations, based on receiver's understanding.

ILLUSTRATION 1.2

A written wedding invitation, for instance, may elicit one of the following responses: the receiver may write to notify the sender of his or her intention to attend or not to attend. The Receiver may also attend without giving notice to the sender. Yet another possible reaction could be that the receiver may not attend without notifying the sender.

A message that does not elicit the right response obviously does not achieve its aim. The sender would, therefore, encourage response if the message is worded in a way as to elicit the single most appropriate and desired response.

(c) **To create good relations**

Another goal of communication is the creation of good relations between the parties. The sender of a message must ensure that the content of the message does not cause strains in relations. Primary responsibility for creating and maintaining good relations would be assumed by the sender and this can be done by ensuring that the wording of the message looks good, positive and encouraging. Composing messages whose contents do not stress the interests of the receiver is critical.

(d) **To create organisational goodwill**

Goodwill is a critical success factor in business and communication that must be used to enhance the creation of organisational goodwill. The goodwill of all stakeholders that the organisation deals with such as clients, suppliers, customers, government, the community, etc., is necessary for the continued successful operation of business.

Similarly, when individuals communicate, the receiver of the message must enjoy his or her (sender's) confidence and trust as this is likely to facilitate the receiver's appreciation and response.

(e) To inform

The central message of communication is information which gives us knowledge needed to take decisions. Without information, communication cannot take place. Information may be in the form of ideas, beliefs, thoughts, or attitudes which stimulate a sender to communicate with others for the purpose of awakening their consciousness about the body of facts available to the receiver.

(f) To entertain

Communication can be used to entertain. A person with a heavy heart listening to a jester will smile or laugh at certain critical points of the performance, thus creating relief temporarily or permanently. An interesting story makes the reader's or listener's heart merry.

1.4 HUMAN COMMUNICATION

Human communication is strictly limited to attempts to relate to fellow humans. Non-human communication would naturally involve communication between human and non-human beings. In this sense, communication attempts involving machines, animals or extra-terrestrial bodies such as aliens from space would be outside the scope of human communication as stated here.

1.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter, the definition and roles of communication are discussed.

In the introduction, communication is defined as the interchange of information between or among persons. It is also noted that communication is not limited to the art of speaking or writing, but covers also body language, personal manners, and the way these are exhibited in style and effect. The origin of the word "communication" as deriving from the Latin word "communis" which means "common", is noted. The implication of this definition is that individuals involved in the communication process need to attempt to ensure a common basis for understanding in order to enhance the process. The difference between human and non-animal communication is highlighted.

The chapter also discussed the various view points or perspectives of communication. The modern perspective of communication derives from the principles of objective

measurement and decision-making based on traditional calculations. This view point tends to see organisations as quite, complex entities which may not be fully understood through natural science.

The interpretive, critical and post-modern perspectives of communication have also been discussed.

The following major roles of communication were discussed: level of recipient's understanding, eliciting receiver response, creating good relations, creating organisational goodwill, information and entertainment.

1.6 ENDOFCHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

1.6.1 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. The following are features of communication EXCEPT
 - A. It involves more than an individual
 - B. It involves transmission of information
 - C. It is not limited to the art of writing
 - D. It is limited to the art of speaking
 - E. It promotes good human relations

2. Which of the following is NOT a role of communication?
 - A. Providing information
 - B. Promoting goodwill
 - C. Creating conflict
 - D. Promoting education
 - E. Providing entertainment

3. Which of the following constitutes human communication?
 - A. Man and woman
 - B. Man and animal
 - C. Woman and alien
 - D. Man and bees
 - E. Man and machine

4. Which of the following is NOT a constituent of communication?
 - A. Sender
 - B. Receiver
 - C. Action
 - D. Channel
 - E. Feedback

5. Which ONE of the following is NOT a stakeholder in the promotion of organisational goodwill?
 - A. Customers
 - B. Government

- C. Company car
- D. Community
- E. Suppliers

1.6.2 SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. In communication.....confirms the understanding of the message.
2. Communication is a.....process.
3. Body language is part of.....
4. In a business environment the of all stakeholders is a critical factor for success.
5. Communication is vital in both formal and.....relationships.

1.6.3 ESSAY

1. Define briefly the term “communication”
2. State and explain briefly any FOUR roles/goals of communication.

1.7 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

1.7.1 SOLUTIONS TO MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. D
2. C
3. A
4. C
5. C

1.7.2 SOLUTIONS TO SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. feedback
2. two-way
3. communication
4. goodwill
5. informal

1.7.3 SOLUTIONS TO ESSAY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

Communication refers to the transfer of information from a sender to a receiver through an understandable medium where the receiver sends a feedback to the original sender of the

information. Communication may be generally classified into three major categories namely: written communication where the information transmitted is, in all cases, documented such as letters, memoranda, reports, journals, press releases, minutes and magazines.

The second category is oral communication which refers to the situation where information to be transmitted is by word of mouth, such as face-to-face conversation, telephone conversation, meetings, public addresses, as well as conferences. The third type of communication, visual communication, involves the use of tables, diagrams, graphs, charts and pictures, which are all connected with sight.

For communication to be effective, certain conditions must prevail. Of importance are issues such as choice of medium, language use, clarity, and choice of words. The communication process is not considered complete until there is a feedback indicating adequate understanding of the message as it was originally intended by the sender.

QUESTION2

Communication is concerned with the sending and receiving of information which is accurately transmitted and understood by the receiver. Six roles of communication are:

(a) Facilitating recipient's level of understanding:

When a message is sent by the sender, it is the duty of the sender to explain the intention and meaning of the message so that the receiver can understand the message as originally intended.

(b) Eliciting receiver's response:

Communication experts are of the view that the communication process cannot be complete without the receiver providing a feedback to the original sender. Such a feedback must be an indication to the sender that the message, as intended, has been received and well understood.

(c) Creating good relations:

One of the key principles of communication is to establish positive relationship between or among the parties involved in the process. Communication between two parties, therefore, attempts to solicit and exchange ideas, facts and symbols between

them.

(d) **Creating organisational goodwill:**

Every aspect of an organisation requires good communication. This is because the formulation and implementation of the organisation's goals will depend on effective communication. In a competitive business environment, the existence of communication will ensure the successful implementation of programmes, especially where change is required. It will also enhance goodwill within the organisation.

(e) **To inform**

The central message of communication is information which gives us knowledge needed to take decisions. Without information, communication cannot take place. Information may be in the form of ideas, beliefs, thoughts, or attitudes which stimulate a sender to communicate with others for the purpose of awakening their consciousness about the body of facts available to the receiver.

(f) **To entertain**

Communication can be used to entertain. A person with a heavy heart listening to a jester will smile or laugh at certain critical points of the performance, thus creating relief temporarily or permanently. An interesting story makes the reader's or listener's heart merry.

CHAPTER 2

THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

2.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to

- identify the stages of the communication process;
- explain the principles of effective communication;
- distinguish between different models of the communication process;
- explain the importance of communication;
- identify the factors that constitute barriers to effective communication.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

You will recall that in Section 2 of Chapter 1 communication as a daily occurrence at the workplace and in our daily lives was discussed. It was also suggested that communication improves recipient's understanding, creates good relations and improves organisational goodwill. These goals may be achieved only when the communication is a two-way process and involves a sender and a receiver. This chapter discusses the principles of effective communication, models of the communication process, the importance of the process and the factors which may constitute a hindrance to the process.

2.2 ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Communication has been described as a six-point process covering conception, encoding, channel selection, decoding, interpretation and provision of feedback. The communication process may be more than the totality of these elements. However, adequate understanding of these elements is required to appreciate what happens when one party is expressing an idea to another. Each of the elements of the communication process is explained below:

(a) Conception

The process starts with the conception of the message which may be involuntary and instantaneous; that is, it may not require any serious thought-out reasoning. Others may require a more-structured reasoning and planning.

(b) Encoding the message

At this stage, the sender is required to put the idea or information conceived into the most suitable and appropriate form. It is important for the sender to consider a number of factors in encoding the message such as receiver's level of appreciation and understanding, background, culture, etc. The sender has the duty to ensure that language, vocabulary, symbols, pictures and signs used will convey the intended meaning to the receiver.

(c) Selection of a suitable channel

The suitability of the chosen medium or channel, like other factors already discussed, would impact either positively or negatively on the quality of the response. At this stage, the actual process of transforming the message from sender to receiver takes place. Factors to be considered in deciding on a suitable channel include speed, cost, convenience, confidentiality, distance considerations as well as the nature and type of message.

(d) Decoding the message

This is the level of converting the received code into understandable language. The converted code must correspond with the code used by the sender. A message that is received must be understood by the recipient in order to elicit the right response. To ensure effective understanding, it is the receiver's responsibility to attempt to breakdown the components of the message to the extent that the message in totality makes some sense to him (receiver). Effective decoding of the message may be hampered where it is of technical nature and beyond the receiver's comprehension. Similarly, the receiver's perceptions and emotions could affect effective understanding of the message as originally intended.

(e) Interpreting the message

This is level of assigning meaning to the code of the message received. Interpretation and decoding of any message, although quite related, are two distinct and separate phases of the process. There can only be effective and adequate understanding of the message received if the recipient is able to establish, in his mind, a one-to-one correspondence of meaning with the sender's intention. The sender's inability to ensure that the message is carefully encoded could lead to possible distortion of the message with the effect that the message

may be interpreted in a completely different way from the originally-intended meaning. It is important that the manner in which the sender delivers his message is done carefully and in such a way as not to be misinterpreted or misunderstood by the receiver.

(f) Feedback

Feedback is the element of the process in which the response of the receiver is conveyed to the sender. Without a feedback, the communication process is not considered complete or successful. In the feedback process, the roles are reversed: the original sender of the message becomes the receiver, while the original receiver assumes the role of a sender. Depending on the type of communication, feedback could be oral, written or involve the use of body language.

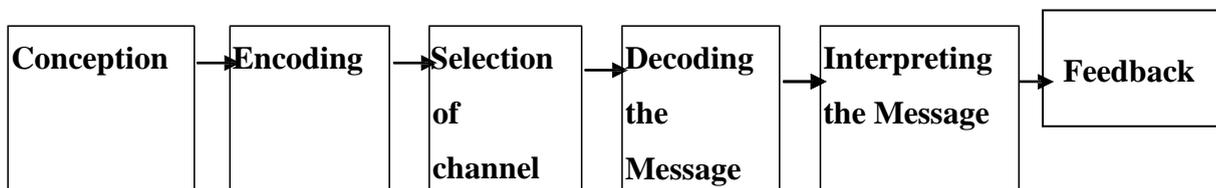


Fig 2.1: The Elements of the Communication Process

2.3 THE PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

In this section, we will deal with the principles required for effective communication. Poor communication in any form could, in the long run, be costly to us as individuals in terms of image and perception. In business, poor communication could greatly damage the organisation's reputation and possibly put off potential clients. Communication experts have advocated the following principles to improve the effectiveness of communication.

(a) Choice of words

If the sender's aim is to ensure effective decoding of the message, then choice of words is critical. The sender must choose words that the receiver understands. This could be effectively done if he understands the recipient's interests, attitudes, emotions and knowledge level as these variables could have an impact on message decoding. When a familiar word is used in an unfamiliar way, the intended meaning must be stated in parenthesis the first time it is used. This will eliminate any possible confusion in the mind of the receiver.

(b) Clarity of purpose

The sender should be clear, concise and to the point and thus avoid any irrelevant matter. Once this is done, no room is left for ambiguities, which could possibly lead to the message failing to convey the intended meaning.

(c) Listening intelligently

Since communication is a two-way process, the receiver may do a disservice to the process if adequate attention is not paid when the message is being communicated. Listening is just as important as speaking in order that the process is able to achieve the desired results. One approach to addressing this problem of inadequate attention is for the sender to try to read to himself the written message whilst pretending to be the recipient. In this way, the sender is in a position to consider whether listening would be effective and thus deliver the desired results.

(d) Selection of suitable media

The method for delivery of the message could have an impact on the expected results. This impact could be favourable or unfavourable depending on the suitability of the medium in a particular circumstance. For optimum results, therefore, it is imperative that the encoded message is delivered through the most suitable medium in order that the message would elicit the right response. Choice of media should be considered in relation to distance, time, sense of urgency and cost.

(e) Appropriate timing of the communication

It is important to decide when to send a particular message. Depending on the nature of the message a particular time may not be suitable. In our traditional African setting, transmission of news of death of a dear one, for instance, is carefully managed and this includes finding the most suitable time to break such news. This is for the obvious reason of managing the shock or impact of such bad piece of message on the recipient. A departmental meeting billed to hold at the last working hour of Friday is ill-timed, as participants are unlikely to give their best at such a meeting.

(f) Obtaining feedback

Obtaining feedback ensures that the communication has been effective. As stated earlier, a message may not be understood as a result of the inadequacies of the receiver but also because the sender may not have made the right decisions in relation to what likely impression could have been created by language and expressions used, suitability of the timing of delivery, nature of tone and appropriateness of the manner of delivery.

(g) Standards

The quality of response obtained from the communication process is as good as the standard set for all aspects of the process. High standards in choice of media, methods used both in relation to language and presentation are likely to deliver positive results, so long as they are for the purpose and objective of the message.

2.4 IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

- (a) Communication is essential not only for the efficient discharge of one's duties in the formal work place setting, but also to the individual and society at large. Communication is a key to the achievement of organisational goals and objectives.
- (b) Communication serves as an intermediary between two parties where the sender sends a message intended to elicit some specific response and the receiver reacts by providing that response.
- (c) Good communication is required not only for presentations, but also more importantly to keep up the interest of the audience in the subject matter being discussed whether in a meeting, seminar, workshop or forum situation.
- (d) Communication helps job seekers to obtain the jobs they want. Communication assists in the design of personal profiles, composition of the application letter and discharging oneself creditably at the job interview with confidence.
- (e) Communication helps in the provision of good and efficient leadership. Good communication can lead to clear, unambiguous directives and instructions but can also serve the purpose of motivating subordinates at the work place.
- (f) Communication helps to promote positive relations with others through enhanced ethical communication, concern, compassion and empathy.

- (g) Communication may provide information through the media for a number of purposes, including weather forecast, determination of dress code, means of transport, as well as an update on the happenings around the globe.

ILLUSTRATION 2.1

Why Communication is so important

The purpose of communication is to get your message across to others clearly and unambiguously.

Doing this involves effort from both the sender of the message and the receiver. And it is a process that can be fraught with error, with the message often misinterpreted by the recipient. When this is not detected, it can cause tremendous confusion, wasted effort and missed opportunity.

In fact, communication is only successful when both the sender and the receiver understand the same information as a result of the communication give the information sent and received the same meaning.

In a recent survey of recruiters from companies with more than 50,000 employees, communication skills was cited as the single more important decisive factor in choosing managers. The survey, conducted by the University of Pittsburgh's Katz Business School, points out that communication skills, including written and oral presentations, as well as an ability to work with others, are the main factors contributing to job success.

In spite of the increasing importance placed on communication skills, many individuals continue to struggle, unable to communicate their thoughts and ideas effectively—whether in verbal or written format. This inability makes it nearly impossible for them to compete effectively in the workplace, and stands in the way of career progression.

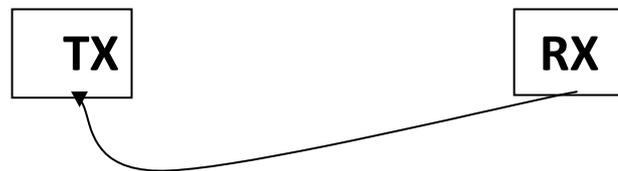
Getting your message across is paramount to progressing. To do this, you must understand what your message is, what audience you are sending it to, and how it will be perceived. You must also weigh-in the circumstances surrounding your communication, such as situational and cultural context.

(Adapted from *MindTools.com*)

2.5 MODELS OF COMMUNICATION

Living in a world of complexity and dynamism means that most of the activities that we are involved in cannot be clearly stated when it comes to testing different relationships and their effects, hence the use of models. Models have been used in almost all spheres of life from engineering to the normal communication that takes place in our daily life. The question, therefore, is what is a model? A model—and in our case—communication model, is a theoretical representation of a real world situation in a graphic form.

In the communication model, an obstruction or an approximation is used to reflect an actuality. As represented in the diagram below, the communication model will allow people to gain an improved understanding of what exists in real life.



In the above model, TX is the transmitter of a message and RX is the receiver of the message. When RX responds to TX, there is a feedback.

2.5.1 The Development of Communication Models

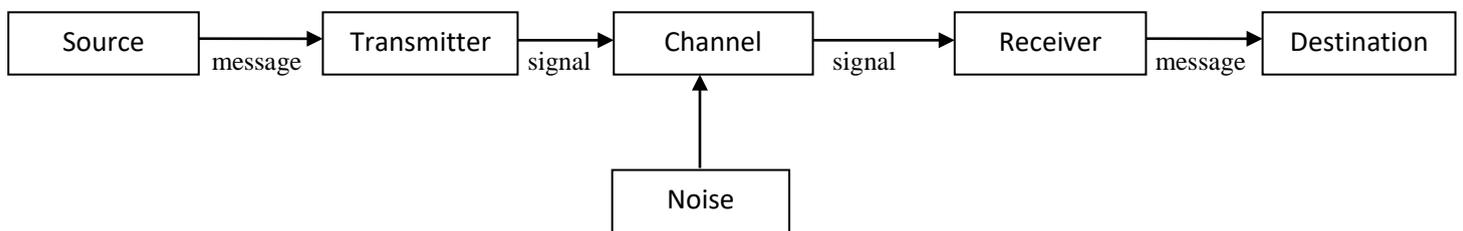
Ever since the 1940s, management and communication specialists have sought to explain the theory and processes of human communication with the help of models. We would consider two of such models.

(a) **Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver (1949)**

C. Shannon and W. Weaver who were American researchers devised a model identifying the key processes of communication to explain their work in telephone and radio telecommunications in the late 1940s. They were the first to devise a structural model of communication that attempted to explain information theory beyond its engineering base in order to apply it to human communication. They modelled communication on a process in which a source encodes and then transmits, along a channel, a message which is received and decoded by its destination upon which it produces an effect. As a result of their background, their model

illustrates a one-way system, since they were interested in how an electrical signal was transmitted along a wire or radio wave and what happened to it during transmission. In this model, the concept of noise allowed for distortion and interference of static upon the message's signal which might prevent its clear reception – indeed a background consideration. What should be noted is that, the concept of “noise” in human communication models refers to anything interfering between the transmission and reception of the message.

Shannon and Weaver Model (1949)



(b) **Wilbur Schram (1954)**

Other communication theorists like Wilbur Schram emphasised the importance of the two-way nature of communication in which the success of the process depends upon the sender receiving feedback. The idea behind his concept is that the sender needs to receive frequent reassurance that his points are being received and understood—that is, constant feedback. What should be noted is that Wilbur Schram's model has been accepted by many business professionals as the most suitable model in human communications.

(c) **De Fleur (1966)**

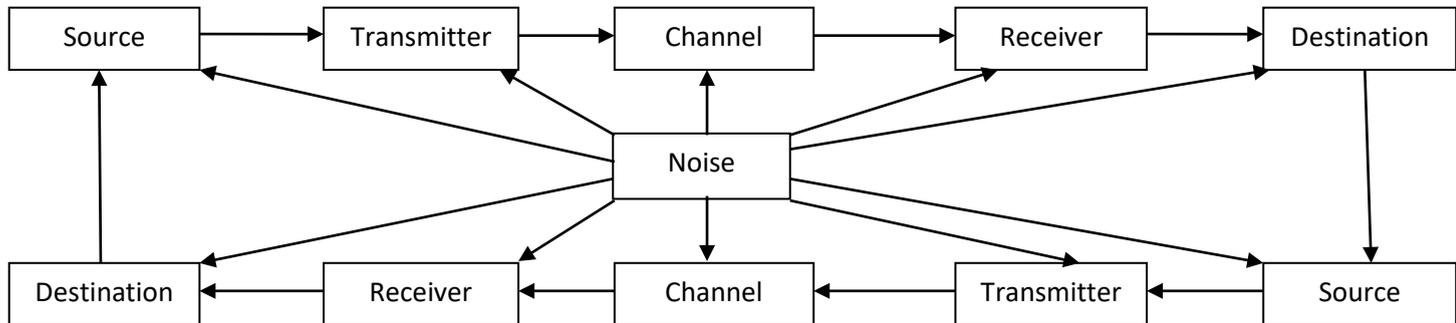
As demonstrated in the Shannon and Weaver linear model, communication begins with the source and ends with the destination. The realisation that communication is a two-way process, however, led De Fleur into replicating the Shannon and Weaver model to explain the feedback loop in a two-way traffic.

De Fleur's model is based on three fundamental assumptions:

- i. that communication is a two-way process

- ii. that noise affects every element of the process
- iii. that there is no permanent source or sender in the process.

De Fleur Model (1966)



2.6 SEVEN Cs OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Experts generally agree that there are 7 Cs of effective communication which are applicable to both written and oral communication. They are as follows:

- a. **Completeness** – For communication to be complete, it must convey all facts required to the audience. The sender of the message must take into consideration the receiver’s mind set and convey the message accordingly. A complete communication develops and enhances the reputation of an organisation; it is cost saving as no crucial information is missing that will require resending any other message that is missing in the first instance if the message is incomplete; it leaves no question in the mind of the receiver and it assists greatly in decision-making by the receiver or reader of the message as all that is required is given.
- b. **Conciseness** – Conciseness deals with conveying the message in the least possible number of words without leaving any facts out. The message that is concise saves time as well as cost; it highlights the main message as it avoids using excessive and needless words; it provides the message in limited words; it is more appealing and comprehensible to the receiver of the message and it is not repetitive in nature.
- c. **Consideration** – Consideration implies ‘stepping into the shoes of others.’ Communication should take into consideration the receiver’s viewpoint, mind-

set, education level, emotion and so on. Consideration emphasizes the “you” approach; empathizes with the receiver; it emphasizes what is possible as against what is impossible; lays stress on positive words that will endear the communicator to the receiver of his/her message.

- d. Clarity – Clarity has to do with laying emphasis on a specific message at a time. This makes understanding very easy; it enhances the meaning of the message and exact, appropriate and concrete words are made use of when the communicator wants to make his/her message clear.
- e. Concreteness – Concreteness implies being particular and clear rather than being a general statement. Communication that is concrete is supported with facts and figures; uses words that build reputation and the message that is concrete can never be misinterpreted.
- f. Courtesy – Courtesy implies that the message that is being sent expresses the sender’s respect for the receiver. The sender should be polite, reflective and enthusiastic. Courteous communication is positive and focuses on the receiver and it is not biased.
- g. Correctness – Correctness implies the communication has no error of any kind, be it grammatical, semantic or phonological. Correct communication is exact and well-timed. It boosts the confidence level of the communicator and has greater impact on the receiver. It makes use of precision, accurate facts and figures, and appropriate and correct language.

2.7 BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Communication barriers are factors that may interfere with the effective implementation of the process and thereby affect its success. Barriers may distort messages or affect the recipient’s understanding of the message. The recipient’s understanding may not be the intended meaning. These barriers may disrupt the process when they occur between any two of the various stages of the process, although they may affect all stages of the process as well. The main communication barriers are as follows:

(a) Unclear aim or objective

This is a situation where the sender is unsure or unclear about the goal (aim) or the objective (the reason) of the message which he is encoding.

Ambiguity or lack of clarity will result in communication breakdown as the receiver is unlikely to respond as expected by the sender.

(b) **Choice of wrong medium**

Similarly, the choice of an unsuitable or wrong medium to convey the message could lead to a breakdown in the communication process. In the informal work-setting, for instance, information could be conveyed via several media, such as telephone, circulars, letters, notices and memoranda. Depending on the nature of the information and considering the likely consequences of possible misinterpretation, management could opt for a formal interaction in the form of workers' durbar or meeting to bring information to staff. Once the appropriate medium is chosen, the effectiveness of the process and the chances of it eliciting the desired response are enhanced.

(c) **Wrong timing**

Timing of the message, as noted earlier, can be critical to the success of the communication process. In our traditional West African setting, the elders consider the very early hours of the day as the best period for the discussion of very important issues. This obviously is because of the possibility of having the recipient's full attention at such a time and thereby enhancing the effectiveness of the process.

(d) **Wrong choice of words**

Words that are not carefully chosen can constitute a communication barrier to the receiver. This happens when words are too technical or too difficult and cannot, therefore, be easily decoded by the receiver. Words that appear too easy or too simple may also constitute a problem. It is necessary, therefore, for the sender to be able to assess the receiver in order to be able to choose the most suitable words for the message. This way, the sender ensures that the message achieves its goals.

(e) **Meaning of words**

Whereas the sender may choose words with a certain and clear meaning in mind, the words in actual fact may connote some other meaning as far as the receiver is concerned. When this happens, the sender and the receiver are at

cross purpose as they both have different meanings of the message. Connotative meaning can also arise as a result of one's experiences, opinions, emotional status and interests. In order to obtain shared meaning required for words used, the sender should analyse the message being sent to be able to determine what likely connotations could arise as a result of the use of certain words.

(f) **Environmental factors**

The environment within which communication takes place can have an effect on the effectiveness of the process. A telephone call from a crowded market centre or from a moving vehicle on a busy motor way would obviously suffer from the effect of noise. Similarly, factors such as distance, room temperature, colour and the immediate physical environment can all affect the effectiveness of the process. To achieve success, it is the sender's duty to endeavour to eliminate all environmental factors which in his opinion could have a negative impact on the communication process.

(g) **Capability of the recipient**

Physical disabilities of a recipient will have an obvious effect on the extent to which the recipient appreciates the intended meaning of a message. Hearing difficulties, for instance, are obvious situations that will constitute a barrier. It is important that the sender is able to take the receiver's capability into consideration in order to ensure effective communication.

(h) **Pre-judgement**

Past experiences, perceptions, anxiety and the state of expectancy of one's mind are likely to constitute a barrier. One major cause of a message not achieving the intended objective is that the receiver would, most of the time, "hear what he wants to hear." Where a person's mind is made up about an issue, it is possible for that person to have an appreciation of the implications of the message that is based on his own judgement, but which is different from the intended and/or actual meaning of the message.

(i) **Relationships**

Relationships, no doubt, affect the effectiveness of communication. When people have good relationships, the communication flow is

greatly enhanced in the sense that hindrances such as hate, prejudice and discrimination are eliminated.

(j) **Information overload**

In the workplace, managers and top executives are surrounded with a pool of information. The tendency is that too much information may be dished out to subordinates at a time such that the information becomes too heavy for the person(s) receiving it to handle. Because of this, the information may be misinterpreted or forgotten or overlooked. As a result, communication becomes ineffective.

(k) **Information under-load**

Information under-load is a situation in which an individual or a segment of an organisation is functioning below his or its processing capacity. A victim of information underload is being deliberately starved of information needed for optimal performance. Strikes by workers are usually linked with information under-load.

(l) **Distractions/Noise**

Communication is affected a lot by noise or distractions. Physical distractions such as poor lighting, uncomfortable sitting arrangement, and unhygienic environment also affect communication, for example, at a meeting. Similarly, the use of loud speakers may interfere with communication.

(m) **Emotions**

The emotional state, at a particular point in time, affects communication. For example, if the receiver feels that the communicator is angry, he may interpret the information being sent as very bad; whereas he may interpret the same message as good and interesting if he feels the communicator is happy.

(n) **Poor retention**

Human memory cannot function beyond a limit. It is difficult for a listener to retain what he is being told, especially if he is not interested or not attentive. Obviously this will lead to communication breakdown.

ILLUSTRATION 2.2

The level of attention that a company driver may pay to an instruction issued by his Director may not be the same as what occurs between a man and his wife. In the former example, because of the formal and official superior-subordinate relationship, the driver is likely to attach serious and urgent attention to the instruction. The latter relationship may, however, depict a much more relaxed situation between partners and thus reduce the level of urgency and attention paid to the message by the receiver.

2.8 BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE VISUAL COMMUNICATION

Poorly produced visual aids may not be efficient for learning. The following are some of the barriers to effective visual communication.

- (a) **Inappropriate use** – either the aid does not do the job because it is wrongly conceived or because of physical limitations.
- (b) **Over-use**– too many aids for the length of the presentation.
- (c) **Misuse** – the aid fails to work when/as required.
- (d) **Poor viewing conditions** – members of the audience may use too little/too much colour and be overcrowded; flip charts are often used to note down ideas from the audience to be drawn together by the presenter, only to be unreadable because of poor handwriting.
- (e) **Cost of production** – Visuals are expensive and not easily affordable.

2.9 SUMMARY

Communication covers a six – element process spanning conception, encoding, channel, decoding, interpretation and feedback. For communication to be effective, a number of principles must be observed. These include: choice of words, clarity of purpose, selection of suitable media, listening attentively and intelligently, timing, standards and feedback. Communication is important for various reasons such as for the individual's personal good, job search, for efficient leadership, presentation in a workshop or seminar and also for promoting good relations. The final aspect of this chapter noted communication barriers such as noise, environmental factors, meaning of words, unclear aims/objectives, wrong choice of medium, recipient capability and pre-judgement.

2.10 END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

2.10.1 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. Which of the following is NOT an element of the communication process?
 - A. Feedback
 - B. Encoding
 - C. Channel selection
 - D. Recipient
 - E. Conception

2. When encoding the message, which of the following may be overlooked?
 - A. Language
 - B. Symbol
 - C. Sign
 - D. Paradigm
 - E. Vocabulary

3. An appropriate channel of communication is NOT dependent on
 - A. Motorway
 - B. Cost
 - C. Distance
 - D. Speed
 - E. Convenience

4. ONE of the following is NOT the primary duty of a recipient of a message.
 - A. Decoding
 - B. Sending feedback
 - C. Interpretation
 - D. Encoding
 - E. Understanding

5. Which of the following is NOT crucial for effective communication?
 - A. Choice of words
 - B. Clarity of purpose
 - C. Giving evidence
 - D. Effective listening
 - E. Appropriate timing

2.10.2 SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. In transmitting feedback, the becomes a sender
2. To decode a message correctly, the recipient must be conversant with the of the words used.
3. visual communication exploits the sense of
4. The choice of a wrong medium of transmission leads to

of the message

2.10.3 ESSAY

1. The communication process is important for the transmission of information in an organisation. However, problems may occur at the various points of the process which may render communication ineffective.
State and explain briefly each of the parts and explain the problems which may occur therein.
2. Explain briefly any FIVE principles which you consider critical to the effectiveness of the communication process.

2.11 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

2.11.1 SOLUTIONS TO MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. D
2. D
3. A
4. D
5. C

2.11.2 SOLUTIONS TO SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. Receiver
2. Meaning
3. Sight
4. Misunderstanding
5. Barrier

2.11.3 SOLUTIONS TO ESSAY QUESTIONS QUESTION 1

The communication process flows through six distinct points namely:

1. Conception

The process starts with the conception of the message which may be involuntary and instantaneous; that is, it may not require any serious

thought-out reasoning. Others may require a more structured reasoning and planning.

2. Encoding

The encoding stage enables the sender to be able to put the idea or information conceived into the most suitable and appropriate form for example, words and phrases which are then transmitted to the recipient of the message. There is the need for the transmitter to plan the message effectively and take into consideration the needs of the recipient.

The problems that can occur at this stage have to do with language.

The language chosen by the transmitter can be too sophisticated with 'jargon' and technical terms to beat the understanding of the receiver of the message. Another problem may include information overload, whereby the transmitter sends too much information to the receiver, which he (the receiver) might not need.

3. Selection of suitable Channel

This is the stage that the transmitter of the message selects the suitable medium for the transmission of information. The common problem at this stage is the wrong selection of the appropriate channel. The transmitter might make the mistake of choosing the wrong channel without giving due consideration to the needs of the receiver. For example, the transmitter may choose the written medium to transmit his information, whilst in actual sense the receiver is an illiterate or semi-literate and reading is not part of his daily activities. In this situation, the oral medium would suffice for the effective transmission of his message.

4. Decoding

The decoding stage facilitates the interpretation of the message by the receiver. At this stage, the receiver can be affected by the problems of selective perception, where the message is interpreted, based on the understanding and perceptions of the receiver- whilst in actual sense, the transmitter meant the message to have a different meaning.

5. Interpreting the message

This is the level of assigning meaning to the code of the message received. Interpretation and decoding of any message, although quite related, are

two distinct and separate phases of the process. There can only be effective and adequate understanding of the message received if the recipient is able to establish in his mind a one-to-one correspondence of meaning with the sender's intention. The sender's inability to ensure that the message is carefully encoded could lead to possible distortion of the message with the effect that the message may be interpreted in a completely different way from the originally-Intended meaning. It is important that the manner in which the sender delivers his message is done carefully and in such a way as not misinterpreted or misunderstood by the receiver.

6. Feedback

At this stage the receiver of the message sends a response to the original sender of the message about the receipt and understanding of the message. The problem that can occur at this stage is the refusal or inability of the recipient of the message to communicate his response to the sender. This can lead to a break in communication since the sender might find it difficult to make judgments as to whether or not the message was understood as intended.

QUESTION 2

There are basic principles in ensuring that the communication process is successful.

Five principles critical to the effectiveness of the process are:

(a) Choice of Words

In order that the message sent elicits the right understanding and subsequently, response, it is imperative that the sender uses the most suitable and appropriate words. Different persons and different situations would require the use of particular words and it is the duty of the sender to appreciate these differences at all times in order for him to be able to choose the most suitable words in all cases. To be successful, the recipient's interests, attitudes, emotions and knowledge level must be considered.

(b) Clarity of purpose

It is necessary that the sender is clear, concise and straight to the point. This will remove all ambiguities and ensure that the message is received as intended and not misconstrued because of ambiguity and/or lack of clarity. The message must not be verbose and should be devoid of all irrelevant matters.

(c) Selection of the most suitable media

Choice of media for transmitting the message can impact on the effectiveness of the whole communication process. This is because factors such as distance, time, cost and sense of urgency may have varying degrees of effect on the media used. To ensure effectiveness, therefore, it is necessary that, in all circumstances, the most suitable media is selected for transmission.

(d) Timing Consideration

Timing consideration will always affect the effectiveness of the communication process. Different circumstances and times require that the message is encoded in a particular manner. This will obviously ensure effective understanding of the message as originally intended by the sender. It is for this reason that messages regarding bereavement, for instance, must be carefully handled such that they do elicit the right response rather than being influenced by the anguish and emotions of the recipient.

(e) Feedback

The communication process is not complete without feedback. In the absence of feedbacks; the sender may not know whether the message, as intended, has been understood. The inadequacies of the recipient, use of appropriate wording and timing considerations are but a few of the problems that can affect the effectiveness of the communication process and also the feedback from the process.

(f) Seven Cs of Effective Communication

Any of the seven Cs of effective communication which are

completeness, conciseness, consideration, clarity, concreteness, courtesy and correctness may be used in conjunction with the other basic principles explained in (a) to (e) above.

CHAPTER 3

MEDIA OF COMMUNICATION

3.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to

- identify the media of communication;
- distinguish between different media of communication.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the media or methods for communicating a message are considered, bearing in mind the basic principle that the suitability or otherwise of the media chosen would either facilitate the achievement of the desired response or impair the whole process of communication. Also to be discussed are factors that determine the choice of a particular medium rather than another. A medium of communication simply refers to the means or method by which one intends to get a message across to the intended recipient. In practice, it may be prudent sometimes to use more than one medium. A notice in the office about punctuality to work would use the written communication. However, the same message could be reinforced verbally in a meeting, for instance. This way, we are sure the message would be adequately communicated for effective response. The main methods to be discussed will be verbal, and non-verbal and as well as written communication.

3.2 VERBAL COMMUNICATION

This is the type of communication that involves the use of spoken words. This is also referred to as oral communication in that, in this instance, information is transmitted by word of mouth. Verbal communication is a two-way process involving two or more people proximate in space and time. Effective verbal communication requires communicators to possess good pronunciation skills, good articulation of words or syllables as well as competence in sentence structure. Verbal communication implies communication through words of mouth. It includes individuals conversing with each other, be it direct or telephone conversation. Speeches, presentations, discussions, interviews are all forms of verbal/oral communication. It is recommended when communication is of a temporary nature or where direct interaction is needed.

3.2.1 Forms of Verbal Communication

Verbal or oral communication may be categorized into various forms such as:

(a) Interviews

This is often referred to as a two-party conversation with a specific purpose. Interviews are part of a system of handling problems or queries of individuals and allows for confidentiality and flexibility in responding to personal issues where necessary. Interviews are also principally used in the recruitment and selection process where job applicants are interviewed to determine their suitability for the positions they are applying for. Other forms of interviews include grievance and disciplinary interviews, appraisal interviews and exit interviews.

(b) Meetings

A meeting is defined as an assembly of people coming together in accordance with legally defined rules and procedures for the purpose of discussing the business of the group as required by law. Meetings may be convened within the organisation at any level. They may also be used to bring members of the organisation into contact with other organisations. Meetings are normally held for a number of purposes such as: provision of information to people who may require them, creation of involvement, participation and interest, discussion of ideas and problems for which members may be seeking solutions, provision of details of report and for purposes of co-ordinating an activity.

(c) Telephony

The telephone is one of the most common methods of verbal communication. In this instance, communication may take place between two or more parties and in different locations or within the organisation's premises. When appropriately used, this method of communication could be very effective as it provides immediate feedback and may be relatively less expensive. Other forms of verbal communication include oral presentation and public addresses.

ILLUSTRATION 3.1

Although telegraphy marked a great advance in rapid long-distance communication, early telegraphy systems could convey messages only by letter. The search was therefore, on for some means of voice communication by electricity as well. Early devices that appeared in the 1850s and 1860s were capable of transmitting sound vibrations but not true human speech. The first person to patent an electric telephone in the modern sense was the

American inventor, Alexander Graham Bell, in 1876. At the same time, Edison was also in the process of finding a way to record and then reproduce sound waves, paving the way for the invention of the record player. By the late 20th century, such developments as transoceanic cable, fibre-optics, and satellite technology had revolutionised the use of the telephone. Mobile telephones ...are increasingly in use.

(Adapted from Microsoft Encarta Encyclopaedia,2005).

3.2.2 Advantages of verbal communication

Among others, these are the advantages:

- a. Since verbal communication is interpersonal, there is a high level of understanding and transparency.
- b. There is no element of rigidity as there is flexibility because any of the parties involved can change the decision previously taken.
- c. Because feedback is instantaneous, decisions are made quickly and without any delay.
- d. It is time-saving as well as money and efforts-saving at times.
- e. Conflicts, disputes and many issues and differences can be put to an end by talking them over. So, it is best for conflict resolution.
- f. It is essential for group or team work.
- g. It can be used to boost morale and encourage employees in an organisation.

3.2.3 Disadvantages of verbal communication

- a. Verbal communication is not suitable, for example, in Business communication because such communication is formal.
- b. Because of its informal nature, what is said can be denied because it is not documented.
- c. Meetings, conferences and long speeches consume a lot of time and may be unproductive at times.
- d. It is unpredictable as verbal communication is not easy to maintain.

3.3 NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Non-verbal communication involves the transfer of information from a transmitter to a receiver through the use of body language, facial expressions, symbols, dress and pictures. Non-verbal communication techniques are sometimes employed by communicators consciously and, at times, unconsciously. Non-verbal communication

is an example of routine and non-routine communication. In this instance, each person involved in the communication process is a facilitator of non-verbal communication. Moreover, the various forms of diagrams, pictures, graphs and slides facilitate the effective transmission of non-verbal communication.

3.3.1 Types of Non-verbal Communication

Many writers use various categories to classify non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication is classified as

- (a) Body language (or Kinesics): This involves the movement of the body and may be divided into the following areas:
 - *Facial expression:* Facial expression conveys meaning. A snarling face says something different from a smile. Facial expressions like smiles, frowns, narrowed eyes may be intended to transmit friendliness, anger or disbelief respectively.
 - *Gestures:* This involves pointing fingers, shaking of the head to transmit and emphasise focus or disagreement.
 - *Movements:* Quick pacing up and down, finger drumming, leisurely strolling may all transmit impatience, boredom or relaxation and are all non-verbal communication techniques which may be used to send messages.

- (b) Proxemics: This involves how people use space and distance around them in communicating. A student who enters a lecture theatre and decides to sit in the back row instead of the front may be indicating his reluctance to be involved.
 - *Positioning:* Keeping a respectful distance, looking over one's shoulder, sitting close to someone are all forms of using non-verbal cues to communicate. They transmit awareness of differing status, a close working relationship or relaxed mutual trust respectively.
 - *Posture:* Standing straight and erect, lounging, sitting hunched up, leaning forward, spreading oneself in a chair are all means of communicating non-verbally. These convey alertness and care, self-confidence (or even over confidence), nervousness or ease respectively.

- (c) Paralinguistic features: Feedback sounds of surprise or agreement or

annoyance or impatience, for example, “uh-u hooops!”. A heightened awareness of what people are saying non-verbally would greatly assist the manager to read a situation and to act—perhaps toward-off a personality clash or to calm an irate customer. The use of tones, stress and intonation as non-verbal cues in oral communication is also important as such cues add emphasis to, or cause significant change in meaning in utterances.

- (d) **Personal Appearance:** Physical appearance always contributes towards how people are perceived. For example, neatly dressed hair, ironed clothes and a lively smile can carry more weight in describing a person than the use of words.

3.3.2 Features of Non-Verbal Communication

The following summarise the important characteristics of non-verbal communication.

- (a) Non-verbal communication can be unintentional. The sender may be unaware that he or she is sending non-verbal message and consequently, may not be aware of the impact it may have.
- (b) Non-verbal communication may be more honest than a verbal one. Since the message may be transmitted unconsciously, the sender will not have planned it. Therefore a non-verbal message can be more reliable than an oral or a written one.
- (c) Neither oral nor written communication exists without non-verbal communication. Examples of non- verbal messages being sent even when the communication may not be face-to- face include: tapping the phone receiver, loudly rearranging papers or keeping silent.
- (d) Non-verbal communication reinforces oral communication by providing non-verbal cues to emphasize what is being said orally.
- (e) Non-verbal communication provides additional visual stimulus. The presence of diagrams enhances the quality of what is being communicated.

3.3.3 Advantages of Non-Verbal Communication

- (a) Non-verbal communication can help the communicator to overcome language barriers.
- (b) Non-verbal communication makes it possible for information to be conveyed to many audiences.
- (c) Non-verbal communication may be more reliable, at times, than verbal or oral

communication because it is mostly transmitted unconsciously.

- (d) Non-verbal communication is always present because this form of communication is always associated with oral or written communication.

3.3.4 Disadvantages of Non-Verbal Communication

- (a) Non-verbal communication can, at times, be difficult to interpret without reinforcing it with written or spoken word.
- (b) Non-verbal communication may require additional skills of comprehension and interpretation.
- (c) Non-verbal communication does not allow time for evaluation

3.4 WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Written communication is a form of communication in which the information to be transmitted is documented. It includes letters, memoranda, fax transmission, electronic mails, and organisational periodicals. Since letters and memoranda are discussed elsewhere in this pack, fax, e-mail and periodicals are discussed here:

- (a) Fax transmission is an electronic means of sending an exact copy of a document by scanning it. In this case, a bonding is established between the sending and receiving machines. The sending machine first scans the document, converts it into data and thereafter, both machines start printing it out simultaneously at their respective locations. In recent times, this mode of transmission, which was initially done via telephone lines, has now been incorporated into computer systems.
- (b) Electronic mail (e-mail) is the transmission of written messages via computers. It is also possible to transmit diagrams and photographs by e-mail. E-mail may be sent to one person or many people on a world-wide basis. Only one message is required for this purpose. E-mail takes less time to prepare and transmit and it is relatively cheap.
- (c) Organisation journal/periodical
An organisation journal or periodical is an internal magazine or newspaper printed by the organisation to inform employees about various workplace issues.

3.4.1 Advantages of Written Communication

The following are some of the advantages of written communication:

- It provides written record and evidence of receipt.
- It is capable of transmitting complex ideas.
- It provides analysis, evaluation and summary.
- It disseminates information to dispersed receivers.
- It can confirm, interpret and clarify oral communication.
- It serves as the basis of contract or agreement.
- It is more precise and explicit than oral communication
- It assists in the proper delegation of responsibilities.
- It is legally-binding

3.4.2 Disadvantages of Written Communication

The following are some of the disadvantages of written communication:

- It is expensive and takes time to produce.
- It tends to be formal and distant.
- It lacks instant feedback.
- It does not allow for exchange of opinions, viewer's attitudes except over a period of time.

3.5 VISUAL COMMUNICATION

In the context of business communication, visual communication refers to the transfer of information through diagrams, display boards, flip charts and other forms of visual aids. Visual aids exploit sight, which assists the human memory and thereby stimulates the business person's level of understanding. In business communication, certain difficult processes are made easy through the use of visual aids.

3.5.1 Types of Visual Aids

- The White Board:*** White board, which is used with markers, is common in every classroom and it is now the most accessible visual support. This board can be used for drawing very simple diagrams. Once the diagram or the drawing is on the board, the presenter should turn to facilitating effective explanation.
- Objects and Models:*** In certain instances, real objects are used for presentations because the audience may want to see them. Models, on the other hand, are replicas of actual objects which facilitate effective learning when the real objects are too complex to be exhibited physically. Examples include models of

aircraft, cars or buildings.

- (c) **Posters, Diagrams and Charts:** A poster consists of lettering or pictures or both. The purpose of poster is to enhance the speaker's presentation. A diagram may range from a simple organisational chart to a complex rendering of a three-dimensional object. Diagrams are particularly valuable in showing how something works. A flip chart is a series of pictures, words, diagrams. It is called a flip chart because it is made up of several pages that you flip through. A flip chart is best used when the subject to be discussed needs illustrations.
- (d) **Tables and Graphs:** Tables are columns of figures arranged in an order that enables the viewer to easily pick out the information needed. Graphs are statistical materials presented in a visual form that helps viewers see similarities, differences, relationships or trends. There are three commonly used graphs namely bar, pie and line.
- (d) **Strips and Slide Projectors:** These are media that use film strips. Generally both slides and strips project images onto a screen and require a darkened room. This situation makes it difficult for the presenter to maintain eye contact with the audience and for the audience to make notes. The media It can be operated by remote control, which allows the presenter to move around.
- (f) **Overhead Projectors (OHP):** Overhead projectors show images through a transparent material (acetate film) projected onto a screen behind the operator. No blackout is required though in brightly-lit rooms, images may become faint. This situation gives the presenter the great advantage of facing his audience while writing or showing a transparency and thus retains his rapport with them.
- (g) **Video Tapes / Video Cassette Recorders:** The recent development in video equipment has made video recorders almost as common place as a television set. Their familiarity has made them ideal to facilitate effective learning. For one to be an effective user of the video cassette recorder (VCR), it is worth checking that one is conversant with the equipment. Apart from picture control and sound quality one must be able to control the visual image through the fast forward, rewind and freeze-frame buttons. For presentations, the television monitor should be positioned so that it is visible and the screen is not affected by excess sun light or shadow. In most organisations, the system is mounted on

wheels and is easily manoeuvred.

3.5.2 Function of Visual Aids

- (a) They can show how things look.
- (b) They can show how things work.
- (c) They can show how things relate to one another.
- (d) They can emphasize important points.

3.6 SUMMARY

A medium of communication refers to the means or methods by which one intends to get a message across to the intended recipient. A number of media have been considered in this chapter on the basis of the two broad methods i.e. verbal and non-verbal communication. The medium chosen for the transmission of a message must be suitable for the purpose in order that it (the medium) can facilitate the process. Where unsuitable media are employed, the process of transmission may be gravely impaired.

The various forms, of visual aids and their advantages and disadvantages have been discussed. Briefly, verbal or oral communication occurs in situations where the information to be transmitted is done by word of mouth. Verbal communication may be transmitted through media such as interviews, meetings, telephone, oral presentation, and also through the use of public address systems.

Non-verbal communication involves the transfer of information from a transmitter to a receiver through a number of media some of which are body language, facial expressions, symbols, pictures etc.

In written communication, the information to be transmitted is documented. Forms of written communication may include letters, memorandias, fax transmissions, electronic mails, organisation's periodicals etc.

3.7 END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

3.7.1 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. ONE of the following is NOT a feature of verbal communication.
 - A. Paper
 - B. Words
 - C. Pronunciation

- D. Articulation
 - E. Syllables
2. Which of the following is NOT an example of verbal communication?
 - A. Telephone
 - B. Meeting
 - C. Writing
 - D. Interview
 - E. Conversation
 3. Which of the following is NOT primarily associated with non-verbal communication?
 - A. Body language
 - B. Facial expression
 - C. Symbol
 - D. Picture
 - E. Conversation
 4. Which of the following suggests 'patience'?
 - A. Smiling
 - B. Pacing up and down
 - C. Finger drumming
 - D. Strolling
 - E. Whistling
 5. ONE of the following is an advantage of non-verbal communication.
 - A. Overcoming language barriers
 - B. More reliable in comparison to verbal communication
 - C. Inaccessible to non-natives
 - D. Accessible to non-natives
 - E. Available for communication.

3.7.2 SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. Communication may be verbal or _____.
2. Kinesics is also known as _____.
3. E-mail is primarily a form of _____communication.
4. A _____aid for information dissemination depends on sight.
5. Facial expression is a form of _____language.

3.7.3 ESSAY

1. Explain briefly THREE types of verbal communication.

2. Explain briefly the following;
 - a. The white board
 - b. Tables and graphs
 - c. Stripes and slide projectors

3.8 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

3.8.1 SOLUTIONS TOMULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. A
2. C
3. E
4. A
5. C

3.8.2 SOLUTIONS TOSHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. non-verbal
2. body language
3. written
4. visual
5. body

3.8.3 SOLUTIONS TO ESSAY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

There are three types of verbal communication

a. Meetings

Meetings are the gathering together of two or more people to discuss matters of common interest for the purpose of taking appropriate decisions or formulating policies. Meetings can be formal, informal, or statutory. Meetings are normally held for specific purposes such as:

- i. provision of information to people
- ii. discussion of ideas and problems to arrive at solutions
- iii. coordination of activities in an organisation

Meetings are normally governed by rules laid down by the authority convening the meeting. The leader of a meeting is referred to as the chairman while the record keeper is known as the secretary.

b. Interview

An interview is a face-to-face conversation which attempts to elicit as much information as possible from a person or persons within the shortest time possible. In business, interviews are used for different purposes such as:

- i. staff recruitment
- ii. disciplinary matters
- iii. grievances and complaints
- iv. management/staff relations

The interview procedure helps in all matters to discover as much information as possible that will guarantee appropriate decision making.

c. Telephony

The telephone is one of the most common methods of verbal communication. It connects people at great distances apart. Immediate feedback, as in face-to-face communication, is a hallmark of this type of communication. The mobile phone and the video phone are a great technological improvement that make the type adorable.

QUESTION 2

(a) The white board

The white board has come to replace the conventional blackboard as a visual aid during presentations. It is guided by the principle of easily erasable materials through the use of its specialised markers which come in different colours. The presenter can, therefore, quickly draw very simple diagrams, write simple notes and explain them and replace them at will.

(b) Tables and graphs

Whereas tables are columns of figures arranged in a specific order to facilitate a

viewer's accessibility to data, graphs are statistical materials that present data pictorially in order to show similarities, differences, relationships and trends. Both tables and graphs are very useful visual aids during presentations, facilitating the bonding between the presenter and his audience.

(c) **Strips and slide projectors**

Both strips and slide projectors use the mechanism of film strips in serving as visual aids during presentations. Although quite effective in facilitating the communication link between the presenter and his audience, strips and slide projectors share the hindrance of being restricted to a specific environment: a darkened room. Nonetheless, the presenter usually has the liberty to move around the room since the mechanism can be controlled remotely.

CHAPTER 4

SYSTEMS OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION

4.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to

- describe the different systems of communication;
- explain the importance of the systems of communication;
- describe the barriers to organisational communication and ways of overcoming such barriers.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Communication, in well-developed organisations, may take various forms and patterns. In this chapter, the various patterns that may be at play in any standard organisation such as formal, vertical, horizontal, diagonal and also informal systems are discussed. Also to be discussed are the factors that facilitate these different patterns. The chapter also discusses barriers to organisational communication and what measures could be adopted to overcome such barriers.

4.2 FORMAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

Formal systems of communication, in the organisation setting, are the types of communication which pass through the official channels in the organisation. In this case, the flow of communication is always backed by some degree of authority.

ILLUSTRATION 4.1

For example, if the Chief Executive Officer originates a written memorandum for his departmental heads convening a crisis meeting, this may be referred to as formal communication. Through formal communication systems, the organisation disseminates all forms of policies, directives and instructions and guidelines for implementation.

This form of communication is very successful because of the authority that backs it up and the possibility of applying sanctions in case of non-compliance.

4.3 THE VERTICAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

The vertical system of communication in an organisation refers to the principal channel for routing directives and policies from top decision makers down through the organisational structure to the people who, at various levels, will be required to implement them.

All forms of ideas, suggestions, criticisms and queries that originate from superior levels in the organisation may be referred to as vertical communication and may be grouped as either downward or upward direction.

4.3.1 Downward Communication

Communication that flows from superiors to their subordinates is referred to as downward communication. The downward flow of communication is the most common in organisations. It may take the following forms:

- **Job Instructions:** These are directives about what to do and how to do it. For example, “Please make sure all the salary vouchers are compiled before the close of the day.”
- **Procedures and practices:** These are information about rules, regulations, policies and benefits. For example, “Don’t try to argue with unhappy customers. If you can’t handle them yourself, call the manager.”
- **Point out problems that need attention:** e.g. a manager raising an issue about the non-performance of particular accounting software in the organisation database system.
- **Feedback:** The manager can also provide information about how effective a subordinate is performing.

4.3.2 Upward Communication

Information flowing from subordinates to superiors is referred to as upward communication. To the organisation, upward communication is as important as downward communication.

Upward flow of communication may take the following forms:

- (a) Information of the subordinate about himself, his performance, his problems and grievances.
- (b) Information about other subordinates and their problems.
- (c) Suggestion about what needs to be done and how it could be done.
- (d) Report on what has been done.
- (e) Feedback about the subordinate and may include some of the issues listed above. What should be noted is that managers rely on upward communication for ideas and how things can be improved.

4.4 THE HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

Horizontal communication also called lateral communication is communication which occurs between people who operate at the same or similar levels in the organisation. Communication between and among members or office workers in the same department, co-workers on a construction project are obvious examples of horizontal communication. Horizontal communication occurs at all levels of an organisation and is generally marked by the increased frankness and ease with which groups at similar levels, peer groups communicate. They are less affected or inhibited by the chain of command situation which employees tend to experience when communicating with superiors. Horizontal communication saves time and facilitates coordination in the organisation. Horizontal communication serves five purposes namely

- Task coordination as in a situation where officers on the same level come together to produce, say, time-table of production or shift duties.
- Problem solving that is, the ability of organisation members to speed things up so as to get problem(s) solved with minimum efforts.
- Sharing information that will enhance employee performance.
- Conflict resolution.
- Building rapport among employees.

Despite the importance of good horizontal communication system several forces work to discourage communication between and among peers. The following should be taken note of:

- Rivalry: People who feel threatened by one another are not likely to be cooperative. This threat can come from competition for promotion, praise, or other scarce resources.
- Specialisation: Another problem that inhibits horizontal communication is specialisation. Here, people with different technical specialities may find it difficult to understand one another.
- Information overload: This can also discourage employees from reaching out to others in different areas.
- Motivation: Lack of motivation may prevent co-workers from having effective lateral communication in the organization.

4.5 DIAGONAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

The diagonal system of communication is a combination of vertical and horizontal systems, linking individuals or members of an organisation who are ordinarily not within the same lines of duty. When, for instance, a labour leader is contacted by a manager to resolve the issue of a sacked employee, the correspondence between them may be regarded as diagonal communication.

4.6 INFORMAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

It has now been established that a significant amount of communicating is done in organisations informally, even when it is official. Put another way, much information is passed on by word of mouth among interested colleagues who have received it from various sources – briefings, memoranda, visits, reports etc. Employees prefer to use informal communication as this removes from them (employees) the responsibilities arising out of the use of the formal patterns and structures.

It should be noted, however, that informal communication might be malicious and full of half-baked truths and if not monitored regularly and correctly, it could lead to mistrust and confusion in the organisation. Some aspects of informal communication are discussed below.

4.6.1 The Grapevine

The grapevine is one major route for informal communication. The grapevine refers to the totally unofficial communication system which has been constructed informally and which is constantly changing. Even though the grapevine is an informal source of communication, it has become an important source of information in organizations which managers cannot ignore in the day-to-day administration of organizations.

4.6.1.1 Characteristics of the grapevine

The major characteristics of the grapevine are as follows:

- (a) Management has absolutely no control over this form of communication.
- (b) It is perceived by most employees as being more believable and reliable than formal communiqués issued by top management.

- (c) It is largely used to serve the self-interest of the people within it.

4.6.1.2 Sources of the grapevine

Users and distributors of grapevine sources of information find their material in the form of confidential letters left unattended on desks, accidental and careless remarks made by superiors in an organisation, loud voices coming from behind closed doors or system changes in established routines and practices.

It has been established that the basis for grapevine is rumours and gossips. Grapevine flourishes more particularly in organisations in which official communication channels are more closed than open.

4.6.1.3 Patterns of the grapevine

The grapevine has four patterns: the single strand, the probability, gossip and cluster patterns.

a. The single strand pattern

This occurs when a person makes a scoop and passes it on to his friend who in turn passes it on to another person and so on. A gets information and relays it to B who passes it to C until it reaches Z. As the information flows along, the original information despatched by A begins to lose or add substance until the information that reaches Z may become absolutely different from the original.

The single strand pattern

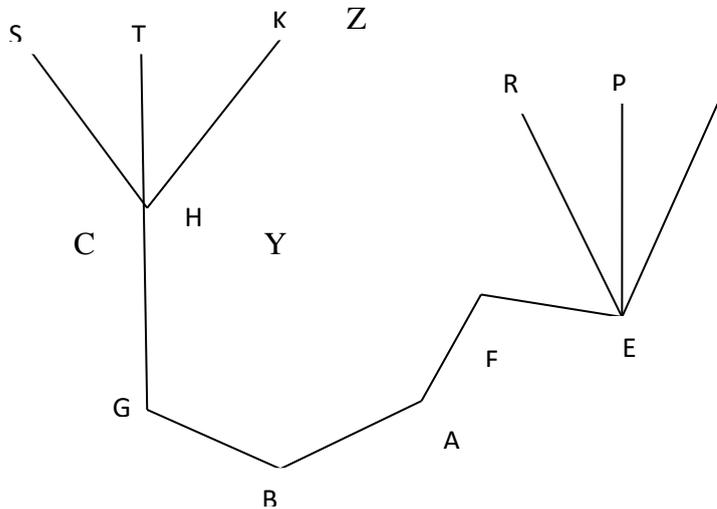


b. The probability pattern

The pattern presumes that people in an organization who are linked by one common interest or the other will first receive the information before it gets to the other person directly concerned. If, for example, a worker in the Accounts Department overhears his friend in the Human Resources Department that three people are to be sacked in the Accounts Department for fraud, the eavesdropper will tell one or two persons in his department and each of them will pass the information to two or more. The offenders

may be the last to hear, if they will hear at all, until they receive their sack letters The pattern works as illustrated below.

The Probability Pattern

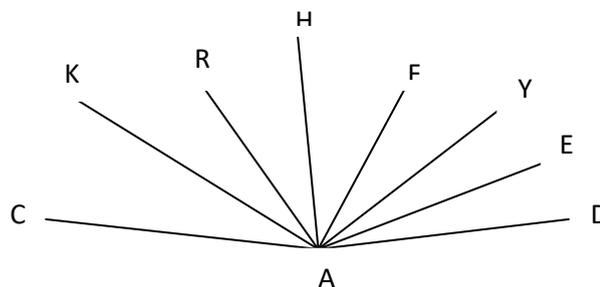


C, Y, Z do not get the information because they constitute the target of the grapevine message

c. The Gossip Pattern

This pattern works this way: One person, A, gets the information and shares it with as many people as are in touch with him. The spread of the information is unrestricted and without discrimination. The pattern is as illustrated below

The Gossip Pattern

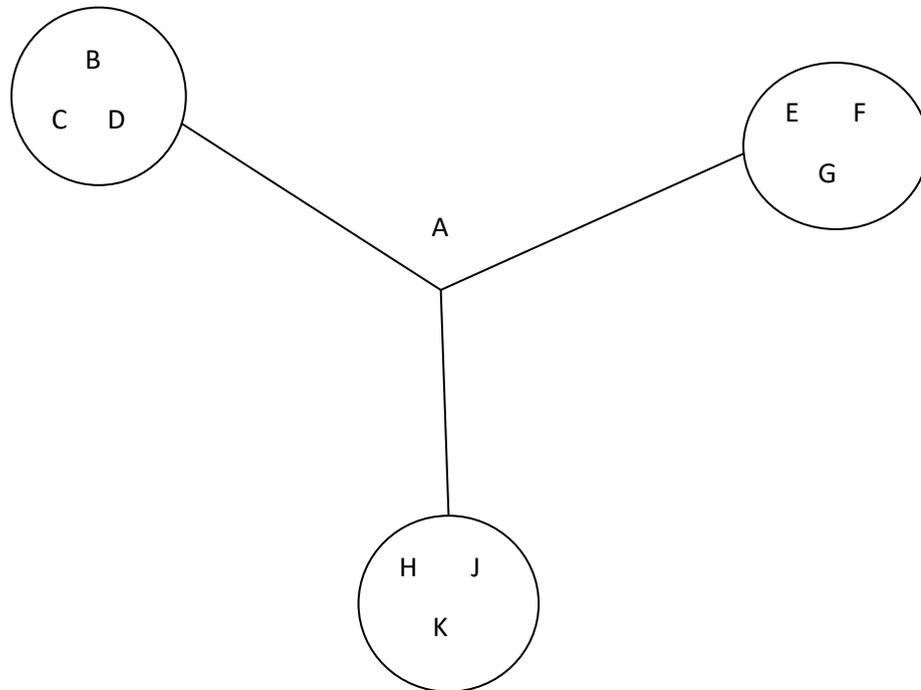


d. The Cluster

In an organisation, many groups exist and a person may belong to two or three of these groups. The person who gets information is likely to spread it

to all members of the group he belongs to and the members of each group will spread it to other groups that they belong to. The pattern is as illustrated below:

The Cluster Pattern



“A” belongs to each of the three groups above. He receives information and spreads it to members of his groups. The other members in each group spread it to other groups to which A does not belong.

4.6.2 Rumours

As previously stated, rumours serve as the basis of grapevine and the two exist side-by-side. Rumours have been noted to emerge as a response to situations that are important to employees, when there is ambiguity and under conditions that arouse anxiety. Rumours may glare up for a short period of time and information received from one part of the organization may be contradicted by that from another source. Rumours may persist for as long as the circumstances giving rise to them prevail and can only be brought under control when attempts are made to fill the information void by providing information to those who need it.

4.6.3 The negative consequences of the grapevine and rumours

Even though grapevines and rumours provide one benefit for both the organization

and the employee, they may have serious implications for the organizational communication system. Some of the effects are::

- (a) Because messages pass primarily by word of mouth, in corridors and other meeting places, senior managers may find it difficult to assess their impact and/or hold them in check.
- (b) Even where senior managers have access to the messages the information may be transient, inconsistent and unreliable.

4.7 BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Barriers to effective organisational communication refer to all forms of impediments that may hinder the successful flow of communication in the organization. A number of barriers can retard or distort effective communication. Some of these barriers are discussed below.

(a) Language

Words mean different things to different people. Age, education and cultural background are three of the variables that can influence the language a person uses and the definitions he gives to words.

In an organization, employees come from diverse backgrounds and this can have an effect on the use and understanding of language. Even where all employees speak a common language like English, the interpretation can lead to language barrier. The English word “family”, for example, may be interpreted differently based on the individual’s background. In the United Kingdom or United States, family refers to one’s immediate parents or one’s wife and children. In Africa and certain European and Latin American countries, however, family refers to one’s immediate parents plus aunties and uncles and grandparents and cousins. One should also not forget that technical jargons can mean different things. Senders tend to assume that the words and terms they choose mean the same to the receiver as they do to them.

(b) Selective Perception

This refers to a situation where people selectively interpret what they see or hear on the basis of their interest, background, experience and attitude.

Selective perception allows people to quickly draw conclusions about others,

based on a restricted number of stimuli that are of interest to the observer. As a result, prejudice and other shortcomings may creep in.

(c) Information overload

Information overload is a condition by which information inflow exceeds an individual's processing capacity. When there is too much information, the result is less effective communication this is because individuals will elect, ignore, gloss over or forget some information.

(d) Emotion

Emotion refers to how a person feels at the time of receipt of a piece of information. How a person feels will influence how information is interpreted. Extreme emotions such as jubilation or depression are most likely to hinder effective communication.

(e) Noise

Noise is anything that distracts the attention of the sender or receiver from receiving information. Physical, psychological, technical or social noise is any form of noise that occurs in the communication process which impedes the effective transmission and reception of communication.

(f) Filtering

This refers to a situation where a sender purposely manipulates information, so that it will be seen more favourably by the receiver. For example, when a manager tells his boss what he (the boss) wants to hear. Factors such as fear of conveying bad news and desire to please one's boss often lead communicators to filter information.

(g) Cultural Differences

As a matter of reality, individuals in one social group may have different norms, values or behaviours that vary from individuals in an other social group. Here cultural differences and, for that matter, communication difficulties will emerge as soon as communicators encounter each other.

(h) Lack of Feedback

Most communicators find it difficult to communicate their responses back to the original sender of information. When this happens, communication

ineffectiveness will emerge because the sender might not know whether or not the message has been received and fully understood.

ILLUSTRATION 4.2

To deliver your message effectively, you must break down the barriers that exist in each of the stages of the communication process.

Let us begin with the message itself. If your message is too lengthy, disorganised, or contains errors, you can expect the message to be misunderstood and misinterpreted. Use of poor verbal and body language can also confuse the message.

Barriers in context tend to stem from senders offering too much information too fast. When in doubt here, less is of ten times more. It is best to be mindful of the demands on other people's time, especially in today's ultra-busy society.

Once you understand this, you need to work to understand your audience's culture, making sure you can converse and deliver our message to people of different backgrounds and cultures within your own organisation, in your country and even abroad.

(Adapted from Mind Tools.com).

4.8 OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Communication is now perceived to be the most important determinant in organisational success. As a result, communicators should strive to eliminate all forms of hindrances that may prevent the effective functioning of the communication process. The underlisted steps will be of immense help in reducing, if not eliminating, the barriers to effective communication in organisations.

(a) Expanding the basis of communication to include feedback

Effective communication requires the receiver to send a feedback to the sender. Sometimes managers feel that two-way communication is unnecessary. However, various studies comparing one-way to two-way communication systems have concluded that information is transferred more accurately when there is a feedback.

(b) Proper use of Language

Communicators should use language that will be understood by those involved in the communication process. Communicators should try and modify the language they use to minimise the difficulties in interpreting the message sent. Here simple words, for example, should be preferred to using high sounding words.

(c) Improving Listening Skills

Many people find listening to be a difficult and agonising exercise and are more often than not impatient. It is, however, necessary that one pays close attention to what the other is saying in order to improve understanding.

(d) Practising Empathy

Empathy is identification with another person's perspective. Carl E. Rogers has suggested that an interesting technique for improving communication is through the practice of empathy. Effective communication, therefore, requires that the listener understands exactly what others mean and the perspective from which they speak. It should, therefore, be noted that empathy is an important ingredient for the efficient functioning of the organisational communication system.

(e) Following Basic Communication Guidelines

Various guidelines have been suggested for improving a organisation's communication practices. Some standard guidelines include:

- **Eliminating ambiguities:** It is important that senders make their communication as precise and straight to the point as possible so as to minimise the number of possible misinterpretations.
- **Using proper follow-ups:** Follow-up is necessary in some cases when communication takes place. Certain situations require managers to follow a verbal instruction with a written memorandum confirming spoken or discussed details.
- **Timing of messages:** Generally, the timing of some communication is vital. It is necessary that management schedules such communication, so as to avoid noise in the communication channel and the environment.

4.9 SUMMARY

This chapter has done a detailed discussion of various communication patterns in organisations. Formal system of communication is the official means and procedures employed in communicating in organisations. This kind of communication should always be backed by some degree of authority. Vertical system of communication refers to the principal channel for routing directives and policies from top decision makers through the organization's hierarchy to people who are required to implement them. The chapter also discussed downward communication as the type through which communication flows from superiors to subordinates. This appears to be the most common flow of communication in organizations. Upward communication refers to a flow of information from subordinates to superiors, whereas diagonal communication cuts across conventional operational lines.

The horizontal system of communication, which may also be referred to as lateral communication, which occurs among people who operate at the same or similar levels in an organization has been discussed too. Informal communication systems form a large portion of organizational communication patterns. Systems such as the grapevine, rumours, gossips and unintended comments all constitute types of informal communication.

Communication, in general, is always hindered by certain factors that do not facilitate the process. Among others, the following barriers of effective organisational communication have been discussed: language, perception, information overload, emotion, cultural differences and lack of feedback. For the process to be effective these barriers must be managed and a number of measures have been suggested for this purpose.

4.10 END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

4.10.1 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. Which of the following is NOT an official channel of communication in an organisation?
 - A. Memo
 - B. Newsletter
 - C. Circular
 - D. Rumour

- E. Query
2. Which of the following may NOT be accomplished through vertical communication?
 - A. Problem solving
 - B. Task coordination
 - C. Conflict resolution
 - D. Camaraderie
 - E. Directives

 3. ONE of the following is NOT a facilitator of the vertical system of communication.
 - A. Superior officers
 - B. Subordinates
 - C. Supervisors
 - D. Visitors
 - E. Low-cadre staff

 4. Horizontal system of communication takes place between or among
 - A. Equals
 - B. Superiors and Subordinates
 - C. Subordinates alone.
 - D. Superiors alone
 - E. Superiors and equals.

 5. ONE of the following is NOT associated with informal communication?
 - A. Grapevine
 - B. Rumour
 - C. Newsletter
 - D. Gossips
 - E. Comments

4.10.2 SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. With in an organisation, the informal route used to disseminate unconfirmed information is called _____.
2. Lateral communication within an organisation is more commonly known as _____.
3. Any impediment to the free flow of information within an organization is usually referred to as ____.
4. A receiver communicates his response to the sender through _____.

5. Downward and upward flows of information are both instances of _____ communication.

4.10.3 ESSAY

1. Examine briefly any FOUR factors which indicate a breakdown of formal communication systems.
2. It has been established that the grapevine is one of the key aspects of informal communication systems in organizations.

Explain briefly what the grapevine is as an informal communication system and how a manager might use the grapevine for the benefit of the organization.

4.11 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

4.11.1 SOLUTION TO MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. D
2. D
3. D
4. A
5. C

4.11.2 SOLUTIONTOSHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. grapevine
2. horizontal communication
3. barrier
4. feedback
5. vertical

4.11.3 SOLUTIONS TO ESSAY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

Indications that the formal system of communication has broken down would include the following:

Loss of coordination

If organisational objectives and the needs of clients are not being met, the system may show signs of lack of communication between the various functional units.

Conflict

Lack of communication and consequent loss of coordination commonly leads to conflict, misunderstanding, the apportionment of blame, etc. Full scale industrial dispute can emerge if a minor conflict is not quickly resolved.

A growth in grapevine communication

Rumour and gossip may flourish even where the formal communication system is healthy, but becomes increasingly subversive, inaccurate and damaging where there is no formal communication to counter act it. Interpersonal conflicts, signs of demotivation and hostility towards the organisation will tend to appear.

Loss of motivation

All the above, added to lack of job satisfaction that poor communication fosters, create motivation problems. Demotivation may appear in the form of absenteeism, high staff turnover, stress related illnesses and so on.

QUESTION 2

The grapevine refers to the organisation's informal communication system that is totally unofficial and which changes constantly. The grapevine has three characteristics. First it is not controlled by management. Second, it is perceived by most employees as being more believable than formal communiqués issued by top management. And third, it is largely used to serve the self-interests of the people propagating it.

Propagators of the grapevine find their material in the form of confidential letters left unattended on desks; accidental, careless remarks and sudden changes in established routines and practices.

The grapevine flourishes more particularly in organisations in which communication channels are more closed than open.

It appears that the grapevine is much preferred by employees because it is particularly used for translating formal communication into their group's own jargon. Managers might benefit from the grapevine because it is from time- to-

time used by them as a means of disseminating a message they chose to endorse openly.

Secondly, the grapevine might benefit managers because it gives them the feel for the morale of their organisation, identifies issues that employees consider relevant and helps tap into employee anxieties. Thirdly, the grapevine acts both as a filter and a feedback mechanism, picking up issues that employees consider important.

CHAPTER 5

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

5.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to

- explain the elements of interpersonal communication;
- identify the features of oral communication;
- explain attitudes and their impact on the communication process;
- identify the different types of organizational conflict and their sources;

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal communication is the term applied to the verbal and non-verbal interaction in a one-on-one or small-group setting. “People skills and soft skills” are terms often used to describe someone’s interpersonal abilities.

Interpersonal communication is a cornerstone in what social scientists refer to as the communication climate the quality of the personal relationships that exist within an organisation. The communication climate reflects the workers’ perception of whether the organisation trusts, respects and values them. In other words, factors related to job satisfaction and commitment.

5.2 ELEMENTS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

How members of a group transfer information between and among each other have been approached differently by different writers. In our case, it can be said that the major elements of interpersonal communication are *listening, speaking and non-verbal*. These are often regarded as the primary elements of a person’s interpersonal communication. It should, however, be noted that writing can also reflect them. Let us consider them.

5.2.1 Listening

Listening is often referred to as the mental activity that a person goes through while he awaits his/her turn to speak. Listening is not the same as hearing. Listening involves comprehending and retaining what is heard.

5.2.2 The Listening Process

The listening process consists of four elements. They are discussed below:

- (a) **Hearing:** Hearing is the first element of the listening process. Hearing is a physiological process. When we hear, the auditory nerves are stimulated by sound waves. Every one hears sounds unless he/she has a hearing impairment.
- (b) **Filtering:** Filtering is the elimination of unwanted stimuli. Filtering allows a listener to focus on stimuli that are of specific interest. An individual has difficulty concentrating on an oral message when his/her filtering process is unable to eliminate or at least minimize his tracing stimuli.
- (c) **Interpreting:** When interpreting, the listener's mind assigns meaning to the stimuli. This assignment of meaning is done through the use of the person's mental filters. Listeners tend not to consider verbal cues as well as non-verbal cues when interpreting oral messages.
- (d) **Recalling:** Recalling involves remembering at a later time the information that was interpreted earlier. The success of this element depends heavily on the association (relationship) period on the stimuli during the interpretation phase.

5.2.3 Guidelines for Effective Listening

Listening, as a process, can be improved if the receiver takes an active role. The following guidelines can help to improve listening skills.

- (a) **Concentrating on the message:** Keeping concentration upon what is being said and avoiding distractions and mind-wandering, which result in blank patches, will enhance effective listening.
- (b) **Keeping an open mind:** When listening, one should not leave room for bias or prejudice.
- (c) **Asking questions:** Being ready to ask questions or provide answers are marks which cause the speaker to explain or amplify a point aids the listener understands of the message.
- (d) Listening especially attentively for points and sections of personal importance or relevance: This is to ensure that actions and personal follow-up requests are fully and clearly understood before the speaker rings off, departs or a meeting is closed.
- (e) Providing a regular feedback indicates that the message is received and understood progressively. Responses such as: "You're right, I quite agree" affirm effective listening.

- (f) Monitoring and controlling personal non-verbal communication signals: Such as those which provide the speaker with positive feedback, can help establish rapport and provide encouragement.
- (g) Ensuring that written or tape-recorded notes are made clearly and insufficient details for future reference and follow-up work.

5.3 IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING

Listening enhances good customer relationships. Effective listening is vital to the development of good customer relationships. This can improve quality, boost productivity and save money for the organisation. Poor listening can have the opposite effect.

ILLUSTRATION 5.1

GOOD LISTENERS LISTEN WITH THEIR FACES

The first skill that you can practise to be a good listener is to act like a good listener. We have spent a lot of our modern lives working at tuning out of the information that is thrust at us. It, therefore, becomes important to change our physical body language from that of a deflector or to that of a receiver, much like a satellite dish. Our faces contain most of the receptive equipment in our bodies, so it is only natural that we should tilt our faces towards the channel of information.

A second skill is to use the other bodily receptors besides your ears. You can be a better listener when you look at the other person. Your eyes pick up the non-verbal signals that all people send out when they are speaking. By looking at the speaker, your eyes will also complete the eye contact that speakers are trying to make. A speaker will work harder at sending out the information when they see a receptive audience in attendance. Your eyes help complete the communication circuit that must be established between speaker and listener.

When you have established eye and face contact with your speaker, you must then react to the speaker by sending out non-verbal signals. Your face must move and give the range of emotions that indicate whether you are following what the speaker has to say. By moving your face to the information, you can better concentrate on what the person is saying. Your face must become an active and contoured catcher of information.

It is extremely difficult to receive information when your mouth is moving information out at the same time. A good listener will stop talking and use receptive language instead. Use the “I see,” “un huh,” “oh really” words and phrases that follow and encourage your

speaker's train of thought. This forces you to react to the ideas presented, rather than the person. You can then move to asking questions, instead of giving your opinion on the information being presented. It is a true listening skill to use your mouth as a moving receptor of information rather than a broadcast.

A final skill is to move your mind to concentrate on what the speaker is saying. You cannot fully hear their point of view or process information when you argue mentally or judge what they are saying before it is completed. An open mind is a mind that is receiving and listening to information. If you really want to listen, you will act like a good listener. Good listeners are good catchers because they give their speakers a target and then move that target to capture the information that is being sent. When good listeners don't understand their speakers, they will send signals to the speaker about what they expect next, or how the speaker can change the speed of information delivery to suit the listener. Above all, a good listener involves all of their face to be an active moving listener.

(Adapted from: Canadian Association of Student Activity Advisors); <http://www.casaaleadership.ca/mainpages/resources/sourcebook/listening-skills.html>).

Listening enhances effective leadership in the organisation. Good leaders listen to what the customer has to say before offering a response. Good leaders demonstrate their effectiveness by showing that they are listening without necessarily doing everything the customers, the team and other subordinates demand.

Effective listening is just important in a variety of careers. Sales people who listen to customers can discover their needs and build rapport. Effective listening helps individuals and organisations to succeed in the performance of their operations.

5.4 ORAL COMMUNICATION

Speaking, and for that matter, oral communication is the chief means of conveying messages. All forms of speeches, formal, one-on-one and group discussions are all forms of communication that are done by words of mouth.

ILLUSTRATION 5.2

Understand what you want to achieve.

Before you start working on your talk or presentation, it is important that you really understand what you want to say, who you want to tell and why they might want to hear it. To do this, ask yourself: Who? What? How? When? Where? and Why?

Who are you speaking to? What are their interests, presuppositions and values? What do they share in common with others? How are they unique?

What do you wish to communicate? One way of answering this question is to ask yourself about the “success criteria”. How do you know if and when you have successfully communicated what you have in mind?

How can you best convey your message? Language is important here, as are the non-verbal cues discussed earlier. Choose your words and your non-verbal cues with your audience in mind. Plan a beginning, middle and end. If time and place allow, consider and prepare audio-visual aids.

When? Timing is important here. Develop a sense of timing so that your contributions are seen and heard as relevant to the issue or matter at hand. There is a time to speak and a time to be silent. “It’s better to be silent than sing a bad tune.”

Where? What is the physical context of the communication in mind? You may have time to visit the room, for example, and rearrange the furniture. Check for availability and visibility if you are using audio or visual aids.

Why? In order to convert hearers in to listeners, you need to know why they should listen to you—and tell them if necessary. What disposes them to listen? That implies that you know yourself why you are seeking to communicate—the value or worth or interest of what you are going to say.

(Adapted from *MindTools.com*)

5.4.1 Checklist of Effective Speaking

Creating the message: In order to create a well-structured oral message, the speaker should

- (a) first consider on the context of the oral communication and the outcome desired.
- (b) establish the key points to get across and what running order would best link them together at the beginning, middle and end.
- (c) advance the salient facts and figures which will support the argument.
- (d) decide on what the delivery style of the message should be before embarking on it.
- (e) constantly monitor the feedback received from the audience
- (f) know when he has said enough and stop on a positive note.

5.4.2 Important speech features to master

- (a) **Accent:** Accents of different people may be accepted but it should be devoid of being foxed by local dialect words.
- (b) **Pronunciation:** People would not like to hear speeches marred by ugly or resentful habits.
- (c) **Enunciation/articulation:** Good oral communication, especially over a poor telephone line or in a large hall, depends on vowels being well rounded and not swallowed.
- (d) **Intonation/emphasis:** Nothing causes listeners to switch off faster than ponderous utterance of drab monotones.
- (e) **Projection:** Effective speakers adopt erect stance and head positions which allow for free and unrestricted escape of air from the lungs and mouth which are essential to clear delivery.

5.5 ANALYSIS OF ATTITUDES

Many scholars have agreed that 'attitude' may be defined as a group of beliefs that causes us to respond in some way to a particular object or situation.

A person's attitude can influence his/her decision in many ways as it forms the basis for his/her behaviour for taking certain actions.

In delivering speeches, for example, one will need to consider one's own attitudes and the attitudes of one's target audience to check whether there are similarities. Where there are similarities of attitudes, the speech will be delivered and received in a peaceful atmosphere.

On the other hand, there are certain instances where there are differences in attitudes between two parties and in such circumstances, hostilities may emerge as a result of the differences.

5.5.1 Why Do We Have Attitudes

It has been suggested that attitudes and motives are interlinked and depending on an individual's motive, Attitudes can serve four main functions, namely:

- (a) **Knowledge:** Attitudes provide a knowledge base and framework within which new information can be placed.
- (b) **Expressive:** Attitudes become a means of expression. They enable individuals to indicate to others the values they hold and thus are able to

express their self-concept and adopt or internalise the values of a group.

- (c) **Instrumental:** Attitudes held would determine the manner one behaves towards a person or object in a particular way; either positively or negatively.
- (d) **Ego-defensive:** Attitude may be had in order to protect a person's ego from an undesirable truth. A person who believes in honesty will discourage any form of behaviour that may result in cheating or dishonesty as in examinations. Based on the person's attitudes, he has developed a strong ego that will resist all forms of dishonest practices.

5.5.2 Attitude Change

Attitudes once held are difficult to change; however, there are certain circumstances that may cause a person to change his attitudes. The following are some of the factors that can assist in attitudinal change:

- (a) The characteristics of the persuader that is the one endeavouring to effect the change
 - (b) Presentation of issues that may cause a person to change from positive to negative or vice-versa as a result of the manner in which issues are represented to convince him/her.
 - (c) Audience characteristics: Depending on the expectations of a speaker, attitudes can change if the speaker wants the target audience to have a positive perception about him.
 - (d) Outcome of attitudes: A person may change his attitude if he expects to get some rewards for the change or if some form of punishment will be meted out if he fails to change.
- (b) Seeking more information: Showing interest in what prompts the criticisms can help a person to decide how to fix whatever prompted it. One should do the following:
- Ask for specific example. For example "Can you show me where the errors are?"
 - Describe a situation and ask whether it illustrates the problem.
 - Ask how you can improve by requesting for specific suggestions that might help.

5.6 BODY LANGUAGE

- (a) Body language, whether intentional or unintentional, can change the meaning of

a verbal message. Body language is universally used because it is impossible to communicate without body language. The same gesture may be interpreted differently in indifferent cultures. Folded arms may signify defensiveness in certain cultures; at the same time, the gesture may mean arrogance in certain other cultures. Body language in inter-personal communication has the following advantages:

- (b) It provides instant feedback: Body language conveys instant feedback universally as an expression of friendliness and approval. As smile indicates satisfaction, but a frown shows disagreement.
- (c) It communicates a non-verbal message. An individual standing or sitting erect conveys confidence and pride, whereas a person slumping over may be perceived as being tired or depressed. An experienced business communicator can read cues from the way a person stands or sits.
- (d) Handshakes communicate non-verbal message. A person who firmly grips a person's hand demonstrates confidence and familiarity.

5.7 SUMMARY

Impersonal communication is the verbal and non-verbal interactions that take place between individuals in one-on-one situations or in small group situations. Some major elements of interpersonal communication are listening and speaking.

Listening is referred to as the mental activity which a person undergoes while awaiting his/her turn to speak. Listening goes through a process starting with hearing, filtering, interpreting and recalling. Speaking is the principal means by which messages are conveyed. Some important features of speech are accent, pronunciation, enunciation/articulation, intonation/emphasis and projection.

Also discussed in this chapter is the concept of attitudes, why people develop certain attitudes and a general view of attitudinal change. Attitudes can be defined as groups of beliefs that cause us to respond in some way to a particular object or situation. Attitudes have been noted to serve the following purposes among others; knowledge, expression, instrumentality and projection of one's ego.

The chapter also touches on conflict in organizations and defines organizational conflict as situations that hinder the effectiveness of the organization. Conflicts may occur at the horizontal or vertical level. Some major sources of conflict noted are:

money, jobs, goals and the environment. Conflict resolution techniques discussed include prompt action, use of active listening techniques, brainstorming, focusing on the problem, etc.

5.8 END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

5.8.1 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. Effective speaking is dependent on the following EXCEPT
 - A. Context of the oral communication
 - B. Prior adoption of delivery style
 - C. Feedback
 - D. Identification of key points to put across
 - E. Timing

2. ONE of the following is NOT an important speech feature.
 - A. Good pronunciation
 - B. Avoidance of bad accent
 - C. Appropriate intonation
 - D. Monotones
 - E. Appropriate voice projection.

3. Which of the following is NOT undertaken by the facilitator in a conflict situation?
 - A. Sale
 - B. Management
 - C. Resolution
 - D. Mediation
 - E. Negotiation

4. ONE of the following groups are stakeholders in conflict mediation.
 - A. The parties in the dispute
 - B. The parties in the dispute and the facilitator
 - C. The parties in the dispute and other interested parties
 - D. The facilitator and other interested parties
 - E. Other interested parties

5. Which ONE of the following is NOT a potential source of conflict within an organisation?
 - A. Ratio of wages to profits
 - B. Rates of pay for different jobs
 - C. Authority and power
 - D. Annual General Meeting
 - E. Market situation

5.8.2 SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. The listening process starts with.....
2. Interpersonal communication involves at least..... person(s).
3. Most people have a..... attitude towards criticism.
4. The process of eliminating unwanted stimuli during listening is called.....
5. Workers' demands for a greater say in decision-making within a workplace leads toconflict

5.8.3 ESSAY

1. List any FOUR ways management can communicate with
(a) its staff (b) customers
2. Choose one method of interpersonal communication and explain how incorrect use of language and body language can cause distortions of the message.
3. Identify any FOUR factors you may consider when criticizing a subordinate

5.9 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

5.9.1 SOLUTION TO MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. C
2. D
3. A
4. B
5. D

5.9.2 SOLUTION TO SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. hearing
2. two
3. negative
4. filtering
5. organisational

5.11.3 SOLUTIONS TO ESSAY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

(a) Methods of communicating with staff include the following:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Meetings | 2. Team briefing |
| 3. Telephone messages/Conversations | 4. Conferences |
| 5. Company newspaper | 6. Memos/Letters |
| 7. Notice boards | 8. e-mail |

(b) Methods of communicating with customers include the following:

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Personalised letters | 2. Press advertisement |
| 3. Leaflets | 4. Television |
| 5. Telephone | 6. Direct marketing |
| 7. Press releases | |

QUESTION 2

Language and body language are sensitive for both the speaker and the audience. If used wrongly, distorted messages are given and received. There are many instances where the spoken words do not have the intended effect:

- Words not known to the audience,
- Jargon (especially technical jargon),
- Initials with two or more meanings.

Many speakers have phrases in their speeches which they repeat unknowingly to the annoyance of their listeners. A speaking pace which is too fast or a tone which is uninteresting is also frustrating. Questioning may be aggressive, or may be accompanied by aggressive gestures such as the pointing of fingers.

A speaker may discomfort the audience by continuous movements, lack of eye contact and unfriendly facial expressions. Standing with folded arms is defensive and blocking. Dress is seen as a message-giver and, if inappropriate, may distract the attention of the audience. If too casually dressed, the speaker may find that his opinions are discounted or ignored. Presenters must know their audience and be able to respond to its members at the emotive level.

CHAPTER 6

COMMUNICATING AT THE WORKPLACE

6.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter you should be able to

- define communication climate;
- explain ways of building positive relationships;
- explain what is entailed in the conversation process;
- explain how to accommodate diversity in communication.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

To many business professionals, communication is the life blood of the successful organization. What this means is that irrespective of one's knowledge about one's job, and field of specialisation, successful performance cannot be guaranteed unless there is good communication at all levels of the organization. This assertion makes it imperative upon all individuals in the organization to possess communication skills for the general advancement of the organization.

Good communication climate is critical to the process of communicating in the organization. The mood, emotions, trust, goodwill and level of tolerance of persons involved in the process will either enhance or affect communication. Similarly, the nature of relationships employees develop has been noted as one major factor in organisational communication. There is need to promote, build and sustain positive relationships as a means of enhancing effective organisational communication. Organisations are increasingly showing diverse outlook that reflect diverse workforce, culture, race, language, beliefs and attitudes. The ability or otherwise of communicators to accommodate divergent views, opinions and emotions would dictate the extent of effectiveness and success of the process.

In the following sections, how these factors affect or enhance the communication process in an organization are discussed.

6.2 COMMUNICATION CLIMATE

In business communication, the term "communication climate" is used by social scientists to describe the quality of personal relationships in an organisation. The

term may also be seen in relation to the “mood” surrounding organisational communication. The general respect, trust, goodwill and the degree of acceptance of communication in the organisation will reflect the mood or climate of organizational communication.

It should be noted that the climate of organisational communication depends, not so much on the specific and direct duties and responsibilities that members in the organization must perform, but also on their feelings about these duties and responsibilities and about one another.

6.3 CONVERSATION PROCESS

Positive relationships do not just happen. They must be built overtime and they require continuous maintenance. A good conversation is one of the techniques that are used to build and maintain positive relationships.

Relationships generally begin with conversations. At first, the interaction will probably be a cautious one but as trust and comfort begin to be developed, participants begin to reveal more of their personalities and to share information about their lives. People begin to connect on intellectual, personal and emotional levels.

Whether conversations occur in person, via telephone, or during a conference, they are constantly changing events. This means one must listen and adjust one’s delivery on the basis of feedback. The conversation process generally covers five stages.

(a) **Greeting**

The greeting opens the channel for conversation. It can be verbal or non-verbal like a smile or a wave. Once the greeting has occurred, the conversation then moves to the introduction stage.

(b) **Introduction**

During this stage, the person initiating the conversation imagines what will follow. An introduction should be as brief and informative as possible. An introduction may be direct or indirect.

(c) **Exchange**

The business of a conversation is conducted in a give and take manner. During this stage, the purpose of the conversation will come to the fore.

(d) **Review**

A review of the process allows the parties to reflect on the exchange, to recap the items discussed during a long or complex exchange and to signal that the conversation is ending. Either the sender or the receiver may review the conversation with a view to determining its prospects.

(e) **Closing**

The closing is the cordial concluding part of the process. Depending on the situation, the closing may be verbal, non-verbal, or a combination of the two.

ILLUSTRATION 6.1

After finalizing a sales agreement with a customer, for example, the sales executive might say “It’s been a pleasure doing business with you. I will process your order today and phone you in about a week after the printer would have been installed, in order to be sure you are satisfied with it. Good bye”.

Whether spontaneous or planned, successful conversations are honest, objective, sincere and reasonable. Effective interpersonal relations and communications depend very much on these attributes.

6.4 KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL FACE-TO-FACE CONVERSATIONS

A face-to-face conversation has an advantage over written and telephone communication because both the sender and the receiver can use non-verbal cues to help them interpret a message. The following techniques help in making a face-to-face exchange productive.

(a) **Choice of Location**

After the initiation of a relationship, the choice of a location for its development becomes crucial. A conversation may take place in the office or at a neutral place. The purpose of the meeting should dictate the site and seating arrangements required. The choice of location can greatly enhance the conversation.

(b) **Avoidance of Interruptions:**

Interruptions, say, by a third party, affect one’s ability to hold a meaningful conversation. Therefore, all interruptions must be avoided.

(c) **Effective Speaking**

Strong effective messages are short and simple. One should always think

before speaking and sentences should be structured very well for the receiver to understand. Pitch, speed and volume should be varied to hold the listener's interest. Important points should be emphasised. Emotions should also be controlled.

(d) **Clear and Appropriate Non-Verbal Cues**

A smile may be appropriate in a specific situation when a genuine smile is offered to someone, it demonstrates acceptance and trust. People speak freely when they feel safe and smile conveys safety.

(e) **Questions**

Asking questions encourages the other person to communicate. Carefully structured questions can help to gather facts, determine the receiver's needs and encourage dialogue. Good communicators understand and use both closed and open-ended questions.

(f) **Accommodating Diversity**

To have a successful conversation one should recognize and accommodate cultural and other differences during the conversation. Consider language differences, non-verbal communication differences, and factors such as values, attitudes, religion, political systems and social orders. One should be alert and sensitive about all physical and other disabilities that affect communication.

(g) **Effective Listening**

When people are conversing, they often think about what they are going to say next, instead of listening to what the other person has to say. By giving the speaker your full attention, you can participate effectively in the Conversation and make the other person believe he/she is important and interesting. One should listen empathetically.

6.5 POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

The existence of a positive relationship among communicators in an organisation has been accepted as one of the successful factors in effective organisational communication. It is, therefore, necessary for organisational communicators to make some efforts at bringing about positive relationships for successful organisational communication.

Positive relationships in communication will prevail, if there is a favourable

perception of the individuals or parties who are involved in the communication situation within the organisation.

6.5.1 Building, Promoting and Sustaining Positive Relationships

As a matter of guidance, many researchers and writers have provided various guidelines on building and sustaining a positive relationship both in and outside the organisation. These guidelines should not be seen as a solution since the individual must also play a significant role in building and sustaining positive relationship. Scholars have suggested ways to promote positive relationships as discussed below:

6.5.1.1 Using Descriptive “I” Language

Many communicators unnecessarily attack the other person when delivering a message. Let us consider these examples: “Your report is too sloppy. You’ll have to re-type it.” “This is the third time this month that you’ve been late for work. You’ll have to be more punctual.” “That was a dumb promise you made. We can never have the job done by the end of the month.”

Statements like these are often called “you” language because they point a verbal finger of accusation at the receiver. “You are lazy”. “You’re wrong”. These statements do not enhance the building and sustenance of a positive relationship among organizational communicators.

Conversely, descriptive statements are often termed “I” language since they focus on The speaker instead of judging the other person. The “I” language rather fosters positive relationship among communicators within the organization. The “you” statements above can be rephrased in descriptive “I” language as follows: “I’m afraid the boss will get angry at both of us if we turn in a report with these errors. We’ll get a better reaction if it is retyped.” “Since you’ve been coming in late, I’ve made a lot of excuses when people call asking for you. I’m uncomfortable with that, and that’s why I hope you’ll start showing up on time.” “I’m worried about the promise you made. I don’t see how we can get the job done by the end of the month.” Statements like these show that it’s possible to be non-judgemental and still say what you want to say without any verbal attacks. Such statements will rather build and sustain the desired positive relationships.

6.5.1.2 Focussing on solving problems

Some messages try to force others to do something they don't agree with or understand. If one has a tight deadline, for example, it is easy to say. "Look I don't have time to explain– just do it my way." What should be noted here is that control shows a lack of regard for the other person's needs, interests or opinions. It can cause problems in the development of positive relationships even if one attains his objectives.

On the other hand, problem-oriented messages are aimed at solving both parties' needs. The goal is not to solve a problem my way or your way, but rather to develop a solution that meets everyone's needs. This will help build and sustain positive relationships among members of the organisation.

6.5.1.3 Being honest

As a matter of human nature, a person who discovers that he/she has been manipulated will exhibit a defensive reaction. Dishonesty of any form in organizational communication could lead to loss of positive relationships. Conversely, simple honesty is less likely to result in people being defensive, even when the news is not welcome. Even though others might sometimes dislike what one says, one's reputation as being honest can earn one the respect of subordinates, co-workers and management.

6.5.1.4 Showing concern for others

Being indifferent (lack of acknowledgement or concern for others) is a strong discomfoting message. By contrast, a genuine message of interest can make a significant difference. A simple apology for making one wait can do wonders. The secretary who takes the responsibility to get the right person to attend to one's needs will leave a feeling of appreciation, encouraging the person to do business with the company once again. The financial controller who seems genuinely concerned with the accounts officers' opinions– even if one is in disagreement– is easier to work with than the one who appears snobbish.

6.5.1.5 Demonstrating an attitude of equality

Individuals who act in a superior manner imply that others are inferior – clearly a discomfoting message. Nobody likes to feel less valuable than another person, and an air of superiority communicates this sort of message. This kind of attitude can have a negative effect on the development of positive relationships. What should be

noted is that the kind of superiority that makes people defensive is not based as much on intelligence, talent, or skill as on dignity and respect.

6.5.1.6 Listening with an open mind

An assertion that has been made is that listening with an open mind makes a good sense. Whether the people you are dealing with are in your department or another, subordinates or customers, they probably have knowledge that you do not have. Hearing them out may teach you something useful.

Besides providing useful information, listening open-mindedly can promote good relationships. A subordinate whose views are rejected straight away will feel very offended and this will contribute to the development of negative relationships between the subordinate and the boss. Conversely, if the subordinate's views are even rejected after a careful consideration is given to such views by the boss, the degree of disappointment from the subordinate would not have any significant effect on him/her. This will rather lead to the development of a positive relationship between the subordinate and the boss.

6.6 ACCOMMODATING DIVERSITY IN COMMUNICATION

The emergence of globalisation and dynamism that surrounds most organisations means that organisations need a number of skills and knowledge to be able to compete effectively in their areas of business operations. In such circumstances, organisations have no alternative but to rely on individuals who are diverse in terms of culture, race, gender, age, education, etc. The organisation should, however, note that communication and other business activities would be more prone to individual differences.

Effective communication in the organisation can take place only when efforts are made to accommodate diversity in the organisation's communication activities. The underlisted strategies may be of immense help to the business professional in managing the issues arising out of diversity.

6.6.1 Learning about different cultures

It has been confirmed that many cultural problems are not caused by malice but by lack of knowledge. Trainers in cultural sensitivity cite examples of how mistaken assumptions can lead to trouble. Misunderstandings that come up in organisational communication are as a result of parties or individuals not being conversant with

each other's background and culture. What is suggested as a solution here is that individuals should make an effort to learn and understand other people's backgrounds in relation to their culture, age, education, values, experience, etc.

6.6.2 Viewing diversity as an opportunity

It is easy to think of cultural differences as a bother that makes it difficult to take care of business. Dealing with others who have different attitudes may require some patience and time—both are scarce commodities in a busy work schedule. But what should be noted is that with the right attitude, cultural diversity can stop being just a necessary cost of doing business and can become an opportunity.

6.6.3 Not despising people

It is easy to view people who are different as inferior. A person's first reaction to a physically-challenged colleague might be sympathy or pity. Also, people who learn English as their second language might be perceived as less intelligent than native speakers. Individuals from predominantly traditional majority might seem like members of the "good old boys" club and might not exhibit any respect for people who are from minority groups. To be able to gain successful communication in diverse groups, one is encouraged not to insult or look down on members because of their backgrounds.

6.6.4 Talking about differences

When people from differing backgrounds refuse to talk to one another on such issues, there could obviously be perception problems. People are encouraged to have open discussions of concerns, attitudes and feelings about other groups from diverse backgrounds to enhance the elimination of all forms of misconceptions about others. What should, however, be noted here is that not all talk about differences is constructive. The way people talk about differences can make a tremendous difference as to whether a relationship is improved or impaired.

ILLUSTRATION 6.2

Let us consider two non-productive styles of conversation as proposed by Ellis Cose. "Discussions tend to be conducted at one of two levels—either in shouts or in whispers. The shouters are generally so twisted by pain or ignorance that spectators tune them out. The whisperers are so afraid of the sting of truth that they avoid saying much of anything at all."

6.7 SUMMARY

This chapter discussed a wide range of issues regarding communication at the work place. Organisations require the right atmosphere or climate in order to operate. There are six main categories that could be used in the promotion of positive relationship in the organisation. These include: development of positive personal relationships, focussing on solving problems, being honest, showing concern for others and listening with an open mind. The chapter also discussed the conversation process and the way and manner of managing diverse views in the communication process as a means of promoting good organisational climate.

Accommodating diverse views can be achieved through the acquisition of knowledge about different cultures and diversity not viewed as a hindrance but as an opportunity. Diversity can be managed when the communicating parties do not view each other as inferior but as equal. Open discussion of varying backgrounds and individual differences will help manage perception problems arising out of such differences.

6.8 END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

6.8.1 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. Which of the following does NOT promote positive personal relationships?
 - A. Focusing on problem solving
 - B. Being honest
 - C. Listening with an open mind
 - D. Not showing concern for others
 - E. Not being dishonest

2. Diversity in communication within an organization may be accommodated through the following, EXCEPT
 - A. Learning about different cultures
 - B. Viewing diversity as an opportunity
 - C. Looking down on people
 - D. Not ignoring human differences
 - E. Having open discussions

3. In accommodating diversity, open discussions do NOT enhance
 - A. Exposure of concerns
 - B. Exposure of attitudes and feelings of culturally-different peoples
 - C. Elimination of different forms of misconception
 - D. Promotion of misunderstanding
 - E. Improvement of relationships

4. ONE of the following is NOT a difference in individuals that need to be accommodated in communication.
 - A. Gender
 - B. Race
 - C. Blood group
 - D. Age
 - E. Education

5. Which of the following is NOT necessarily a reflection of the “Communication climate” in an organisation?
 - A. Prestigious working environment
 - B. Positive feelings of workers to their duties and responsibilities
 - C. The trust and good will of management is felt by employees
 - D. Employees feel appreciated by management
 - E. Mutual respect among all concerned

6.8.2 SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. A good communication climate in an organisation is dependent on _____ members of the organisation.
2. The term “communication climate” means the _____ of personal relationships in an organisation.
3. Personal relationships are usually initiated through _____.
4. Cultural _____ are not necessarily a hindrance to a good Communication climate.
5. Focusing on problem-solving between two individuals is one of the major steps in the development of good __relationships.

6.8.3 ESSAY

1. Describe briefly any FOUR through which positive relationships in an organisation can be promoted.
2. Communicators who succeed in a diverse work place must educate themselves about different cultures in order to be considered successful communicators.

As an Accounting Officer working in an organisation that has strong belief in diversity, discuss briefly any FOUR techniques you would put in place to have effective communication in such an organisation?

6.9 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

6.9.1 SOLUTION TO MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. D
2. C
3. D
4. C
5. A

6.9.2 SOLUTION TO SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. all
2. type
3. conversation
4. differences
5. personal

6.9.3 SOLUTIONS TO ESSAY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

The development of positive personal relationships in an organisation is considered to be a major determinant of organisational effectiveness. The six supportive statements that can be used to provide positive relationships are:

- (a) Using the descriptive "I" language. The effective communicator in his desire to improve positive relationship, should eliminate statements that are often called "You" language because they point a verbal finger of accusation at the receiver, e.g. "You are wrong". By contrast, descriptive statements which are often referred to as "I" language should be used. The "I" language is considered to be non-judgmental and will improve positive personal relationship in the organisation.
- (b) Focussing on solving problems, not controlling others. A person desiring to improve positive personal relationship should focus on solving problems and not controlling others. Messages should not force others to do things that they do not agree with or understand.
People should concentrate on problem-oriented and messages aim at solving both parties' needs. Solutions should be developed to take total approach on solving problems.

- (c) Being honest. Once people discover that they have been manipulated, a defensive reaction is almost guaranteed. People should exhibit honesty since this will reduce defensiveness even when the news is unpleasant.
- (d) Showing concern for others. Indifference – lack of acknowledgement or concern for others-is a strong disconfirming message. By contrast, a genuine message of interest can make tremendous difference. A simple apology from a person for an infringement on others' rights can work wonders.
- (e) Demonstrating an attitude of equality: People who act in a superior manner imply that others are inferior-a clearly, disconfirming message. Any form of 'superiority can arouse defensiveness and this should be avoided to improve positive personal relationships in the organisation.
- (f) Listening with an open mind: Listening with an open mind makes good sense. Listening to others will, by all means, provide some benefits for the listener. Apart from providing useful information, open-minded listening can promote good relationships.

QUESTION 2

The decline in birth and changes in demographic patterns in certain parts of the world means that most organisations will have problems with their staff members.

One way of reducing this shortage is to employ people from different backgrounds i.e.

People from diverse backgrounds.

It should, however, be noted that employing people from diversity backgrounds has its problems and as an Accounting Officer, I will use the following techniques to ensure effective communication in my organization.

- (i) Learning about different cultures: Many cultural problems are not caused by malice but lack of knowledge. Mistaken assumptions can lead to trouble. For a person to be an effective communicator in diverse cultural setups, the person should demonstrate an extreme level of open mindedness.
- (ii) Viewing diversity as an opportunity. One should view cultural differences as an opportunity. When dealing with people who have different attitudes or customs, even though it takes patience, it also offers the learner the opportunity to do business

effectively across such cultures.

- (iii) Not despising people: Even though it is easy to view people who are different as inferior, this does not promote positive relationships in the organisation. People should eschew this behaviour and try as much as possible to show respect for others from diverse backgrounds.
- (iv) Talking about differences: When people from different backgrounds don't talk to one another, wrong perceptions can take root. As an Accounting Officer what can be done to be a successful communicator is to talk about the differences that exist within the cultures of people from diverse backgrounds. This will be an effective technique to ensure successful communication in the organisation.

CHAPTER 7

COMMUNICATION ETHICS

7.0 Learning Objectives

After completing this chapter, you will be able to

- Understand issues of ethics in the workplace
- Understand the notions of conflict in the workplace
- Know how conflicts are managed in organizations
- Handle criticisms in the workplace

7.1 Definition of Ethics

Ethics may be defined as the generally acceptable ground rules of behaviour within an organisation. These rules are moral principles that govern a person's behaviour or the conducting of an activity. It is, therefore essential to examine attitudes in the workplace and determine how they could generate conflict within the organisation.

7.2 Attitudes in the workplace

Since ethics shape the concept of right and wrong that are accepted by an individual or social group, people's attitudes towards work, fellow workers (superiors and subordinates) and day-to-day activities may vary, especially because of their varying backgrounds, race, religion, culture, etc.

7.2.1 Fundamental Provisions of Attitudes

It has been suggested by researchers that attitudes are related to motives. So, depending on an individual's motives, attitudes can provide the following fundamentals: knowledge, expression, instrumental device and ego-defensive mechanism:

- (a) Knowledge: Attitudes provide a knowledge base and framework within which new information can be placed.
- (b) Expressive: Attitudes become a means of expression. They enable individuals to indicate to others the values they hold and thus are able to express their self-concept and adopt or internalise the values of a group.
- (c) Instrumental: Attitudes held would determine the manner one behaves towards a person or object in a particular way; either positively or negatively.

- (d) Ego-defensive: Attitude may be had in order to protect a person's ego from an undesirable truth. A person who believes in honesty will discourage any form of behaviour that may result to cheating or dishonesty as in examinations. Based on the person's attitudes, he has developed a strong ego that will resist all forms of dishonest practices.

7.3 Attitude Change

Attitudes once held are difficult to change; however, there are certain circumstances that may cause a person to change his attitudes. The following are some of the factors that can assist in attitudinal change:

- (a) The characteristics of the persuader, that is, the one endeavouring to effect the change.
- (b) Presentation of issues that may cause a person to change from positive to negative or vice-versa as a result of the manner in which issues are presented to convince him/her.
- (c) Audience characteristics: Depending on the expectations of a speaker, attitudes can change if the speaker wants the target audience to have a positive perception about him.
- (d) Outcome of attitudes: A person may change his attitude if he expects to get some rewards for the change or if some form of punishment will be meted out if he fails to change.

7.4 Conflict in Organizations

The workplace is an assemblage of people from diverse origin, cultures, linguistic and educational backgrounds. Coupled with all this is the fact that each individual has his/her own peculiarities. The interplay of such disparate aggregation of humans, without some control by some authority, may only be compared to sanatorium. To maintain peace and sanity, it is only to be expected that such an assemblage must device a set of regulatory principles of right and wrong that are acceptable by individuals and social groups.

Conflict is an inevitable situation in organisations. It can be a serious problem to organisational effectiveness. Conflict has always had a less positive side and it is always considered very bad. But as to whether conflict is bad or not we need first to define what it is.

Conflict in organisations is defined and interpreted in many ways. But for the purpose of organisational communication, conflict may be defined as any behaviour intended to obstruct the achievement of some other person's goals. Conflict is based on the incompatibility of goals and arises from opposing behaviours. It can be viewed at the individual, group or organisational level. The behavioural approach to conflict defines it as the disagreement that occurs within and among people in a work group. Here, conflict deals with interpersonal relations and also within individuals.

7.4.1 Definition of conflict

In any organisation, some form of friction, disagreement or discord arises within and among the members or within a group in such organisation as long as they communicate with each other. Conflict can arise between members of the same group or it can occur between members of two or more groups. However, there is no single universally accepted definition of conflict. What we can say is that in a conflicting situation, there must be recognised opposing interests between /among parties involved; there must be a belief by each side that the other one is not willing to accept and that conflict is a process. In other words, conflict is an interactive process which display the elements of incompatibility, disagreement or dissonance which can be within an individual or between and among individuals or groups.

7.4.2 Types of Conflict

The types of conflict which are possible in organisations are:

- (a) Intrapersonal conflict– i.e. within the individual which may arise from stressful conditions of work.
- (b) Interpersonal conflict - i.e. between individuals. This is the most common type of conflict which is present in workgroups because of the different views and objectives of group participants.
- (c) Conflict between individuals and groups.
- (d) Conflict between groups in the same organisation i.e. inter-group conflict.
- (e) Inter-organisational conflict -i.e. between two or more organisations.

7.4.3 Sources of Conflict

Conflict can be said to occur either on a horizontal axis, that is between individual managers or between workers working at the same level or on a vertical axis, between workers and managers. Many conflicts relate to economic aspects of pay and access to resources in the organisation. The main sources of conflict discussed here are internal and can be summarised under the following headings:

- (a) **Money:** The ratio of profits to wages – a conflict between workers and managers or among workers themselves may arise where a sum of money is to be shared.
- (b) **Job:** Rates of pay are different for each job and sometimes one group claims a job, possible to safeguard their future security or loss of earnings, if the job is given to others. The right to do the job can lead to disagreement between groups on demarcation lines “between jobs and this frequently occurs.
- (c) **Goals:** Managers are concerned with efficiency and workers with security. Managers may want newer, more efficient machinery; this may displace workers as few of them will be needed. Conflict may occur between marketing and finance managers as their policies and interests often differ.
- (d) **Environmental factors:** Downward fluctuations in the market for a product are a threat to workers security’. Such problems may cause conflicts even within union, if the rank and file do not think their leaders are doing sufficient to secure their jobs.
- (e) **Authority and Power:** Workers are pressing for more, say in decisions, which affect their lives. This is vertical conflict. In addition, subordinates may resent the fact that there is always a superior above them.
- (f) **Nature of work:** The socio-technical system organises people in a particular way which often leads to a boring job, no control of the pace of work, no responsibility of group identity.
- (g) **Individual differences:** In society, human beings are not alike in their nature, interest, attitudes and aspirations. Because of this basic difference and when they cannot accommodate each other, conflict arises.

- (h) **Cultural differences:** Culture is said to be the way of life of people. This way of life differs from one culture to the other. This cultural difference among people sometimes cause tension and leads to conflict.
- (i) **Clashes of interests:** In organisations, interests of workers sometimes clash with that of the employers and when this happens, conflict is inevitable.
- (j) **Social change:** In society, as in organisations, there is usually a difference between the way the old and the new generation react to social change. The way the new generation react to, say, moral norms may be different from that of the old. When this happens, there will be conflict. In this sense, conflict is an indication of disequilibrium.
- (j) **Conflicting roles:** Sometimes an employee may be expected to perform a role outside his normal role in the organisation. When this happens, he may step on another employee's toe and conflict or power tussle may arise. The same is true of a situation where an employee views a task as his own responsibility and another employee comes in to take over the responsibility.
- (k) **Unpredictable policies:** In a situation where a change in rules and regulations or policies is not communicated to employees, there is bound to be confusion and this may lead to conflict.
- (l) **Different personal values:** An employee might be asked to perform a task that is against his moral or ethical belief. When this happens, there will be conflict.

7.4.4 Methods of Solving Conflict

Although a certain amount of organisational conflict may be seen as inevitable, there are a number of ways in which management can attempt to avoid the harmful effects of conflict. The under-listed techniques may be of immense help in situations where one is a participant and in situations where one is a facilitator:

- (a) **Acting promptly:** It should be noted that the longer a problem goes unattended to, the greater the chances that it will escalate into a major issue. If the conflict involves emotions, the parties will need time to cool off. 24-48hours should be sufficient.
- (b) **Scheduling a meeting:** Whenever possible, meet face-to-face so that the

participants can take advantage of non-verbal cues.

- (c) **Using Active Listening:** Every conflict has two sides and each party believes his or her side is the accurate or “right” side. Both parties want to be heard and understood. Before a conflict can be resolved, both parties must be able to separate what happened from how they feel about it. Paraphrasing can be valuable in this effort.
- (d) **Focusing on the problem not the person:** Laying blame delays resolution. The parties must respect themselves and each other.
- (e) **Brain storming:** Parties should look for win-win opportunities, and negotiate, if necessary.
- (f) **Formalising the solution:** Putting the solution on paper allows both parties the opportunity to see as well as hear it and minimises the likelihood that they will later disagree on the solution.
- (g) **Implementing the solution and setting a follow-up:** The follow-up creates an air of accountability.

7.4.5 Towards Conflict Resolution

- (a) **Taking the first step:** One person in a conflict must initiate its resolution. Although some perceive the person who takes the first step as the weaker party, others believe he/she is the stronger. Before taking the first step, one should critically analyse the situation and one’s role in it. When approaching the other person, one should do it with sincerity. It is better to issue an invitation, rather than to give a directive.
- (b) **Listening before speaking:** During the resolution meeting, one should allow the other person to tell his/her side of the story first story. One should demonstrate empathy. Words should be chosen carefully. For one to get angry, arguing, telling the person to be quiet and listen will make the situation worse. One should listen attentively and look for areas of agreement.
- (c) **Proffering a solution:** After identifying areas of agreement, one should move to those in which resolution will be necessary. One should begin to propose a solution. A second meeting should be scheduled for lists that are complex and long with the assurance that one would come up with possible solutions.

(d) **Supervisor's intervention:** As a manager or accounting supervisor, one may learn about the existence of a conflict by (a) observing it, (b) being told of it by one or both parties involved or (c) being informed by a third party. When the supervisor becomes aware of a conflict situation, he should demonstrate neutrality towards all the parties involved in the conflict. However, the supervisor must refrain from apportioning blame or forcing the offender to apologise. In all this, the privacy of the exercise should be upheld.

7.4.6 Conflict Resolution, Mediation and Negotiation

Conflict resolution, mediation and negotiation are three distinct, though related activities. In conflict resolution, the ultimate goal is to 'put to rest' an identified conflict situation. In conflict mediation, on the other hand, the focus is on the "middle-man position" which the facilitator plays, whereas conflict negotiation involves the "give-and-take", which all the parties in a conflict situation engage in.

Whether resolving, mediating or negotiating in a conflict situation, the facilitator is guided by certain communication ethics. What are these? Communication ethics are guiding principles which, when faithfully followed, ensure the success of the task of a facilitator in a conflict situation. And what are these principles? They may be summarised as: listening, summarising and questioning. This tripartite cycle operates in a vicious circle. Effective listening followed by an objective summary of all the arguments involved and finally by appropriate questioning forms a full circle, which may be repeated several times over before the conflict situation may be said to be resolved, mediated or negotiated.

In practical terms then, the facilitator is not a 'rescuer', but a "supporter" of those involved in a dispute. The disputants are the real owners of the conflict and should, therefore, be given the chance to 'steer their ship' –the facilitator should only provide the enabling environment.

7.4.7 Conflict Management Styles

Conflict, as it has been said, is inevitable in organisations. Conflict also comes from a variety of sources such as individual differences, personality differences, values, clash of interests, etc. When conflict is embraced as a way of life, one can make the most out of the conflicting situation by taking the situation as an opportunity to make things

better. There are five conflict management styles identified: Accommodating, Avoiding, Collaborating, Competing and Compromising.

- a. **Accommodating** – this is when one cooperates with the other party in the dispute with a view to resolving it. It indicates a willingness to meet the needs of the other party at the expense of one's needs. One party knows when to give in to the other party. This style is appropriate when the resolution of the conflict matters more to the other party when peace is more valuable than winning. This approach may, at times, not give the best outcome. This style is also known as 'smoothing.'
- b. **Avoiding** – this is when one simply avoids the issue involved in the conflict. Avoiding is adopted when the atmosphere surrounding the conflict is charged and there is the need to cool off. During the period of avoiding, the issue involved may be resolved. On the other hand, during the process of waiting, the conflict can escalate. This is also known as "withdrawing."
- c. **Collaborating** – this is where one partner collaborates with the other party to achieve their goals. It requires a degree of trust on the part of each of the parties involved. To reach a consensus here may take some time and effort to get everybody to agree to the solution proffered. Collaboration encourages the sharing of ideas for solutions to the conflict. This style is also known as "win-win" technique.
- d. **Competing** – this is when one refuses to co-operate with the other party in finding solution to the conflict. Here, each party to the conflict pursues his goal, resisting pressure from the other party to submit, or to force the other party to accede to his request if the conflict is to be resolved. This approach is employed when quick, decisive action is needed. This is known as the "win-lose" approach.
- e. **Compromising** – this is where neither party achieves its aim. In this situation, each party is expected to sacrifice personal goals to achieve the ones they agree upon. Each party agrees to do its part to resolve the conflict. In other words, each party involved in the conflict is ready to give up at least a part of what it wants. This is known as "lose-lose" technique.

7.5 HANDLING CRITICISMS IN HUMAN COMMUNICATION

Criticisms in human communication have been in existence since time immemorial. Even though criticisms are disliked by people, they cannot be eliminated—hence the

business person should learn the art of giving and receiving criticisms effectively.

7.5.1 Giving Criticisms

- (a) **One should be sure he has the authority to criticise the receiver:** Lack of authority to criticise will lead to the rejection of criticisms.
- (b) **Criticise one relevant concern at a time:** When people are piled with many criticisms they become dejected– hence criticisms should not be compounded.
- (c) **Check facts:** Facts should be checked before delivering criticisms as receivers of criticisms who identify any element of lies in criticisms can argue about them.
- (d) **Criticise privately:** Face-to-face criticism is preferable. Receivers of criticisms should not be embarrassed in the process.
- (e) **Offer only constructive criticisms:** Criticisms that are offered to remedy problems are more effective.
- (f) **Accept partial responsibility:** If appropriate, one should accept partial responsibility for the problem.
- (g) **Use “blameless” gestures:** One should be aware of the verbal and non-verbal cues that accompany the message. Conversational pace and tone should be used. Blameless gestures should be used.

7.5.2 Receiving Criticisms

People find it more difficult to receive criticisms and mostly respond with “fight or flight.” Fighting is manifested in defensiveness, arguments and counterattack remarks. Feeling can be physical (e.g avoiding face-to-face or telephone contact), or mental tuning out. All these do not solve the problems involved. When faced with criticisms, the following should be adopted:

- (a) **Agreeing:** A person faced with factual criticisms should acknowledge the other person’s feelings and make a promise to reduce the errors or faults that led to the criticisms.
- (b) **Seeking more information:** Showing interest in what prompts the criticisms can help a person to decide how to fix whatever prompted it. One should do the following:
 - Ask for specific example. For example. “Can you show me where the errors are?”
 - Describe a situation and ask whether it illustrates the problem.

- Ask how you can improve by requesting for specific suggestions that might help.

7.6 SUMMARY

This chapter has discussed issues of ethics in the workplace. It has identified the types and sources of conflicts in organizations. The management of conflict as well as ancillary issues in human communication such as giving and receiving criticisms, have also been discussed.

7.7 END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

7.7.1 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. Which of the following does NOT promote positive personal relationships?
 - A. Focusing on problem solving
 - B. Being honest
 - C. Listening with an open mind
 - D. Not showing concern for others
 - E. Not being dishonest
2. Diversity in communication within an organisation may be accommodated through the following EXCEPT
 - A. Learning about different cultures
 - B. Viewing diversity as an opportunity
 - C. Looking down on people
 - D. Not ignoring human differences
 - E. Having open discussions
3. In accommodating diversity, open discussions do NOT enhance
 - A. Exposure of concerns
 - B. Exposure of attitudes and feelings of culturally-different peoples
 - C. Elimination of different forms of misconception
 - D. Promotion of misunderstanding
 - E. Improvement of relationships
4. ONE of the following is NOT a difference in individuals that need to be accommodated in communication.
 - A. Gender
 - B. Race
 - C. Blood group
 - D. Age
 - E. Education

5. Which of the following is NOT necessarily a reflection of the “Communication Climate” in an organisation?
 - A. Prestigious working environment
 - B. Positive feelings of workers to their duties and responsibilities
 - C. The trust and good will of management is felt by employees
 - D. Employees feel appreciated by management
 - E. Mutual respect among all concerned

7.7.2 SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. A good communication climate in an organisation is dependent on _____ members of the organisation.
2. The term “Communication Climate” means the _____ of personal Relationships in an organisation.
3. Personal relationships are usually initiated through _____.
4. Cultural Communication Climate
5. Focusing on problem-solving between two individuals is one of the major steps in the development of good _____ relationships.

7.7.3 ESSAY

1. Describe briefly the FOUR ways through which positive relationships in the organisation can be promoted.
2. Communicators who succeed in a diverse work place must educate themselves about different cultures in order to be considered successful communicators.

As an Accounting Officer working in an organization that has strong belief in diversity, discuss briefly any FOUR techniques you will put in place to have effective communication in such an organization?

7.8 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

7.8.1 SOLUTION TO MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. D
2. C
3. D
4. C
5. A

7.8.2 SOLUTION TO SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. all
2. type
3. conversation
4. differences
5. personal

7.8.3 SOLUTIONS TO ESSAY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

The development of positive personal relationships in an organisation is considered to be a major determinant of organisational effectiveness. The six supportive statements that can be used to provide positive relationships are:

- (a) Using descriptive "I" language. The effective communicator in his desire to improve positive relationships, should eliminate statements that are often called "You" language because they point a verbal finger of accusation at the receiver, e.g. "You are wrong". By contrast, descriptive statements which are often referred to as "I" language should be used. The "I" language is considered to be non-judgmental and will improve positive personal relationships in the organisation.
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- (c) Being honest. Once people discover that they have been manipulated, a defensive reaction is almost guaranteed. People should exhibit honesty since this will reduce defensiveness even when the news is unwelcome.
- (d) Showing concern for others – Lack of acknowledgement or concern for others is a strong message that shows unwillingness to cooperate with

others. By contrast, a genuine message of interest can make tremendous difference. A simple apology from a person for an infringement on others' rights can work wonders.

- (e) Demonstrating an attitude of equality: People who act in a superior manner imply that others are inferior – a clearly, disconfirming message. Any form of superiority can arouse defensiveness and this should be avoided to improve positive personal relationships in the organisation.
- (f) Listening with an open mind: Listening with an open mind makes good sense. Listening to others will, by all means, provide some benefits for the listener. Apart from providing useful information, open-minded listening can promote good relationship.

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The decline in births and changes in demographic patterns in certain parts of the world means that most organizations have problems with the adequacy of their staff members. One way of reducing this shortage is to employ people from different backgrounds i.e. people from diverse backgrounds.

It should, however, be noted that employing people across diversity has its problems and as an Accounting Officer, I will use the following techniques to ensure effective communication in my organization.

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- (ii) Viewing diversity as an opportunity. One should view cultural differences as an opportunity. When dealing with people who have different attitudes or customs, even though takes patience, also offers the learner the opportunity to do business effectively across such cultures.
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as inferior, this does not promote positive relationships in the organisation. People should eschew this behaviour and try as much as possible to show respect for others from diverse backgrounds.

- (iii) Talking about differences: When people from different backgrounds do not talk to one another, wrong perceptions can take root. As an Accounting Officer what can be done to be a successful communicator is to talk about the differences that exist within the cultures of people from diverse backgrounds. This will be an effective technique to ensure successful communication in the organisation.

CHAPTER 8

COMPREHENSION AND SUMMARY

8.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to

- Demonstrate an understanding of the objectives of a comprehension text
- Develop the capacity to understand and respond accurately to comprehension question
- Demonstrate an understanding of the objectives of a summary passage
- Develop the capacity to understand and respond to summary questions

8.1 INTRODUCTION

It has been observed over the years that candidate's performances in the compulsory section of the Communication Skills paper has not been impressive as the scores obtained are usually below average. This section presents the candidates with either a comprehension or a summary passage, after which the candidates are asked to answer a number of questions. Whether the passage is for comprehension or summary, almost the same language skills are being tested. In each case, the passages given are written in good modern prose. The passages are of various forms; some might be narrative, descriptive, expository or argumentative, directions or instructions, explanation of an idea, and so on. These various forms, of course, might have been taken from translations, fiction, drama, travels, modern historical records, current economic and/or political interest in Africa or other lands. This is so because candidates' level of understanding of the content of some given information is being tested. The slight difference between summary and comprehension is that in the former, the candidates are expected to answer the questions in complete sentences and in specific number, stating the main ideas in the given passage. This is why comprehension and summary are taken together in this chapter.

8.2 COMPREHENSION

Comprehension is essentially the ability to understand something. It is the understanding and interpretation of what is read. It is the reason for reading. If readers can read the words, but do not understand or connect to what they are reading, they are not really gaining anything from their reading. So, to succeed in comprehension, the reader must be able to read purposefully, absorb what is read, analyse it and make sense out of it.

How then should candidates handle comprehension passages? The simplest answer, of course, is for them to READ them; there is no alternative if they want to UNDERSTAND the contents of the passages. But there are different categories of readers. This is the crux of the matter. There are slow and fast readers, for example. Each of these categories of readers has its own way of approaching the reading as long as their goal is the same – to understand the information the writer of the passage is passing on to the reader. While a slow reader can hardly read the passage twice before answering the questions, a fairly good reader may conveniently read the passage three times. Usually, the first reading is fairly fast to familiarize the reader with the content of the passage. At this stage, the reader should not endeavour to pause to consider meanings of certain words, group of words or expressions. If this is done, the reader will not only confuse himself/herself but will also ruin subsequent reading(s).

Having gone through the passage once fairly quickly, the second and/or subsequent reading(s) should be attempted more slowly and purposefully. Here, the reader should take note of main or major points and disregard irrelevant materials. It is at this stage that the reader begins to determine the meaning of words, groups of words or expressions used as well as the general information provided in the passage. Generally, traditional or what is known as free-choice questions are asked at the end of the passage. The reader is free to answer the questions the way he likes, based on his/her understanding of the content of the passage. The answers given are expected to be written in the reader's own words as much as possible. The facts that are contained in the passage read are also expected to be used.

The types of questions that are asked in comprehension exercises are a combination of free choice questions and questions on grammar, vocabulary and figures of speech. As it has been said earlier, in answering free choice questions, the reader must be careful as well as use his /her own words as much as possible. It should be emphasized here that the answers given must be very short ones. The obvious advantages derivable from this are that less time is wasted and the chances of making grammatical mistakes are reduced to the barest minimum, if not totally eradicated.

When the questions are on grammar or vocabulary, the reader may be asked to replace words taken from the content of the passage with other words or he/she may be asked to explain given words, phrases and/or expressions. When the questions require explanation, the reader is free to explain the way he/she understands the words,

phrases or expressions as long as his/her explanations are not too long. This is best done in phrases, which should fit the context in which the word, phrase or expression occurs in the passage. The same is applicable to the question that requires replacing a word with another word. The words that are replacing the words extracted from the passage should fit in perfectly into the context of such words. A noun, for example, cannot be given to replace an adjective. In other words, the word replacing a particular word should belong to the same word class; otherwise it will be out of place. Where the question stipulates a replacement with another word, ONE word is required and not TWO as some candidates usually do. Disobeying this rule costs candidates a loss of marks and so this should be avoided by all means.

In addition to questions on grammar and vocabulary, questions on different types phrases, clauses and sentences and their functions, word classes and their functions and different kinds of figures of speech are asked. The level of understanding of the reader is revealed in his/her responses to these types of questions.

From the above consideration, answering comprehension questions is not an easy task. To do well in a comprehension exercise therefore, the reader should be prepared to read wide. The reader should not only rely on textbooks, but must also be prepared to read wide. The reader should read anything that is written or printed in Standard English. In this respect, he/she should read newspapers, magazines, periodicals, journals, and so on regularly.

ILLUSTRATION 8.1

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it

One of the reasons for the emergence of externalities is the fact that property rights are either not well defined or poorly enforced. When property rights are well established, the owners can be fully protected in law against any person misusing or abusing it.

In what has come to be called the Coase theorem, it has been shown that, if property rights are well established, parties to pollution can voluntarily work out solutions without resort to intervention by a third party like government.

Let us illustrate how the Coase proposition could work in a hypothetical case of two firms having property rights on a stream. Suppose Firm A is a laundry business and has property rights over the use of the stream. Then assume that Firm B is a textile manufacturer and pollutes the stream so that the laundry firm cannot use it. Either B

can compensate A to accept the polluted water or A to induce B to stop polluting it by stopping the manufacture of textiles. Coase notes that, if transaction cost is zero, the result will be the same no matter who initiates the action. Thus, a voluntary action to protect one's property rights can lead to internalization of externalities.

The major problems in the application of the Coase theorem are worth noting. First, the assumption of zero transaction cost is untenable, especially where agents affected by detrimental externality are numerous. It is always difficult to organize such agents for establishing a consensus which may result in optimal bargaining. Second, the parties to the bargaining may have unequal bargaining resources. For example, if illiterate villagers whose land has been rendered useless by pollution attempt to extract concessions from a sophisticated oil company, they may not be able to achieve their own aim.

Despite the above shortcomings, however, the Coase theorem underscores two important points about dealing with an externality problem. These are that there is a need to have property rights well defined and legally enforced, and that voluntary actions could be initiated in most cases. Such a lesson is particularly relevant in LDCs where governmental resources have been overstretched in trying to cope with many social problems. Self-reliance in resolving some pollution problems is, therefore, indicated.

QUESTIONS

- a. In the context of the passage, what are 'property rights'?
- b. What does the writer say should be done to prevent a third party intervention in a property rights claim?
- c. What are the two weak points of the Coase theorem, according to the writer?
- d. The writer gives two advantages of the Coase theorem. What are these?
- e. ... *whose land has been rendered useless by oil pollution*
 - i. What is the grammatical name given to this expression?
 - ii. What is its function?
 - iii. What type of phrase is '*by oil pollution.*'?
- f. Why does the writer use two commas in the sentence: *Coase notes that, if transaction cost is zero, the result will be the same no matter who initiates the action.?*
- g. Give another word to replace each of the following words as used in the passage.

- i. emergence
- ii. proposition
- iii. compensate
- iv. initiates
- v. consensus
- vi. sophisticated

SOLUTION

- a. The expression, 'Property rights' means the privilege of owning property. OR
It is the privilege of owning property.
- b. i. Property rights should be well defined.
ii. Property rights should be properly established.
- c. i. The hypothesis of zero transactions cannot hold where affected agents are many as a consensus is not easy to arrive at.

ii. Parties involved in property rights dispute may not have equal bargaining power.
- d. i. Property rights should be properly defined and legally enforceable.
ii. Self-reliance in resolving property rights problems is possible.
- e. i. (Relative) adjectival clause
ii. It qualifies (the noun) "villagers"
iii. It is a prepositional phrase
- f. The two commas are used to isolate the adverbial phrase (if transactions cost is zero)
- g. i. emergence - coming, advent
ii. proposition - suggestion, recommendation
iii. compensate - repay, redress, requite, indemnify, recompense
iv. initiates - begins, starts, pioneers, originates
v. consensus - agreement, understanding
vi. sophisticated - cultured, refined, urbane, polished

8.3 SUMMARY WRITING

Summary writing is, essentially, a comprehension test. In this exercise, a passage, usually of a considerable length, is given and at the end, certain forms of questions are

asked. The types of questions asked here are different from those asked at the end of a comprehension passage. For summary, at the end of the passage given, two or three, or even more, questions are asked calling for the main ideas in the passage. As a matter of fact, the questions are rather specific and concise.

The questions that may be asked take the form of stating

- The problems hindering something;
- The stages of a process;
- The advantages of one thing over another;
- The uses of and/or reasons for something;
- The argument for and/or against an idea;
- The similarities/differences between/among two or more subjects;
- The differences between certain views, etc.

To do well in a summary exercise, the reader requires:

- a. an understanding of the content of the given passage;
- b. a thorough understanding of the instructions given;
- c. setting out the requirements very succinctly.

The reader should have no problem with understanding the passage given, since this is essentially a comprehension technique which has been discussed in the first part of this chapter. There is no shortcut to understanding the information contained in the passage other than to read it. The passage, as in the case of comprehension, is passing on **SPECIFIC INFORMATION** and the writer has a way of passing this information across to the reader. This may be in form of an expanded idea, a process, a view, and the like. It is, therefore, the duty of the reader to look for this information and the way the writer puts his message across. It is necessary to state here that the reader cannot understand the passage at **ONLY** one reading. It is advisable that the reader should take time off to read the passage two or three times.

We might say that understanding the passage and understanding the instructions given are two different things. It is a common feature to find candidates using the right materials, but disobeying instructions or vice versa. And the reason for this is that these candidates only understand the passage but fail to understand the instructions. To know what the instructions/questions demand, candidates should analyse the content of the

questions/instructions. If it is similarities, differences, advantages, uses of, or reasons for are demanded, these are precisely what should be looked for and written out.

8.4 PRINCIPLES OF SUMMARY WRITING

The procedure for answering summary questions include the following

- a. Reading the passage for the first time fairly rapidly without actually paying too much attention to details;
- b. Reading the passage again a second (or even a third) time fairly slowly, now paying attention to details;
- c. Reading the questions/instructions making sure what is demanded in each question/instruction is understood;
- d. Jotting down, in note form, the materials needed from the passage as required by the questions/instructions;
- e. Writing out a summary of items in one's own words making use of the materials that have been gathered from the passage. Here, adherence to the number of sentences required in the correct form is compulsory. Each sentence must not be too long to avoid adding irrelevant material and making grammatical mistakes;
- f. Cancelling out neatly, either in ink or pencil, all irrelevant notes that have been jotted down during reading;
- g. Reading the answers written to make sure that the materials therein are relevant to the demands of the questions/instructions.

ILLUSTRATION 8.2

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it

From trado-medical (traditional medicine) point of view, sickness is a physical house cleaning. This can be borne out by indisputable evidence. The process of active disease is one which actually saves life and enables us to live long.

It enables the body to cleanse itself of dangerous excesses of impurities that the cleansing organs have been unable to eliminate in the normal way. The situation has become one in which the body is full of waste matters and so the body must seek some way by which to throw it off, or death will ensue. The most usual way is by means of

fever – a burning up – such as pneumonia, a feverish cold, etc., and in children, measles, scarlet fever, boils, etc. These processes are produced by the body in an effort to purify it and soothe itself.

Fever, diarrhoea, catarrh, dysentery or an eruptive disease are simply various attempts on the part of nature to cleanse the system. So they should, by no means, be suppressed.

Death should never occur from an acute disease, and under rational natural treatment it does not. Death ensues when suppressive medication is given. The medication may reduce disturbing symptoms for a short time, but it stops the body's effort at self-purification. If the purpose of disease were universally understood from this standpoint it would quickly lose its terrors, and instead be regarded as a friend in disguise.

Many a patient has never fully come to understand himself until he has gone through a severe illness. Then perhaps in the quietness of a trado-medical hospital bed he has a chance to think over all the problems that have brought on his ill health condition. Once he had found the cause he can make these changes that will finally bring him into harmony with himself and nature. It would be accepted as a punishment for abuse of the body by the transgression of the immutable health laws of nature, as advocated by trado-medical physicians. Those who do not obey laws must pay the penalty. This is a great and fundamental truth that cannot be reiterated too frequently and too forcefully.

We can thus make ourselves free from both acute and chronic diseases by helping nature to make the body clean by taking proper diet and exercise. Trado-medicalism not only cures disease but also helps to maintain health. It can diagnose and cure diseases caused by harmful spell directed to patients by evil hands. Above all, it teaches one to move in line with the natural laws of health and thus remain disease free till old age.

This is the simple logic why trado-medical doctors regard the appearance of an acute disease as beneficial.

- a. In THREE short sentences, state the THREE reasons, one for each, the writer offers as regards sickness being beneficial.

- b. In **THREE** short sentences, state the **THREE** things, one for each, the writer says we can do to help nature make our body clean.

SOLUTION

- a. i. Sickness is an agent of purification. OR
Sickness is a physical house cleaning. OR
Sickness cleanses the body of dangerous excesses of impurities.
- ii. Sickness ensures long life. OR
Sickness enables one to live longer.
- iii. Sickness saves life.
- b. i. No suppressive drugs/medication must be used.
ii. Proper diet must be taken.
iii Exercises must be performed.

CHAPTER 9

BASIC LANGUAGE SKILLS

9.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to

- identify the basic language skills that promote communicative activities;
- examine the working of these language skills in promoting communication.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Skills, in general terms, refer to endowments (natural or acquired), which an individual possesses and which may, therefore, be used to perform specific tasks. A natural skill is one which is bequeathed to one by nature. That is, one may be born with it or grow up with it, such that it may be taken as an integral part of the person. An acquired skill is one, which is learnt either in a formal or an informal environment. Skills, whether natural or acquired, are of immense benefit to the possessor, since they place him or her at an advantage over another person, who is unskilled. An unskilled labourer, for instance, has a major disadvantage at a construction site in that he or she may be the last to be hired. The skilled labourer, on the other hand, is easily hired because it is expected that his or her skill would be an asset when the construction work demands it. In the same vein, a skilled communicator is of immense benefit to his or her organisation.

What are the relevant language skills that promote communicative activities and how are they inter-related? Basically, there are two types of language communicative skills: receiving and sending. Receiving skills are sub-divided into Listening and Reading skills, while Sending skills are sub-divided into Speaking and Writing skills.

9.2 RECEIVING SKILLS

The receiving skills in man may be likened to the satellite dish which adorns most homes. A satellite sends signals in the direction of the dish. If the dish is not predisposed to receiving such signals, the residents would not benefit from the information coming from the satellite. Furthermore, the better the positioning of the dish, the optimal the reception would be (assuming that the decoder and associated electronic materials are functioning optimally too). As far as language communication receiving skills in man are concerned, listening and reading appear to

be fundamental.

9.2.1 Listening Skill

Listening is a more advanced human activity than hearing because the former requires an effort by the listener to receive information, where as the latter does not. When an unexpected visitor presses the door-bell, we may or may not hear it, but when the visitor is expected, we are on the look out for the bell to ring and, therefore, we listen to it. It is not unlikely that we would hear it when it eventually rings.

9.2.1.1 Definition of Listening Skill

Listening skill may be defined as one aspect of our abilities to receive information attentively. Listening, then, is an active rather than a passive activity. There is a popular saying (cited on the web pages of the Canadian Student Activity Advisors Association), which pitches listening against talking as follows:

We were given two ears but only one mouth.

This is because God knew that listening was twice as hard as talking

(<http://www.casaaleadership.ca/mainpages/resources/sourcebook/listening.skills.html>)

Though subjective, the statement above underscores the complex nature of listening, implying special skill to cope with it.

9.2.1.2 Types of Listening.

Listening can take different forms. It is generally agreed that the four major types of listening are: informative, empathic, attentive and critical. A fifth type, discriminative, cuts across the other four.

- (a) Informative Listening (also known as Inquisitive Listening) is a case in which the listener's primary concern is to understand the message. A successful informative listener is one who is able to grasp the message as it was intended by the giver.
- (b) Empathic Listening (also known as Relationship Listening) puts emphasis on understanding and sharing the feelings of the other person- the information- giver. In this case, the listener demonstrates an emotional participatory attachment to the speaker. Therapeutic listening,

where medical personnel and other professionals allow a patient to talk through his or her problems, is a good example of empathic listening.

- (c) Attentive Listening (also known as Appreciative Listening) puts the disposition of the listener as of prime importance-not the message *per se*. The success of attentive listening depends on how much enjoyment the listener is able to derive from it. Listening to music, an orator or specific radio programmes are good illustrative examples of attentive listening.
- (d) Critical Listening (also known as Objective Listening) is the ability to receive information *with a grain of salt*. This means that critical listening requires the listener to make enough room for objectively receiving the information. Speaker credibility, logical arguments and psychological appeal are key elements that guide critical listening.
- (e) Discriminative Listening is the master-key of the other four types of listening. It cuts across the other four listening types in the sense that its main feature, which is grading, is beneficial to all types of listening. For instance, informative listening through the consideration of different shades of the speaker's delivery- rate, volume, voice and emphasis, may detect different shades of meaning, just as empathic listening could be strengthened through sensing the impact of certain responses, such as "I see, "or" Indeed", etc. In the same vein, attentive listening may be enhanced by differences between sounds made by different instruments, just as critical listening may be facilitated in judging, not only the speaker's message, but his or her intentions as well, through sensitivity to pauses and other vocal and non-verbal cues.

9.2.1.3 Barriers to Effective Listening

Effective listening may be handicapped by the following:

(a) **Inappropriate receptive poise**

An inappropriate receptive poise by the listener is when he or she is not favourably predisposed to listening. This may happen in several ways, which may be broadly divided into physical and mental indisposition. A physically or mentally indisposed listener, positions himself or herself wrongly for effective listening. For instance, a member of an audience, who decides to look out through the window in order to count the number of red cars driving

by during a speech, is not likely to benefit from much of the information being provided by the speaker. This is because the eyes are physically focussed away from the message and the mind is busy contemplating other matters – sorting out cars by their colours and then counting them.

(b) Lack of cooperation with the speaker

A listener, who does not 'cooperate' with the speaker, makes the delivery more difficult. How does the good listener cooperate? Cooperation comes mainly in form of encouragement to go ahead with the information delivery because there are positive signs that what has been delivered so far has been well received and there is room to accommodate further items that may be offered. Lack of encouragement to forge ahead with information delivery discourages the giver of the information, and this may constitute a great barrier to effective listening.

(c) Loss of concentration

When a listener loses his or her concentration on the information that is being provided by the speaker, the reception is likely to be impaired. For instance, when a listener's mind wanders away from the message being received, it is likely that the part of the message supplied during period of inattentiveness would be lost. This may adversely affect what had been received earlier as well as what may be received afterwards. Loss of concentration thus constitutes a barrier to effective listening.

(d) Relaxing while listening

Listening is a positive activity, and as such can never be done in a passive manner. Therefore, a listener cannot afford to relax when listening. The listener's mind is not a pint pot that can be filled by pouring in speech. The input has to be monitored, analysed and filed by the mind, and these activities cannot be carried out effectively while relaxing.

(e) Speech lag

Because the listening speed is faster than that of the speaking rate, the listener's mind has to slow down to keep pace with the speaker. This is known as speech lag. The resultant effect on the listener is that his mind may wander

and loose concentration.

9.2.1.4 Enhancing Effective Listening

Effective Listening may be promoted by sharpening the following skills:

(a) Living up to expectation.

There are specific traits, which characterise a good listener. Therefore, for effective listening, the listener must show evidence that he or she possesses such traits. When the giver of information perceives such traits in a person, then there is the likelihood that the information flow would be enhanced. It is, therefore, not enough to be a good listener-the good listener must be seen to be one. To enhance effective listening, then, the listener must act as a good listener.

(b) Use of other bodily receptors apart from the ear

It is obvious that the ears are the primary means through which the human body receives sound impulses. However, a good listener exploits other bodily receptors in order to enhance effective listening. For instance, looking at the speaker straight in the face, barring cultural peculiarities, may be a signal to the giver of information that the listener has undivided attention. Eye contact is an indication of keeping in touch.

(c) Use of non-verbal signals.

Effective listening may be enhanced through the use of non-verbal signals. In an attempt to encourage the giver of information, a good listener could use non-verbal signals at his or her disposal. Take, for instance, the use of a simple smile to indicate reception and approval of a message. This is the type of feedback mechanism that a speaker requires in order to forge ahead more vigorously with his or her message.

(d) Use of receptive language

In circumstances that permit the receiver of information to react, using language, it is important to consider the appropriateness of the language being used. In such circumstances, receptive rather than broadcast language is recommended. Receptive language consists of words and expressions that confirm receipt and acceptance of the message, whereas broadcast language is characterised by an unidirectional flow of information, which is not a response

to any stimuli. The former is obviously the preferred alternative. Included in receptive language are expressions such as "Really?" ... "Obviously!"... "I didn't know that," etc.

(e) Concentrating on the information

Concentrating on the content of the information, rather than mentally debating or judging it, enhances listening. This is because such an attitude prevents unnecessary distraction and, therefore, enhances listening.

9.2.2 Reading Skill

Reading skill is the other major ability of man (apart from listening skill), required for receiving information. There is a close relationship between reading and writing since the former is an attempt to decode the latter.

9.2.2.1 Definition of Reading Skill

Reading may be defined as an activity designed to decipher a message which has been coded according to a given orthography. It is not unusual for different languages to employ divergent orthographies for their codification needs. To guarantee standardisation, relevant authorities usually set up regulatory bodies. However, in view of the potential divergences that may arise between codification (through writing) and interpretation (through reading), it is important to constantly sharpen our skill. The rate at which we read and the accuracy of our reading are both essential yardsticks for measuring success in this endeavour.

9.2.2.2 Types of Reading

Overtime, man has evolved different methods to cater for his reading needs. The most popular types of reading are: scanning, skimming, light, word-by-word and study-type.

9.2.2.2.1 Scanning

Scanning (sometimes referred to as Rapid Survey), is mainly concerned with speed. The activity must take place within the shortest time. Scanning a telephone book, for instance, means searching for specific information (e.g. names). Even on the page, where a relevant name is picked up, all other information is irrelevant and may, therefore, not be remembered.

9.2.2.2.2 Skimming

Skimming is also a speed-conditioned reading type. Although no specific item or key word is being looked for, skimming provides an overview of the text. It is a quick glance at the written material to be read. This type of reading is very well employed in sampling, which involves exploring the content of a written material with a view to obtaining details about certain parts, e.g. chapter headings or the introduction. Selective reading, which involves reading a specific part of a text and taking out its essence and leaving out the rest, is an expanded version of skimming.

9.2.2.2.3 Light Reading

Light reading, as the name suggests, is “reading for pleasure.” Most people read novels, e.g. fiction, just for the fun of reading and would easily forget the story line almost immediately afterwards.

9.2.2.2.4 Word-by-word Reading

Word-by-word reading (also known as Close Reading), involves paying attention to each word in a text. This method is painfully slow, but very rewarding. It is widely used in such disciplines as literature and religious studies, where interpretation is of paramount importance.

9.2.2.2.5 Study-type

Study-type reading is associated with preparing for tests and examinations. The main aim in this case is to assimilate the text and be in a position to recall and exploit this knowledge when the need arises. Different approaches have been developed to take care of the special needs of this type of reading. The most popular of these is the Survey, Question, Read, Recall, Review (SQ3R) approach.

SQ3R is a reading plan developed as a sequence of events that culminates in effective reading. The plan works as follows: first, the reader surveys the text by isolating the key words and ideas as set out in chapter titles and sub- titles; next, possible questions that may be asked by the examiner are drawn up; then, the actual reading takes place; followed by an attempt to recall the facts unaided through recitation; finally, a self-assessment of the reader's performance is carried out by comparing the recitation with the raw text.

Developed by Francis Robinson at Ohio State University during World War II, SQ3R proved to be very efficient for military men who needed to effectively read manuals and retain information contained therein.

Since then, variations of the methods have evolved. The most popular ones are:

SQ3R2	Survey, Question, Read, Recall, Review (Repeat)
SQ4R	Survey, Question, Read, Recall, Review, Reflect
SQ5R	Survey, Question, Read, Recall, (W) Rite Reference and Review
SER	Survey, Explore, Review
PSQ5R	Predict, Survey, Question, Read, Recall, (W) Rite, Reference and Review
PROR	Preview, Read, Organize, Review
PORPE	Predict, Organize, Rehearse, Practise, Evaluate
OK4R	Organize, Know, Read, Recall, Review, Reflect

It is good to note that all of them operate on the principle of a step-by-step approach to effective reading. There is no need for one to be rigidly glued to any of them. Instead, one should be willing to experiment with any that seems to satisfy one's goals. PORPE, for instance, though time-consuming, has proved to be highly suitable for preparing to answer essay questions, just as OK4R has been for multiple-choice questions.

9.2.2.3 Barriers to Effective Reading

Effective reading may be hampered by several negative factors. Some of these are discussed in the following sub-sections:

9.2.2.3.1 Sub-Standard Writing System

If the orthography of a language is not standardized, the ensuing irregularities would adversely affect reading. We may recall a popular computer adage here: *Garbage in, garbage out (GIGO)*.

9.2.2.3.2 Inappropriate Reading Methods

Another hindrance to effective reading is the use of an inappropriate reading method. For example, a businessman decides to go through the daily papers quickly, but adopts the word-for-word reading type, it is likely that he would spend

more time than he can afford to accomplish the task. This practice may be likened to *putting a square peg in a round hole*.

9.2.2.3.3 Bad Reading Habits

When a reader has imbibed bad reading habits, it becomes extremely difficult to achieve positive results in reading. Bad reading habits include reading for reading sake, favouring speed at the expense of quality of reading and paying undue attention to volume, rather than depth of reading.

It is generally agreed that the three worst adult reading habits are: polysyllabic fixation (reading by focusing on the syllables of words, rather than on phrases and larger segments); sub-vocalisation (reading in low tones); and habitual regression (occasionally revisiting words earlier read)

<http://www2.hawaii.edu/~linares/readclinics.pdf>.

9.2.2.3.4 Conservatism

The average human mind is conservative. This is why old habits die hard. Since reading starts from pre-adult years, it is not surprising that old bad reading habits cultivated from earlier years are hard to shed off.

9.2.2.4 Enhancing Effective Reading

Four factors that may enhance effective reading are the determination to improve on one's performance, openness to new techniques, willingness to combine methods and readiness to be motivated to practice.

9.2.2.4.1 Determination to improve

One's determination to improve on one's performance is one of the factors that may positively influence effective reading. There is a popular belief that “where there is a will, there is a way”. Some readers have been able to double their reading speed through sheer motivation, backed up by necessary training.

9.2.2.4.2 Openness to new techniques

Being open to new techniques is another positive factors that eliminates rigidity and promotes flexibility. There is, thus, a willingness to modify existing practice or completely migrate to a new more cost-effective practice.

9.2.2.4.3 Combining methods

Preparedness to combine different methods, which are appropriate, also has positive effects on effective reading. There are circumstances in which no single reading method can guarantee success. For example, preparing for a multi-faceted examination, in which there is a section on 'summary' and another on 'essay writing' may certainly require different approaches to reading.

9.2.2.4.4 Motivation to practise

Reading is not a once-for-all-time affair. There is a constant need to practise. Thus, effective reading has to be backed up by a strong motivation to practise.

9.3 SENDING SKILLS

As far as language sending skills in man are concerned, writing and speaking appear to be fundamental.

9.3.1 Writing Skill

From the days of cave-drawing by the earliest civilisations to those of the current digital revolution, man has always sought the ways and means to 'talk' *via* the written medium.

9.3.1.1 Definition of Writing Skill

Writing skill is the special ability in man that enable him to state his desires, thoughts and actions in written form. In writing, symbols are used to represent words and expressions. There are different systems of writing.

9.3.1.2 Types of Writing Systems

The major writing systems developed over several civilisations of man may be divided into: limited writing systems (pictographic) and full writing systems (alphabetic).

9.3.1.2.1 Limited Writing System (LWS)

Drawing is the major tool of the limited writing system (LWS). This could be in form of pictography or ideography. Pictograms are associated with the early stages of civilisation. Cuneiform writing (developed by the Mesopotamians) and Hieroglyphic writing (by the Egyptians) are good illustrative examples of LWS.

In LWS, several images are chronologically presented. For example, to express the

idea: *An old man is leaving the house for the farm*, three images may be needed: (1) house, (2) bearded adult male, facing the farm, and (3) farm.

9.3.1.2.2 Full Writing System (FWS).

A full writing system makes use of alphabets. Unlike a pictographic system, FWS conveys no meaning to the reader who does not have the knowledge of the underlying language. For instance, there is no one-to-one correspondence between the English word "man" and the concept, "human, adult, male," that it represents.

9.3.1.3 Barriers to Effective Writing

Writing is essentially an organised system. Therefore, any disorder is likely to jeopardise its efficacy. Disrespect for established rules; misapplication of rules; bad writing habits; non-standardisation and resistance to change are some of the greatest barriers to effective writing.

9.3.1.3.1 Disrespect for established rules

Every standard writing system has its own rules. When these rules are disrespected, the ensuing writing would not be effective. If a writer decided to write in Arabic, starting from the right hand side of the page to the left, he or she is likely to encounter problems similar to those likely to be encountered by someone writing in English from the right hand side of the page to the left just like someone walking backwards!

9.3.1.3.2 Misapplication of rules

When orthographic rules are misapplied, effective writing is hindered. For example, the addition of "s" to the singular form of several words in English transforms them to the plural form. But the application of this rule to such words as *sheep, furniture, aircraft*, etc. will be inappropriate.

9.3.1.3.3 Bad writing habits

Habits are our usual ways of performing specific tasks. When one usually writes illegibly, illogically or haphazardly; the text would not be optimally presented. Illegibility blocks physical appeal, just as illogicality blurs a sensible train of thought. A text haphazardly written is likely to lead to a lot of confusion.

9.3.1.3.4 Non-standardisation

A non-standardised writing system is not capable of generating an optimal text. This is because non-standardisation encourages inconsistency.

9.3.1.3.5 Resistance to change

Orthographies change overtime. If a writer refuses to go along with approved changes, his or her writings may become isolated and consequently violate current norms.

9.3.1.4 Enhancing Effective Writing

Effective writing may be greatly enhanced by high levels of legibility, clarity and use of specific norms.

9.3.1.4.1 Legibility

Legibility is a yardstick of text-appeal. Whether handwritten or type-written, a text should be legible. A successful writer always aims at the highest level of legibility in order to be appealing.

9.3.1.4.2 Clarity

The clarity of a text determines its acceptability. When a text is written in simple and logical language, it is easy to understand.

9.3.1.4.3 Use of specific norms

All orthography makes use of specific conventions, which its users are supposed to be conversant with. It is, therefore, the responsibility of an effective writer to use such conventions appropriately. The use of abbreviations such as "e.g." (for example) or "etc." (*et. cetera*, 'and so on and so forth') is common place in modern English writing.

ILLUSTRATION 9.1

The extract below is a good illustrative example of a piece of writing aimed at exploring the concept: *public relations*. It kicks off with the role of public relations in politics and entertainment, presents the criteria for a successful public relations practice and finally puts forward a state-of-the-art assessment of public relations. Its layout, the orderly logical presentation of the ideas and the clarity of the language are all worthy of note.

Public relations activities are a major part of the political process in many nations.

Politicians seeking office, government agencies seeking acceptance and cooperation, officials seeking support for their policies, and foreign governments seeking aid and allies abroad all make extensive use of services provided by public relations specialists.

Public relations also plays an important role in the entertainment industry. The theatre, films, sports, restaurants, and individuals all use public relations services to enhance their image and thereby increase their business. Other public relations clients are educational, social service, and charitable institutions, trade unions, religious groups, and professional societies.

The successful public relations practitioner is a specialist in communication arts and persuasion. His work involves various functions including the following: (1) planning that is, analysing problems and opportunities, defining goals, determining the public to be reached, and proposing and formulating a campaign of activities; (2) writing and editing materials such as press releases, speeches, stockholder reports, product information, and employee publications; (3) placing information in the most advantageous way; (4) organizing special events such as press functions, award programmes, exhibits, and displays; (5) setting up face-to-face communication, including the preparation and delivery of speeches; (6) providing research and evaluation using interviews, reference materials, and various survey techniques; and (7) managing resources by planning, budgeting, and recruiting and training staff to attain these objectives. Specialized skills are required to handle public-opinion research, media relations, direct mail activities, institutional advertising, publications, film and video production, and special events.

Although its activities, goals, and effects have been subject, at times, to severe criticism, public relations is a significant force in the developed world. To avoid misuse of professional skills, several public relations organisations have developed a code of ethics for members. In totalitarian countries, the state has a monopoly on communications, and any public relations activities are government controlled, as propaganda. Public relations services are so far little used in many developing nations, but they are likely to become more prevalent in the future.

(Adapted from Microsoft Encarta Encyclopaedia 2005 © 1993-2004 Microsoft Corporation).

9.3.2 Speaking Skill

The second fundamental language sending skill in man is speaking. Speaking is to listening what writing is to reading. In other words, speaking provides the raw

materials which listening consequently processes.

9.3.2.1 Definition of Speaking Skill

Speaking is the art of producing sound waves, to which we ascribe meaning. Speaking skill enables us to express ourselves verbally. Since our desires, thoughts and actions vary, speaking skill needs to be adjusted accordingly in order to faithfully and effectively reflect them.

9.3.2.2 Types of Speech

There are two basic types of speech: formal and informal

9.3.2.2.1 Formal Speech

Formal speech (also known as official speech) is characterised by officialdom. This means there are laid-down rules and regulations which must be obeyed. Formal speeches are delivered at ceremonies and public functions, which call for appropriate decorum in terms of mode of address, choice of words, timing, poise, etc.

ILLUSTRATION 9.2

In the formal speech presented below, a State Governor shows evidence of adhering to the acceptable format of a formal speech: use of honorifics, appropriate mode of address (formal opening, development and closure of address), and careful choice of words:

Your Excellency, the Deputy Governor,
The Honourable Speaker,
Honourable members of the Yobe State House of Assembly,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen!

You would recall that when I addressed this Honourable House on Monday, 13 January, 1992, I informed you that our 1992 Budget estimates would soon be presented for your deliberations. Today, I have come to fulfil that initial undertaking before this Honourable House. As you are, no doubt aware, this Budget shall constitute the first fiscal exercise of the present administration in the state.

Honourable members, if you would kindly cast your minds back to the historic occasion of

my assumption of office on 2nd January, you would recall that in my maiden address I did indicate the wanton neglect and deprivation which several years of misallocation of resources had visited on our people, especially the rural dwellers. Due to obvious reasons, they were left without basic facilities and amenities that would otherwise make their lives comfortable. In every corner of the State, our people barely managed to make ends meet without sufficient water for human and animal consumption, educational facilities, health care delivery facilities, good road networks and input for improved agricultural production. Having analysed these problems, and prescribed a five-point freedom charter to the people, they immediately responded and gave us an over-whelming mandate. The immediate task before us now is to discharge the odious task of emancipating them from the five evils of poverty, hunger, ignorance, oppression and disease. In accordance with the SDP charge for a just society, we have decided to approach the achievement of this onerous task through the implementation of integrated rural development. This policy is predicated on the provision of water, electricity, health care delivery facilities, roads and inputs for improved agricultural production to our people in the rural areas. It is in that light that the proposals in the budget being presented before this Honourable House were carefully tailored for your kind consideration.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable members, this Budget may not necessarily solve all our immediate problems. All of us must not lose sight of the fact that what we hope to achieve may not come in the first one hundred days of the present administration, or in the first year of this administration. Our programmes shall be implemented in phases. However, if we did so much as to lay an enduring, solid and self-sustaining foundation for the effective take-off of Yobe State, even posterity would not judge us as people that failed. It is in this regard that I appeal once again to all of you, Honourable Members, that although some of you are from a political party other than our own, we should close ranks and work as one to ensure the speedy development of the State. We should at all times be mindful of that cake at home, the common man, irrespective of whether he voted for the SDP or NRC, he needs the services that this Budget seeks to provide. In view of that, therefore, let us shun partisanship and give these Budget proposals the objective attention and fair deliberations they require.

Finally, I wish you successful and fruitful deliberations on this Appropriation Bill. I also wish you the blessing and guidance of the Almighty Allah in this arduous task. I thank you very sincerely for having found time to listen to me. Good day and God bless us all.

(An excerpt from the address by His Excellency, the Governor of Yobe State, Alhaji Bukar Abba Ibrahim, to the Yobe State House of Assembly on the occasion of presenting the state's Appropriation Bill (budget) for 1992 on Monday, 20th January, 1992.)

9.3.2.2.2 Informal Speech

Informal speech is characterised by the absence of officialdom. There are hardly any restrictions in terms of subject, choice of words, timing, poise, etc. The overriding principle is to engage in the art of talking *with out borders*. Most of our daily conversations, especially outside the office, fall within this category of speech.

9.3.2.3. Barriers to Effective Speaking

Effective speaking, whether formal or informal, may be hampered mainly by inadequate preparation, inappropriateness of format and inappropriateness of context.

9.3.2.3.1 Inadequate preparation

Any action for which we are inadequately prepared may not be performed optimally. For formal speaking, formal preparation is necessary. This may involve drawing up an outline, rehearsing the speech and previewing the context.

9.3.2.3.2 Inappropriateness of format

The format of a speech is very important. It must present the message appropriately and be admissible by the audience. An inappropriate format, for instance, would be one in which a technical report on current research on breast cancer is presented to an audience made up of industrialists, seeking investment opportunities. An appropriate format for the report would be one in which emphasis is placed on what yet-to-be-patented drugs have been found to be effective in cancer treatment.

9.3.2.3.3 Inappropriateness of context

The context within which a speech is presented contributes to the determination of its effectiveness. When a formal speech is delivered, for instance, in a beer parlour, to an audience made up of construction workers, it may be perceived as a comedy. Some members of the audience would easily take it as a mockery of the middle or upper class.

9.3.2.4 Principles of Effective Speaking

Three basic principles that promote effective speaking are: purposefulness, clarity and preparedness.

9.3.2.4.1 Purposefulness

Goals and objectives should be set in order to achieve effectiveness in speaking. The speaker should attempt to provide answers to such questions as: To whom would the speech be addressed? What is the message? How the message is best delivered? When (i.e. in terms of timing) and where (i.e. in terms of physical context) is the message to be delivered?

9.3.2.4.2 Clarity

Simplicity is a signal of clarity. It is advisable not to drown one's audience in complex formulations. Correct pronunciation backed up by appropriate pausing, suitable volume, warm enthusiasm, necessary poise, correct choice of words and the use of an outline are all essential tools of clarity.

9.3.2.4.3 Preparedness

Preparedness helps in limiting unpleasant surprises. It maps out the conception, development and execution of the speech.

9.4 SUMMARY

The basic language skills in man may be split into receiving and sending skills. Whilst the former serves the purpose of decoding information, the latter acts as the means for generating the message.

Receiving skills are broken down into listening and reading skills, while sending skills, on the other hand, are split into speaking and writing skills. Each category of these skills has different types which may be hindered or enhanced. It is, therefore, the responsibility of each communicator, desirous of efficacy, to cultivate the positive and avoid the negative aspects and factors highlighted in this chapter.

9.5 END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

9.5.1 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. The two sub-divisions of receiving skills in human communication are.
 - A. Talking and reading
 - B. Talking and speaking
 - C. Listening and reading
 - D. Hearing and listening
 - E. Hearing and talking

2. The following are types of listening EXCEPT
 - A. Informative
 - B. Empathic
 - C. Critical
 - D. Formative
 - E. Attentive

3. Sending skills in human communication may be sub-divided into
 - A. Writing and speaking
 - B. Talking and speaking
 - C. Writing and Composition
 - D. Narration and writing
 - E. Composition and narration

3. The following are barriers to effective writing EXCEPT
 - A. Disrespect for established rules
 - B. Bad writing habits
 - C. Misapplication of rules
 - D. Bad listening habits
 - E. Non-standardisation of writing

5. SQ3R2, are reading habits, stands for
 - A. Survey, Quite, Read, Recall, Review, Reflect
 - B. Survey, Question, Read, Recall, Review (Repeat)
 - C. Survey, Question, Read, Recall, Review, Reflect
 - D. Survey, Quit, Read, Recall, Review(Repeat)
 - E. Survey, Question, Read, Recall, Review

9.5.2 SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. Language skills may be natural or
2. Language skills are basically for sending and
information.
3. Writing systems are basically pictographic or

4. The act of listening objectively is referred to aslistening.
5. Hearing is a passive activity while listening is a(n)activity.

9.5.3 ESSAY

1. Explain briefly any THREE ways in which listening may be impaired and any TWO ways it can be promoted.
2. Discuss any THREE factors that may
 - a. hinder reading.
 - b. promote reading
3. Explain briefly, with examples, any THREE ways writing may be
 - a. impaired
 - b. promoted.

9.6 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

9.6.1 SOLUTIONS FOR MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. C
2. D
3. A
4. D
5. B

9.6.2 SOLUTIONS TO SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. Acquired
2. Receiving
3. Orthographic
4. Critical
5. Active

9.6.3 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER ESSAY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

Effective listening may be handicapped by the following: inappropriate receptive poise, lack of cooperation with the speaker and loss of concentration, relaxing while listening and speech lag.

(a) Inappropriate receptive poise

An inappropriate receptive poise by the listener is when he or she is not favourably predisposed to listening. This may happen in several ways, which may be broadly divided into: physical and mental indisposition. A physically or mentally indisposed listener, positions himself or herself wrongly for effective listening. For instance, a member of an audience, who decides to look out through the window in order to count the number of red cars driving by during a speech, is not likely to benefit from much of the information being provided by the speaker. This is because the eyes are physically focussed away from the message and the mind is busy contemplating other matters—sorting out cars by their colours and then counting them.

(b) Lack of cooperation with the speaker

A listener, who does not 'cooperate' with the speaker, makes the delivery more difficult. How does the good listener cooperate? Cooperation comes mainly in form of encouragement to go ahead with the information delivery because there are positive signs that what has been delivered so far has been well received and there is room to accommodate further items that may be offered. Lack of encouragement to forge ahead with information delivery discourages the giver of the information and this may constitute a great barrier to effective listening.

(c) Loss of concentration

When a listener loses his or her concentration on the information that is being provided by the speaker, the reception is likely to be impaired. For instance, when a listener's mind wanders a way from the message being received, it is likely that the part of the message supplied during period of inattentiveness would be lost. This may adversely affect what had been received earlier as well as what may be received afterwards. Loss of concentration thus constitutes barrier to effective listening.

(d) Relaxing while listening

Listening is a positive activity, and as such can never be done in a passive manner. Therefore, a listener cannot afford to relax when listening. The listener's mind is not a pint pot that can be filled by pouring in speech. The input has to be monitored, analysed and filed by the mind, and these activities cannot be carried out effectively while relaxing.

(e) Speech lag

Because the listening speed is faster than that of the speaking rate, the listener's mind has to slow down to keep pace with the speaker. This is known as speech lag. The resultant effect on the listener is that his mind may wander and lose concentration.

However, Effective Listening may be promoted by sharpening the following skills: living up to expectation, use of other bodily receptors (apart from the ear), use of non-verbal signals, use of receptive language and concentration on the language.

(a) Living up to expectation.

There are specific traits, which characterise a good listener. Therefore, for effective listening, the listener must show evidence that he or she possesses such traits. When the giver of information perceives such traits in a person, then there is the likelihood that the information flow would be enhanced. It is, therefore, not enough to be a good listener-the good listener *must be seen to be one*. To enhance effective listening, then, the listener *must act as a good listener*.

(b) Use of other bodily receptors, apart from the ear

It is obvious that the ears are the primary means through which the human body receives sound impulses. However, a good listener exploits other bodily receptors in order to enhance effective listening. For instance, looking at the speaker straight in the face, barring cultural peculiarities, may be a signal to the giver of information that the listener has undivided attention. Eye contact is an indication of keeping in touch.

(c) **Use of non-verbal signals.**

Effective listening may be enhanced through the use of non-verbal signals. In an attempt to encourage the giver of information, a good listener could use non-verbal signals at his or her disposal. Take, for instance, the use of a simple smile to indicate reception and approval of a message. This is the type of feedback mechanism that a speaker requires in order to forge ahead more vigorously with his or her message.

(d) **Use of receptive language**

In circumstances that permit the receiver of information to react, using language, it is important to consider the appropriateness of the language being used. In such circumstances, receptive rather than broadcast language is recommended. Receptive language consists of words and expressions that confirm receipt and acceptance of the message, whereas broadcast language is characterized by a uni-directional flow of information, which is not a response to any stimuli. The former is obviously the preferred alternative. Included in receptive languages are expressions such as "Really?" ... "Obviously!" ... "I didn't know that", etc.

(e) **Concentrating on the information**

Concentrating on the content of the information, rather than mentally debating or judging it, enhances listening. This is because such an attitude prevents unnecessary distraction and therefore enhances listening.

QUESTION 2

- (a) Effective Reading may be hampered by several negative factors. If, for instance, the orthography of a language is not standardized, the ensuing irregularities would adversely affect reading. We may recall a popular computer adage here: *Garbage in, garbage out (GIGO)*.

Another hindrance to effective reading is the use of an inappropriate reading method. This practice may be likened to *putting a square peg in a round hole*.

When a reader has imbibed bad reading habits, it becomes extremely difficult to achieve positive results in reading. Bad reading habits include: reading for reading sake; favouring speed at the expense of quality of reading; paying undue attention to volume, rather than depth of reading.

The average human mind is conservative. This is why old habits die hard. Since reading starts from pre-adult years, it is not surprising that old bad reading habits cultivated from earlier years are hard to shed off.

- (b) Four factors that may enhance effective reading are: the determination to improve on one's performance, openness to new techniques, willingness to combine methods and readiness to be motivated to practice.

One's determination to improve on one's performance is one of the factors that may positively influence effective reading. There is a popular belief that "where there is a will, there is a way". Some readers have been able to double their reading speed through sheer motivation, backed up by necessary training. Being open to new techniques is another positive factor since it eliminates rigidity and promotes flexibility. There is, thus, a willingness to modify existing practice or completely migrate to a new more cost-effective practice.

Preparedness to combine different methods, which are appropriate, also has positive effects on effective reading. There are circumstances in which no single reading method can guarantee success. For example, preparing for a multi-faceted examination, in which there is a section on 'summary' and another on 'essay writing' may certainly require different approaches to reading.

Reading is not a once-for-all-time affair. There is a constant need to practise. Thus, effective reading has to be backed up by a strong motivation to practise.

QUESTION 3

- (a) Every standard writing system has its own rules. When these rules are disrespected, the ensuing writing would not be effective. If a writer decided to write in Arabic, starting from the right hand side of the page to the left, he or she is likely to encounter problems similar to those likely to be countered by someone writing in English from the right hand side of the page to the left- just like someone walking backwards!

When orthographic rules are misapplied, effective writing is hindered. For example, the addition of "s" to the singular form of several words in English transforms them to the plural form. But the application of this rule to such words as *sheep*, *furniture*, *aircraft*, etc. would be inappropriate.

Habits are our usual ways of performing specific tasks. When one usually writes illegibly, illogically or haphazardly; the text would not be optimally presented.

Illegibility blocks physical appeal, just as illogicality blurs a sensible train of thought. A text haphazardly written is likely to lead to a lot of confusion.

A non-standardized writing system is not capable of generating an optimal text. This is because non-standardisation encourages inconsistency.

Orthographies change over time. If a writer refuses to go along with approved changes, his or her writings may become isolated and consequently violate current norms.

- (b) Effective writing may be greatly enhanced by high levels of legibility, clarity and use of specific norms.

Legibility is a yardstick of text-appeal. Whether hand-written or type-written, a text should be legible. A successful writer always aims at the highest level of legibility in order to be appealing.

The clarity of a text determines its acceptability. When a text is written in simple and logical language, it is easy to understand.

All orthography makes use of specific conventions, which its users are supposed to be conversant with. It is, therefore, the responsibility of an effective writer to use such conventions appropriately. The use of abbreviations such as "e.g." (for example) or "etc." (*et. cetera*) 'and soon and so forth', is common place in modern English writing.

CHAPTER 10

GRAMMAR

10.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to

- identify grammatical rules and mechanics that relate to good use of the English language;
- examine the operational use of these rules and mechanics in language.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Language employs different skills in order to ensure its adequacy and consistency. One of such skills is grammar, which is the subject of this chapter. Grammar may be defined as the totality of rules that govern the appropriateness of an expression. It is only a well-formed utterance that is acceptable to the native speaker of a language. As such, any utterance that deviates from the standard norms of a language is at best shocking, if not appalling, to the native speaker.

What are the most prominent aspects of grammar that determine good use of language? First, there is the vocabulary. Next are the different word classes which traditional grammar called “parts of speech.” In addition, there are different types of phrases, clauses and sentences. The types and functions of the sentence are also important aspects of grammar which should be clearly identified. Finally, there are also mechanics, common errors in sentence construction and figurative expressions. Tense distinction plays a vital role in determining good use of language.

10.2 VOCABULARY

A vocabulary is an assemblage of all the expressions at the disposal of an individual or a group of people. The vocabulary may be basic or advanced.

10.2.1 Basic vocabulary

The basic vocabulary in a language includes all words and expressions that are needed for an individual to minimally function in a language. Words, such as *eye, nose, leg, he, use, die, go, 'come, eat,* etc. are common everyday words that the average user of any language would use from time to time.

10.2.2 Advanced vocabulary

Advanced vocabulary is more complex than basic vocabulary in the sense that whereas the latter is needed for routine common place experience, the former is restricted in its accessibility and use. Complex ideas or concepts usually require advanced vocabulary in order to be fully expressed. It is, therefore, not surprising that advanced vocabulary demands greater effort, on the part of the user, for its cultivation and development.

10.3. THE WORD

The English language, like any other language, is a set of symbols or signs. It is made up of sounds and marks. The sound we hear and the marks which represent them on paper. Each sound or mark that is produced in a language act has a meaning. Basically, the sound we make is realised at the level of speech while the marks are realised at the level of writing. In both cases, they give meaning. To produce a message, the sound or marks of English are patterned in various dimensions. The smallest of these dimensions is the WORD.

Concerning the meaning of words, it is important to note three important properties. The first one is that there is no one-to-one relationship between words and what they stand for. For example, there is no reason for calling a TREE, tree or BOX, box. Each of these can equally be called another name. Secondly, words and their meanings are arrived at by a consensus by those using the language. This is why it is said that language is conventional. Thirdly, language changes and therefore, the meanings attached to words in language also change. It is like fashion; certain dresses are acceptable today, tomorrow they may change while some may even go into extinction. In like manner, meanings of words may shrink, expand or even be completely replaced. The word functions at the level of phrases, clauses and sentences. The position it occupies indicates which class it belongs.

10.4 WORD CLASSES

Word classes or parts of speech, in traditional grammar analysis, are categories of words (or expressions), classified according to their positions/functions in a sentence. The word classes are nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections.

10.4.1 Nouns

A noun may be defined as the name ascribed to a person, place or thing. Basically, there are two types of noun: proper and common. A proper noun is one ascribed to a specific person, object or thing. The first letter of such a name is capitalised in modern English (e.g. Olajumoke, a personal Yoruba name from south western Nigeria, meaning "the honourables have assembled to take care of this one", *Aso Rock*, the official residence of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and *Mercedes*, a popular German brand of motor vehicle).

A common noun, on the other hand, is one shared by a group. For example, the word, *man*, refers to both sexes of human beings, when used as a common noun.

In addition to these two general types, there is also a collective noun which is used to designate a group of persons or things e.g team, crowd or flock; an abstract noun which refers to an intangible thing that cannot be discerned with any of our five senses e.g. kindness, craftsmanship or faithfulness; a concrete noun which refers to something we can discern with our senses such a house, goat or car.

Functionally, nouns are perceived in terms of *cases*. The nominative case is one in which the noun functions as a subject within the sentence; the objective case is when it functions as the object (i.e.indicating its relationship with other words, e.g. the verb, within the sentence); the genitive case (i.e. possessive), etc.

Structurally, nouns are categorized into simple, compound and complex nouns.

10.4.1.1 Simple Nouns

A simple noun usually consists of a single word, whose meaning is uni-dimensional.

10.4.1.2 Compound Nouns

A compound noun usually has at least two components, which contribute to the overall meaning

of the noun. Examples are: *house-keeper: classroom; motor-cycle rider*, etc.

10.4.1.3 Complex Nouns

A complex noun is one that is made up of several parts, which may not be easily decomposable (e.g. *antidisestablishmentarianism: multi-parliamentarianism*, etc.)

10.5 PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH NOUN USAGE

There are problems of number encountered in the use of nouns. The first problem is with regular nouns. In English, the form of the noun usually varies to show whether it refers to one or more persons, places or things. The plural forms of most nouns are derived by either adding *s* to their singular forms e.g. *girl/girls, goat/goats* or *road/roads*; or *es* to singular forms that end with *s, sh, ch, x* or *z* such as *James/Jameses, grass/grasses, church/churches*, etc. The second problem is with exceptional nouns. The plural forms of exceptional nouns like *wife, thief* are derived by substituting the *f* with *v* and adding *es*. So *wife* becomes *wives* and *thief* become *thieves*. Some nouns form their plurals by a change of vowel as in *foot/feet, mouse/mice, tooth/teeth*; some that end with a *y* are changed to *i* and *es* is added e.g. *battery/batteries, lottery/lotteries, story/stories*; while others use the same form for both singular and plural e.g. *information/information, furniture/furniture, equipment/equipment*. The third problem has to do with foreign plurals. Forming plurals from their singular forms is highly irregular e.g. *memorandum/memoranda, alumnus/alumni, crisis/crises, larva/larvae, criterion/criteria*, etc. The fourth problem is with compound nouns. These compound nouns are produced when two or more words form the unit. The plural form in this case is formed by the addition of the normal *s* to the noun in the unit e.g. *passer-by/passers-by, father-in-law/fathers-in-law, hanger-on/hangers-on*. The last problem is with collective nouns. The collective noun causes a problem only in connection with verb agreement and pronoun reference. Almost invariably, a collective noun can be considered as either singular or plural according to its use e.g. **The crowd *has* dispersed** (*crowd* is used as singular here) but **The contents of the suitcase *were* awesome.** (*contents* is used here as a plural)

The other problem with noun use is with respect to case. The term “case” means the change in the form of a word to indicate its relationship to another word or words. The noun changes its form to indicate possessive case. The possessive singular form is derived by adding an *apostrophe* and *s* e.g. *Kwaku’s car, sun’s rays* while the possessive plural is formed by adding an *apostrophe* alone to the *s* plural form of the noun for example, *Susans’ house, boys’ playground*. However, the problem arises when the plural form of the noun does not end with an *s*, the *apostrophe* and *s* are

added as in children's corner, men's shoes. The possessive plural is formed by adding an apostrophe and s to the last element of the compound noun by an apostrophe plus s, for example, *sister-in-law's children, the President of Sierra Leone's directive.*

10.6 Pronouns

A pronoun is a word used instead of a noun. The pronoun changes its form according to its use in the sentence much more frequently than the noun. There are different types of pronouns according to the way they designate the nouns for which they stand.

There are personal pronouns e.g. *I, you, she, they, it, me, him, etc.*; demonstrative pronouns e.g. *this, that, these, and those*; interrogative pronouns e.g. *who, which, whom, whose* and *that*; relative pronouns e.g. *who, which, that, whoever, whichever, whatever, etc.*; indefinite pronouns such as *everyone, everybody, one, none, anyone somebody, etc.*; compound personal pronouns such as *myself, itself, himself, herself, oneself, etc.* and reciprocal pronouns e.g. *each other, one another.*

As in the case of nouns, pronouns have problems of number and case. The problem of number affects personal, relative and indefinite pronouns. Since the major function of a pronoun is to take the place of a noun, it must, therefore agree in number with the noun that it represents. The problem of agreement sometimes occur when a collective noun is considered as either singular or plural. This problem can be solved by making the verb to agree with the noun and the antecedent reflecting the same number, e.g. **The team is proud of its last outing.** Also when two or more singular antecedents are joined together by *or* or *nor*, the pronoun and the verb must be in the singular, e.g. **Either Jack or Jill is expected to lead the group;** whereas if they are joined by 'and', the pronoun and the verb must be in the plural e.g. **Jack and Jill are leading the group.** But when two or more singular and plural antecedents are joined by *or* or *nor*, the pronoun and the verb must agree with the nearer, for instance, **Neither Kofi nor his brothers listen with rapt attention during the lecture.**

The relative pronoun assumes the number of the noun or pronoun to which it refers and, therefore, must take either a singular or plural verb accordingly, e.g. There are many young men *who are* afraid of joining the army. Indefinite pronouns which have no expressed antecedents are usually regarded as singular or plural depending on the way they are used and meaning. Therefore, any pronoun having an indefinite pronoun as antecedent should agree with it in number, e.g. **Each of the girls in the class took her studies seriously**

Case in the pronoun, as in the case of noun, indicates a change in the form of the pronoun according to its use in the sentence. Personal, relative and interrogative pronouns have forms to indicate nominative, possessive and objective cases. For example, when it is used as the subject of a verb, the personal pronoun is in the nominative case: **She was told they were all on holidays**; when used as the possessive, adjective, the personal pronoun takes the possessive case: **The bucket is hers**, when it is used as the direct or indirect object of the verb, the personal pronoun is in the objective case: **The thunder hit him on the head.** (direct), **The lecturer gave me another opportunity.** (indirect)

10.7 Verbs

A verb is a word that expresses action or state of being. It is also a word or group of words that states action, being or state of being. Its form in the sentence changes depending on the nature of its noun (person and number: who and how many people are involved in the action e.g. I eat/she eats /they eat; tense: when the action took place; voice: whether *active* or *passive*-e.g. it ate/it was eaten; mood: whether *indicative*, *subjunctive* or *imperative*-e.g. I eat /That I eat... / Eat!). The verb is the most complicated word class/part of speech. A complete analysis of its forms and shades of meanings would require a book on itself. The following treatment, with special reference to troublesome areas of verb usage, should give anyone the confidence to use the verb correctly.

10.7.1 Types of Verbs

There are four kinds of verbs according to their function.

- a. Transitive verb: this is when the action in the verb proceeds from the subject to the object which receives the action e.g. **The boy kicks the ball.** The subject, *boy*, performs the action upon the object, *ball*. A transitive verb, therefore, takes a direct object.
- b. Intransitive verb – this states the action or condition of being without necessarily giving the receiver of the action specified in the verb, e.g. **The sun shines.** Intransitive verb, therefore, does not take a direct object.
- c. Linking verb – this serves as a link between the subject and its complement. A linking verb is intransitive by nature. The principal linking verb is ‘to be’. Others are ‘seem’, ‘taste’, ‘appear’, ‘become’, ‘feel’, ‘get’, etc. Linking verb is incomplete in itself without a complement, e.g. **The story seems incredible.**
- d. Auxiliary verb – as the name implies, auxiliary verb helps or assist. Notable examples are

the various forms of *have, can, may, be, shall* and *will*. Others are *must ought* and *do*.

10.7.2 Grammatical properties of verbs

a. **Voice** – There are two voices: *active* and *passive*. The active voice is used when the subject performs the action of the verb while the passive voice is used when the action of the verb is performed on the subject. For example

The school gave the principal a present – active

The principal was given a present by the school – passive

b. **Mood** – This expresses the attitude or thought of the speaker toward action of the verb. There are three moods: indicative mood which is used in making a simple statement of fact; imperative mood which is used for order or command; and subjunctive mood which is used in making a statement that is contrary to fact. Examples:

The sun rises in the east – indicative

Stop! – imperative

I wish I were him – subjunctive

c. **Person and Number** – The verb indicates person and number in the third person of the present tense only. For example:

I laugh – first person

You laugh – second person

He laughs – third person

d. **Tenses** – In some languages, such as English, the point in time at which action takes place is very significant. This is because the form of the verb that is used to describe the action is dictated by its time of occurrence. In contrast, many African languages do not make use of an overt system of tense distinction. There are different forms of tense distinction, though the basic ones are: present, past and future,

(i) Present Tense

The present tense presents the action as taking place at the time of speaking. The present simple tense handles static situations in the present e.g. **He goes**, whereas the present continuous tense expresses *on-going* actions e.g. **He is going**. The present perfect tense indicates that a current action has been completed e.g. **He has gone**.

(ii) Past Tense

The past tense expresses an event that happened prior to the present moment e.g. **I**

went, I saw. The past tense also could be *simple* or *continuous*, e.g. **He went, He was going**. The past perfect tense expresses the completion of a past event before another past event e.g. **He had gone before I arrived**.

(iii) **Future Tense**

The future tense expresses an event that will take place at a later time than now. Just like its present and past counterparts, the future tense could be simple e.g. *I will go* or continuous e.g. **He will be going** or perfect e.g. **He will have gone**

10.8 Adjectives

An adjective is a word that qualifies or modifies a noun or a pronoun. This qualification or modification may be done at three different levels: simple e.g. *handsome, simple*, comparative e.g. *more handsome, simpler* and superlative e.g. *most handsome, simplest*. For example

He is an old man - simple

Kemi is fatter than Kofi – comparative

This is the sweetest apple I have ever eaten – superlative

A few adjectives, however, have irregular comparatives and superlatives, e.g. bad, worse, worst; good, better, best; may, more, most; little, less/lesser, least, etc.

In addition, some adjectives have typical endings like *-al* actual, general; *-ful* useful, colourful; *-ish* childish, foolish; *-ic* allergic, nonsensical; *-like* manlike, warlike; *-less* senseless, speechless; *-ous* generous, marvellous; *-some* handsome, troublesome, etc.

In many languages, there is an agreement between the adjective and the noun or pronoun it qualifies, which may necessitate a change in the form of the adjective, Examples from French: un stylo *blanc* "a whitepen"; une maison *blanche* "a white house"

An adjective does not pose a problem to the learner of English language because it does not change the form according to its function in the sentence.

ILLUSTRATION 10.1

In the passage below, adjectives (e.g. *greedy, innocent, so-called, oppressive, new, excessive, polygamous, insatiable, and vacant*), contribute immensely to the development of the story line:

A greedy landlord once assembled his innocent neighbours in order to challenge a so-called oppressive law recently promulgated by the Local Government Council. The new law was aimed at curbing

excessive accumulation of wealth by limiting each inhabitant to the ownership of one plot of land only. As a matter of fact, the greedy landlord already had fifteen houses—each registered in the name of a member of his polygamous family. Yet, he had his insatiable eyes on the vacant plot of land adjacent to the central market—a shopping complex built on it could fetch a handsome reward!

10.9 Adverbs

An adverb is a word that qualifies or modifies a verb (e.g. She danced *fast*), an adjective (He was *rather* rude), or another adverb (She danced *very* fast). It is used to indicate place or direction (e.g. *where*), degree (e.g. *too* much), manner (e.g. *consequently*) and belief or doubt (e.g. *perhaps*)

There are two types of adverbs: original such as *soon, there, here, very, often, now*, etc. and derived such as *badly* derived from *bad*, *clockwise* derived from *clock*, *dangerously* from *dangerous*, etc.

Adverbs also have different types according to meaning

- Adverbs of place e.g. *here, there, up, down, nowhere*, etc.
- Adverb of manner such as *well, gracefully, joyfully*, etc.
- Adverb of time e.g. *always, briefly, now*, etc.
- Adverb of degree such as *very, hardly, extremely*, etc.

As in the case of Adjectives, Adverbs have comparative and superlative forms. For example: *soon, sooner, soonest, near, nearer, nearest; badly, worse, worst*, etc.

The comparative form of the adverb should be used, like that of the adjective too, when comparing two situations, e.g. Kwame is *more* fashionable than Ibrahim. It must be noted that there are words which may be either adjectives or adverbs, depending on their function in the sentence. For instance

- The man went into a *far* country – adjective
- How *far* is Lagos to Dakar? – adverb
- A *just* judge is always impartial – adjective
- He had *just* arrived when the rain started falling - adverb
- He gave him a *hard* blow on the face – adjective
- You must try *hard* to pass this examination – adverb

The adverb is very mobile. In other words, the adverb can occur at the initial, middle or final position in a sentence, e.g.

- Probably, he can do the job – initial

- He can probably do the job – middle
- He can do the job probably - final

10.10 Prepositions

A preposition is a word that combines with a noun or pronoun to show relationship between two entities. For example: “*on the table,*” “*under his pillow*” “*by the river side,*” “*inside their room,*”etc.

The preposition constitutes a closed word class. There are simple or complex prepositions. For example

- *at, by, for, from, on, along, below during, except, between, with, up,* etc. are simple prepositions.
- *in front of, by means of, in addition to, out of, with regard to, in spite of, by virtue of, in accordance with, because of,* etc. are complex prepositions

Usually, the preposition should be placed in between the two nouns or pronouns it links, e.g. He is reading *in* the library.

10.11 Conjunctions

A conjunction is a word that joins sentences, clauses, phrases, words; or even paragraphs. Like the preposition, the conjunction constitutes another closed word class. It can also be divided into simple and complex, according to form. For instance

- *and, since, but, if, that, before, if,* etc. are simple conjunctions.
- *in case, as if, as long as, so that, as soon as* are complex conjunctions.

Conjunctions can also be classified as either coordinating or subordinating. Coordinating conjunctions are seven in number: *and, but, or, for, nor, so* and *yet*

‘*And*’ - used to join independent clauses e.g. **Joan and I.** ‘*But*’ - used to join things that are different and contrasting e.g. *She is not good looking but she is pleasant.* ‘*Or*’ - used to make a choice between two things, e.g. **Do you prefer tea or coffee?** ‘*For*’ - used to give reason, proof or explanation, e.g. **Adanini could not attend the lecture for he took ill suddenly.** *Nor, so* and *yet* are also used to give reasons.

Subordinate conjunctions join clauses that are not equal in status. The most common subordinate conjunctions are *as because, since, when, where, why, while, although, though, until, in order that, except that,* etc.

In addition to coordinating and subordinating conjunctions, there are correlative conjunctions. Examples are *both...and*, *not only...but also*; *neither...nor*; *either...or* and *whether...or*. It is necessary to note that correlative conjunctions are used in place of coordinating conjunctions when a greater emphasis is desired, e.g.

The pen you are looking for is *either* on your table *or* on the shelf in the library.

***Neither* you *nor* I would attend the birthday party.**

ILLUSTRATION 10.2

Consider the logical reasoning portrayed by the use of conjunctions (*although, what is more* and *as a consequence*), in the following passage:

With the advance literacy the difference between written and unwritten languages became more conspicuous and more relevant for a greater number of people; for to become literate implied for speakers of unwritten languages to acquire a second language. Although this had been quite normal in societies with restricted literacy, the ideas of equality, democracy and universal schooling, and the proliferation of the politics of identity have lent credence to the notion that acquiring literacy in a second language is an undue disadvantage. What is more, as long as there is a visible difference between written and unwritten languages, the politically correct assertion of the equality of all languages is implausible to any one but linguists, and the demand that no one be discriminated against on the basis of language remains unfeasible. As a consequence, many unwritten languages have been reduced to writing in modern times.

(Culled from Florian Coulmas: *Sociolinguistics*, 2005, p. 209)

10.12 Interjections

Generally, interjections perform no grammatical function. An interjection expresses emotions like surprise, joy, pain, pleasure, disbelief, etc. Some of the common ones are: *wow*, *hey*, *oh*, *eh*, *ugh*, *yeah*, *alas*, etc.

***Wow*, isn't this wonderful?**

***Oh*, sorry about that, I should have known better.**

***Ugh*, this site is horrible!**

10.13 PHRASES

A phrase is a group of word. It is a higher level of grammatical description to the word class level and a lower level to the grammatical description of the clause or the sentence. It has its internal structure and it serves as a constituent of sentence. It does not contain a subject and verb. There are five types of phrases: noun phrase, adjectival phrase, verb phrase, adverb phrase and prepositional phrase. A phrase is named by the word class/part of speech to which its most important element belongs to. For example, **We all like *fried plantain*.**

10.13.1 Noun Phrase

A noun phrase has a noun as its head e.g. *The man behind the wheel; the beautiful shrub in the garden; The aged man.* A noun phrase has three elements: the head, determiner and modifier.

The head is usually a noun or a pronoun, e.g. ***The boys are here***; or an adjective, e.g. ***The rich also cry***; or realised by a participle or by a numeral, e.g. ***Her driving is amateurish, Those two should be enough.***

The determiner in a noun phrase is realised by indefinite /definite article, e.g. *half a bag, both of them*; possessive pronoun, e.g. *Ade's car, my umbrella, his hat*; demonstrative pronoun, e.g. ***This, those, that; numerals***, e.g. *one of you, seventh hour, hundred meters.*

The modifier can be realised by an adjectival phrase, adverbial phrase, a noun phrase and prepositional phrase, e.g. *as old as her mother* (adjectival), *then senator* (adverbial), *the local government chairman* (noun), *will you be able to give a talk on*

10.13.2 Adjectival Phrase

An adjectival phrase is a phrase that has an adjective as its head. For example, the boy is very *courageous*. There are two elements in an adjectival phrase – *the head* and *the modifier* e.g. *very useful*. Here, 'useful' is the head while 'very' is the modifier. The modifier in adjectival phrase may be before the head or after it, e.g. ***He must be extremely brave*** (before); ***The student is not brave enough to confront the lecturer*** (after) An adjectival **phrase the functions** of a modifier and the head in a noun phrase, e.g. an *extremely interesting* excursion (modifier), ***The young shall grow*** (head of a noun phrase).

An adverbial phrase is a phrase that has an adverb as its head, e.g. rather *dangerously*. There two elements in the structure of an adverbial phrase: the head and the modifier, e. g. *lessdangerously*– Here 'less' is a modifier while 'dangerously' is the head. The main function of an adverbial

phrase is that of pre-modifier and post modifier in the internal structure of other phrases and an adverbial in clauses and sentences. For example: *almost very* sure (adjectival phrase; *somewhat special* (adverbial phrase); *mostly* in the evenings (prepositional phrase); *the then* mandate (noun phrase).

10.13.3 Verb Phrase

A verb phrase is a phrase that functions as the main verb in the sentence e.g. *I have finished* the job. There are two elements in the structure of the verb phrase: lexical verb and an auxiliary verb, e. g. **He has finished his assignment** – ‘finished’ is the lexical (main) verb and ‘has’ is the auxiliary verb. There may be more than one auxiliary verb in a verb phrase, e. g. **She has been looking for you; You may have been waiting for him; James may not have been written.** The features of the verb phrase had been discussed under Verb as a word class in terms of aspect , voice and mood.

10.13.4 Prepositional Phrase

A prepositional phrase is a phrase that has a preposition in it, e. g. **The troublesome student kicked the ball over the fence**– ‘over’ is the preposition in the prepositional phrase ‘over the fence.’ There are also two elements in a prepositional phrase: prepositional and prepositional complement, e. g. **He locked the boy inside the room.** ‘inside’ is the preposition while ‘the room’ is the prepositional complement. The prepositional, however, can be more than one word, e.g. *because of, according to, on account of, in addition to, etc.*

10.14 CLAUSES

There are situation where a sentence functions in the structure of another sentence or in the structure of a phrase, e. g. **That he failed the examination was not a surprise** or **This is the officer that came to arrest my brother.** ‘*That he failed the examination*’ and ‘*that came to arrest my brother*’ are examples of clauses. When they appear in sentences like this, they can either be independent (main) or dependent (subordinate) e. g. **I will come to see you when it is convenient for me.** ‘**I will come to see you**’ (independent) and *when it is convenient for me* (dependent) . There are three types of subordinate/dependent clause.

10.14.1 Noun clause

This type of subordinate noun clause is introduced by *why, how, whether* or *what*. For example,

Why he did that baffled everybody; How the money got lost nobody could say, Whether to go now or later is your headache; What to do with the money is entirely yours.

10.14.2 Adjectival clause

A subordinate adjectival clause is of two kinds. It is either restrictive where the information given is necessary for understanding the noun it describes, e. g. **The man *who burnt the shop* has been arrested by the police**; or non-restrictive, the information given if omitted, will not affect the meaning of the sentence, e. g. **The man, *who burnt the shop*, has been arrested by the police**. The difference between a restrictive and a non-restrictive adjectival clause is that non-restrictive adjectival clause is always usually separated by commas.

10.14.3 Adverbial clause

A subordinate adverbial clause is finite, non-finite or verb-less, e.g

If he did that, something must be wrong with him (finite)

To say the truth, he was actually wrong (non-finite)

Unable to make her target, she was sacked (verb-less)

There are eight kinds of adverbial clause

- a. Adverbial clause of time – introduced by words such as *before, when, after, since*, etc. e. g. ***When the road is clear* I will set out on the journey**
- b. Adverbial clause of comparison – introduced by words like *as ... as, than*, e. g. **He is not *as bad as* you have painted him.**
- c. Adverbial clause of concession – introduced by words like *even if, although, though*, e. g. **The director would not have given him the money *even if* he had.**
- d. Adverbial clause of condition – introduced by words such as *unless, in case, provided (that), if*, e. g. ***If the coach had known* she would not have included her name in the team.**
- e. Adverbial clause of degree/result – introduced by words such as *so ... that, as fast as*, e. g. **I wonder why he could not walk *as fast as* others.**
- f. Adverbial clause of purpose – introduced by words like *so that, in order that, that*, e. g. **She worked all day and night *so that* she can earn extra wages**
- g. Adverbial clause of manner – introduced by words such as *as if, as though*, e. g. **The athlete ran *as if* he was being pursued.**

- h. Adverbial clause of reason/cause – introduced by words like *as, that, in as much as, because*, e. g. **The father was angry with his son because he told him a lie.**

10.15 THE SENTENCE

The next syntactic unit above the clause is the sentence. A sentence is a group of words, bound together by a rule or rules in order to express an idea, opinion or thought. Sentences have components and are classified according to structure and intention. The components of a sentence are the subject (S), and a predicator (P); it often has a complement (C) and an adjunct (A) as well. According to structure, a sentence can be simple, compound, complex (and, at times, compound-complex) And according to intention, a sentence is either declarative, interrogative, imperative or exclamatory.

10.15.1 Components of a Sentence

a. The Subject

The subject can be a noun, a pronoun or a noun (nominal) group. It comes before the predicator and has number concord with the predicator. For example

- i. **Cows eat** – (*Cows* is the subject (noun), *eat* is the predicator; both agree in terms of number)
- ii. **He swims** – (*He* is the subject (pronoun); *swims* is the predicator; both agree in terms of number)
- iii. **The books recommended by the Institute are** – (*The books recommended by the Institute* is the subject (nominal group), **are** is the predicator; both agree in terms of number)

b. The Predicator

The predicator is the verb in the sentence. It can be a simple verb or a verbal group. It follows the subject and in number concord with the subject. It precedes the complement, if there is any in the sentence. For example

- i. **He cries** - (*cries* is the predicator (simple verb), *He* is the subject; both agree in terms of number; there is no complement)
- ii. **The driver might have been attacked** – (*might have been attacked* (verbal group) is the predicator, *The driver* is the subject; no complement)

- iii. **They didn't do it** – (*didn't do* is the predicator (verbal group), *They* is the subject and *it* is the complement)

c. Complement

The complement comes after the predicator. It can be a noun, a pronoun or a noun (nominal) group. Usually, it has no concord with both subject and predicator. For example

- i. **He was considered a fool** – (*a fool* is the complement, *was considered* is the predicator, *He* is the subject)
- ii. **The guests at the party ate several pieces of meat** – (*several pieces of meat* (nominal group) *is* the complement, *ate* is the predicator, *The guests at the party* (nominal group) *is* the subject)

d. Adjunct

The adjunct is an optional component in a sentence. When it is present in a sentence, it comes after the complement. It can be in a sentence even if there is no complement. It can be a simple adverb, an adverbial or prepositional phrase. It is mobile, i. e. it can occur at different places in the sentence. For example

- i. **The professor put the reading glasses on the shelf** - (*on the shelf*' is the adjunct)
- ii. **He is working in the garden** - (*'in the garden*' is the adjunct; the sentence has no complement)
- iii. **Anxiously, he was waiting for the result** - (there are two adjuncts in this sentence – '*anxiously*' and '*for the result*')
- iv. **I have never taken alcohol** - (*'never*' is the adjunct, sandwiched between the verb phrase, '*have taken*')

10.15.2 Classification of sentence by structure

A sentence is simple, compound and complex (and compound-complex) by structure.

a. Simple Sentence

A simple sentence is one in which the user of language expresses an idea through the use of an uncomplicated sentence structure (e.g. **I am a student: He eats regularly**).

b. **Compound Sentence**

A compound sentence is one in which two or more sentences have been coordinated. Each of the two coordinated sentence can stand in its own as a complete sentence. (e.g. **You can read your book or watch the football match.**)

c. **Complex Sentence**

A complex sentence is one in which the several parts making up the sentence may not be easily decomposed. A complex sentence contains subordination. (e.g. **You should be able to remember where you have seen him before.**)

d. **Compound-complex Sentence**

A compound-complex sentence contains at least two independent clauses and at least on dependent clause, (e. g. **He was advised to see the doctor now that he has the money to pay or he should risk going later when he will not be sure that he will meet the doctor.**)

10.15.3 Classification of sentence by intention

A sentence is either declarative, interrogative, imperative or exclamatory by intention.

a. **Declarative Sentence**

A declarative sentence makes a statement. e. g. **The food is very delicious**

b. **Interrogative Sentence**

An interrogative sentence asks a question and is normally characterised by a reversal of the normal order of the subject and verb. e. g. **Have you been able to submit your assignment?** It can also begin with WH-word, e. g. **Who are you looking for?**

c. **Imperative Sentence**

An imperative sentence expresses a command, or an entreaty and is characterised by the verb in the imperative mood, e. g. **Send me your photograph, please.**

d. **Exclamatory Sentence**

An exclamatory sentence conveys a strong emotion. It is introduced by phrases beginning with the word **How** or **What**. Its terminal punctuation is the exclamatory mark (!), e. g. **What a mess! How beautiful is the scenery!**

10.16 COMMON ERRORS IN SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

Errors are enduring mistakes which people make, sometimes without being aware that something is a miss in the speech act. Where as a mistake may be corrected by the same person that has committed it, errors are seldom corrected because listeners do not usually want to embarrass the speaker and the speaker is invariably unaware of his or her fault. Some of the commonest errors involve: mixture mix-up of Subject and Object, mixture of singular and plural forms, multiple application of rules, misuse of word-formation rules and over-generalization.

10.16.1 Mixture of tenses

For all speakers of English, whether first (L1) or second (L2) language speakers, tense is an aspect of grammar to which much attention must be paid. In written English, in particular, the mixture of tenses should be avoided. For example

He said he usually comes - wrong

He said he usually came - right

10.16.2 Mix-up of Subject and Object

The mix-up of subject and object is a common error, especially committed by L2 users of English.

As a Nigerian, the country should honour him - wrong

As a Nigerian, he should be honoured by the country – right

He prayed for her which is good - wrong

It is good that he prayed for her - right

10.16.3 Mixture of singular and plural forms

Many people tend to use singular and plural forms of words indiscriminately. When a noun reflects an entire group of persons or things, the group is taken as an entity.

The team, made up of officials and players, arrive on schedule - wrong

The team, made up of officials and players, arrives on schedule – right

One of them are late- wrong

One of them is late - right

Nobody are here - wrong

All of them are here! - right

10.16.4 Multiple applications of rules.

Sometimes, there are multiple ways of marking a particular grammatical form. Both examples below are correct, although the plural form-of the noun has been arrived at differently in each case:

***Ships* are beautiful to behold** - wrong

***Sheep* are easy to rear.**

However, some users of English erroneously apply two rules that essentially perform the same function. The plural formation rule that gives the plural the same form as the singular and the rule that allows 's' to be added to the singular form in order to generate the plural have been applied in this example:

Sheeps are easy to rear - wrong

Sheep are easy to rear - right

Cases of multiple applications of rules leading to ungrammatical expressions are particularly rampant in the use of adjectives (comparative or superlative) as in these examples:

He is *more greater* than his father - wrong

He is *greater* than his father - right

God lives in the *most highest* heavens – wrong

God lives in the *highest* heavens - right

10.16.5 Misuse of word-formation rules

Some users of English sometimes use word-formation rules wrongly. This practice has the tendency of generating grammatically incorrect sentences.

He found a scholarship scheme to take care of his desires - wrong

He finds a scholarship scheme to take care of his desires - right

He founded a scholarship scheme to take care of his desires - wrong

He founds a scholarship scheme to take care of his desires - right

10.16.6 Over-generalization

Errors of concord also occur when people over-generalize concord rules. For instance, there is a concord rule that makes it obligatory for the verb to be in the past tense because of the adverb *yesterday*.

The spaceship blasted of yesterday.

Nevertheless, the word formation rule that correctly generated the example above has been over-generalized in the sentence below.

The astronaut broadcasted from space.

10.16.7 Concord

In grammar, the term, concord, refers to the agreement between or among different parts of a sentence. An adjustment in the structure or form of a part of the sentence may trigger an adjustment in the structure or form of another part of the sentence. For examples:

The *boy* comes regularly.

The *boys* come regularly.

The *boy* came *yesterday*

10.16.8 Faulty Parallelism

This has to do with expressing the elements of the sentence that are of equal importance by parallel grammatical constructions. When this is not done, the sentence will be guilty of faulty parallelism, e. g.

The flowers were *beautiful and of great variety*. - wrong

The flowers were *of great beauty and variety*. – right

10.16.9 Misplaced Modifiers

In the sentence, modifiers are expected to be placed as near as possible to the word/words which they modify, e. g.

We were told that he was killed *by telephone* - wrong

We were told *by telephone* that he was killed - right

10.16.10 Dangling Modifiers

A dangling modifier occurs when an element in the sentence, usually a participial phrase, has nothing to modify, e. g.

***Walking round the school*, the Administrator's office was seen - wrong**

***As we walked round the school*, the Administrator's office was seen – right**

10.16.11 Incomplete or Illogical comparisons

Comparisons should be free of illogicality, especially when sentences are written. The comparisons should also be complete, devoid of any ellipsis, e. g.

John is *better than any student in his class* - wrong

John is *better than any other student in his class* - right

10.16.12 Split Infinitives

The infinitive is a single grammatical unit, hence it should not be separated or be split, e. g.

He used to *punctually attend lectures* - wrong

He used to *attend lectures punctually* - right

10.16.13 Faulty subordination

Faulty subordination occurs when the most important idea of a sentence is not put in the main clause, e. g.

He has just become the CEO of his company when he had an accident – wrong

He had an accident just as he became the CEO of his company–right

10.17 SENTENCE EFFECTIVENESS

So far, we have been explaining how sentences are made up of components such as words, phrases and clauses in certain grammatical patterns. Some common violations of these structural patterns have also been touched. In essence, a badly constructed sentence can hardly be effective. For sentences to be effective, however, they must follow certain principles. These principles are *variety*, *emphasis* and *logic*.

10.17.1 Variety

Sentences can be ineffective as a result of monotony. This is because, in most cases, the sentences written are of the same pattern and type. Variety can be achieved through sentence length, subordination, word order, command/question/exclamation, and use of parenthesis.

- a. **Variety through sentence length** – though there is no single ideal sentence length, the sentence must be long enough to cover the subject matter reflecting the thought and meaning that it is conveying. In other words, there should be a mixture of simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences in our writing. For example

The best way of keeping notes is to keep all notes on any given topic together, regardless of the source of the information. In order to do this best, the

student will need a loose-leaf folder or binder rather than a bound notebook, because of the advantage of re-ordering pages, writing or removing them and adding new material. If for some reason the student cannot keep his notes in a loose-leaf folder or binder, he should, at least, make certain that he has a separate bound notebook for each of his courses, or each area in which he intends to take notes.

(Learn How to Study – Derek Rowntree, page 106)

b. Variety through Subordination

Variety is achieved through the use of modifying subordinate phrases or clauses instead of having different sentences to express the same idea, e. g.

Many candidates never have the time to study. Yet they complain of failing their examination. Such candidates have no right to complain - wrong

Candidates who never had the time to study have no right to complain about failing their examination - right

c. Variety through Word Order

The usual order of the English sentence is subject-verb-object. When this order is used all the time it creates monotony. This order may be turned to achieve variety.

For example

***Effortlessly, he passed his examination* - Adverb**

***At last, she found who she wants to spend the rest of her life with* - prepositional phrase**

***To drive home his points, the prosecutor called in his witnesses* – verbal phrase**

***As he entered through the gate, his children ran to meet him* - adverbial clause.**

Variation through the use of word order should, however, be used with caution so that meaning and intelligibility may not be lost.

d. Variety through Command, Question, Exclamation

When a command, question or exclamation is used at times, it enables one to achieve

variety. It is used as a means of having varied sentence patterns. For example

Nigeria will be great - declarative

Make Nigeria great.

Will Nigeria be great?

Great Nigeria!

It should, however, be used with caution as excessive use of this may be one look too unnatural.

e. Variety through Parenthesis

Variety may be achieved through the use of parenthesis. The parenthesis is to introduce an interruption in the sentence pattern. The interruption, at times, can be removed without affecting the meaning conveyed by the sentence. For example

Kofi, not Susan, is to be blamed for it.

The king, abdicating his throne, decided to live permanently in exile.

10.17.2 Emphasis

This is when the words in the sentence are ordered in such a way that some parts are more prominent than the others. This can be achieved through position, subordination, parallelism and repetition.

a. Emphasis through Position

One or more elements have greater importance than others when we construct sentences. The important elements are placed in position of prominence. These positions are either at the beginning or at the end of the sentence. For example

In all probability, the team will lose the match

He may achieve his goal eventually.

b. Emphasis through subordination

Subordination is an excellent means of achieving emphasis as well as variety, e. g.

The Registrar spends the whole of the morning hours *attending Council meeting.*

c. Emphasis through Parallelism

Parallelism is the putting similar or contrasting ideas into similar grammatical constructions. In this type of constructions, a phrase is parallel to a phrase, a clause is parallel to a clause, a noun with a noun, etc. For example

Some books are *to be tasted*, others *to be swallowed*, and some few *to be chewed*

and digested. – Francis Bacon

d. Emphasis through Repetition

Repetition of words or phrases enhances the quality of sentences. It is a major device for emphasis. For example

We shall fight on the land, we shall fight on the sea and we shall fight in the air; we shall never surrender.

10.17.3 Logic

The purpose of grammatical rules is to bring logic and order to the spoken and written sentences. This is achieved by making sure that there is logical consistency in subject and voice, verb mood and thought.

a. Logical Consistency in Subject and Voice

Here, the same subject should be maintained throughout the sentence. A shift in the subject will necessarily involve a shift from active to passive voice. For example

In the morning, we went to the farm; in the evening our compound was given a clean sweep. (subject shift from ‘we’ to ‘our’)

In the morning, we went to the farm; in the evening we gave our compound a clean sweep. (subject is consistent)

b. Logical Consistency in Verb Mood

Logical consistency in verb mood is achieved when there is no moving back and forth between the indicative and imperative mood of the verb in the sentence. For example

Measure two cupful of flour and you should mix it with water slowly. (shift from imperative to indicative mood)

Measure two cupful of flour and mix it with water slowly. (consistent)

c. Logical Consistency in Thought

A sentence may be correct grammatically and still it may be unsatisfactory on logical grounds. For example

The members of this class will remember what their teacher did for them for the rest of their life. – illogical

The members of this class will remember what their teacher did for them for the rest of their lives. - logical

10.18 FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Figurative expressions may be generally defined as utterances which are not intended to be given literal meaning. This means that such expressions are not intended to be limited to their surface meanings. Consciously or unconsciously, practically all users of language make use of figurative expressions in one form or another. They constitute a great device in embellishing language. Figurative expressions come in many forms: figures of speech, idioms, parables, proverbs, etc.

10.18.1 Figures of Speech

The language user employing a figure of speech seeks to achieve a specific purpose by transforming the meaning of a source text through any of the following ways: expansion (*see* examples in Type (a) to (h) *below*), a bridgement (*see* example in Type (i) *below*), switch (*see* examples in Type (j) to (p) *below*), or transfer (*see* examples in Types (q) and (r) *below*). Here are definitions and examples of several types of figures of speech:

- (a) **Alliteration:** the repetition of the initial consonant sound of a word, e.g. *pitter-patter went the rain.*
- (b) **Anaphora:** the repetition of the same word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses or verses, e.g. *I have a dream!...I have a dream!* (Martin Luther King)
- (c) **Assonance:** when there is identity or similarity in sound between internal vowels in neighbouring words, e.g. *Tough Tofa will win the election* (Bashir Tofa was a presidential candidate in elections in Nigeria)
- (d) **Hyperbole:** the use of exaggerated terms for emphasis, e.g. *I'm starving!*
- (e) **Onomatopoeia:** the sound of a word suggests its meaning, e.g. *The meow o fa cat is instinctive.*
- (f) **Paradox:** a statement that appears to contradict itself, e.g. *He is rich, but poor.*
- (g) **Pun:** a play on words, sometimes on different senses of the same word, e.g. *She sells sea shell at the sea shore.*
- (h) **Synecdoche:** using a part to represent a whole or a whole to represent a part, e.g. *Nigeria will win the 2012 World Cup.*

- (i) **Understatement:** deliberately making a situation seem less important or serious than it really is e.g. *Terrorism may pose a threat to the survival of Nigeria as a nation.*
- (j) **Antithesis:** the juxtaposition of contrasting ideas, e.g. *It was the best of times, it was the worst of times* .(Charles Dickens: *A Tale of Two Cities*).
- (k) **Apostrophe:** having a break in a discourse in order to address some absent person or thing, some abstract quality, an inanimate object or a non-existent character,e.g. *Hello darkness, my old friend, I've come to talk to you again.*(Paul Simon).
- (l) **Euphemism:** substitution of an inoffensive term for one considered offensively explicit, e.g. *He passed away in his sleep.*
- (m) **Irony:** use of a word to convey the opposite of its original meaning, *He experienced the sweet taste of defeat.*
- (n) **Metaphor:** implied comparison between two dissimilar things that actually have something in common, e.g. *Life is ... a journey, a dance, a dream.*
- (o) **Metonymy:** substituting a phrase with another with which it is closely associated, e.g.*She is a home-maker.*
- (p) **Oxymoron:** an expression in which contradictory terms appear side by side, e.g. *He believes in dictatorial democracy.*
- (q) **Personification:** giving human qualities or abilities to an inanimate or abstract object, e.g. *Hello darkness, my old friend, I've come to talk to you again.* (Paul Simon).
- (r) **Simile:** drawing a parallel between two things or people that are fundamentally dissimilar, e.g. *Some people still believe that house flies in Maiduguri are as big as cockroaches.*

10.18.2 Idioms

An idiom is a figurative expression that is fixed in nature and whose meaning cannot be deduced from the words that make it up, e.g. *It rained cats and dogs.*

10.18.3 Parables

Parables are simple (usually, short) stories narrated in order to illustrate a moral or spiritual

lesson, e.g. *The parable of the ten virgins*. (The Holy Bible).

10.18.4 Proverbs

A proverb is a wise saying, which users of a language agree contains fundamental truth or advice, e.g. *A stitch in time saves nine*. In certain cultures, it is usual to enrich one's speech with a proverb before a major assertion is made. This communicative device assures the audience that the speaker is not dependent on his/her personal wisdom alone, but on that of the entire community.

10.19 MECHANICS

Mechanics are various devices at the disposal of a writer to assist the reader in deciphering a text. These include punctuation, use of italics, capitalisation, abbreviations and spelling and paragraphing.

10.19.1 Punctuation

Punctuation is a signal used in writing to guide the reader. Just as road signs guide a driver as to when to accelerate or slow down, punctuations indicate when to pause what to read in a breadth, when to raise the voice, etc.

10.19.2 Common Punctuation Marks

Common punctuation marks include comma, fullstop, semi-colon, colon, quotation marks, apostrophe, dash and dots. The appropriate use of each one of them embellishes the quality of a text.

10.19.2.1 Comma

The comma (,) is the punctuation mark used to indicate a pause, especially to mark off a breath-group, that is, a sequence of words that should be uttered together in one breath. A part of a sentence may be isolated from the rest of the sentence by two commas—one at the beginning, the other at the end of the segment, as in the sentence: **The man, though old, is irresponsible**. However, the same effect may be achieved through the use of a single comma as in: **The man is irresponsible, although he is old**, where the additional information is placed at the end rather than in the middle of the main idea being put forward.

10.19.2.2 Full Stop

A full stop, (.), marks the end of a statement or an abbreviation. It is associated with a much

longer pause than the comma indicates no admittance of any other word into the sentence. In other words, it sets the boundary between the sentence, at the end of which it stands, and the rest of the text.

10.19.2.3 Semi-colon

The semi-colon (;), is another punctuation mark associated with a pause. In this case, the pause is longer than that of a comma, but not as long as that of a full stop. *Example: He went forward; she looked sideways.*

10.19.2.4 Colon

The colon (:), is a punctuation mark placed at the beginning of an enumeration of a list of items, a quotation, or an explanation. *Example: The following are members of the group: Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary.*

10.19.2.5 Quotation Marks

In order to give a word-for-word rendition of a person's speech, quotation marks ('.....' or ".....") are used. A pair of marks, one at the beginning and the other at the end, is used for this purpose. *Example: He said, "Go away" and she left immediately.*

10.19.2.6 Apostrophe

The apostrophe ('), is used to denote possession (as in: *John's father*, that is, the father that John has) or the omission of letters or numbers (as in: *don't* or *26th February'12*).

10.19.2.7 Dash

The dash (-), is a horizontal stroke whose purpose is to create a space (that is, a slot), into which some missing information may be placed. *Example: She is a hardworker– a true nationalist.*

10.19.2.8 Dots/Ellipsis

Dots (...), are a series of round marks or spots (usually three in number) used to indicate suspense. It is also called ellipsis. This means that some information or material has been deliberately withheld. *Example: She looked at him straight in the face and...*

10.19.2.9 ExclamationMark

The exclamation mark (!), is used to indicate intense emotion. For instance, when giving a command, the exclamation mark placed at the end of the declaration ensures that the tense

emotion involved is indicated. Example: “**Go!**” he said.

10.19.2.10 Question Mark

The question mark (?) is used after an interrogative sentence. It can also be used in a question that does not require an answer – this is called rhetorical question. For example:
Will you come along with me to the party? Can we say we are better off than our forefathers?

10.19.2.11 Hyphen

Hyphen (-) is used to form compound words e. g. show-case; to form compound adjectives e. g. up-to-date; to indicate a break of words at the end of a line which continues on the next line e. g. counterpart (**counter – part**); countable (**count – able**)

10.20 Use of Italics

Italics are used for titles of books, magazines, journals newspapers and other published works. For example: *A Man of the People* by Chinua Achebe, *Newswatch*, *The Daily Times*, etc. It is also used for foreign words or phrases e. g. *addendum*, *alumnus*, *persona non grata*, etc.

10.21 Capitalisation

Capital letters are used for the first word of every sentence and the first word of every line of poetry e. g. *The only honourable thing to do is to go and apologise.* Capital letter is used for proper names and derivatives of proper names e. g. **Danladi** (name of a person), **Ghana** (name of a country), **Sierra Leonean** (derivative from Sierra Leone). It is also used for all organisations such as **West African Examinations Council**, **Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria**, **United Nations Organisation**, **Catholic**, etc. It is used to begin titles like **Judge**, **Major-General**, **Inspector General**; day of the week or month, e. g. **Monday**, **Tuesday**, **Wednesday**, etc.; races, ethnic groups and languages e. g. **African**, **Fulani**, **French**, etc.

10.22 Abbreviations

Abbreviations are used for titles before proper names e. g. **Mr.**, **Mrs.**, **Dr.**, **Hon.**, **Col.**, **Rev.**, etc. They are used for titles after proper names e. g. **John Johnson**, Ph.D, Matthew **Danqua** Esq., Lucy May, D. Litt., etc. They are used for certain words in addresses footnotes, bibliographies e.g. **St.** (for Street), **p.** (for page), **pp.** (for pages), **vol.**, **op. cit.**, **ibid.** etc. They are used for governmental agencies and institutions e.g. **DSS**, **UNESCO**, **ILO**, **CIA**, etc.

10.23 SUMMARY

Grammar has been shown to be the entirety of rules that govern the acceptability of an utterance in a language. In this chapter, the vocabulary, parts of speech and tense distinction have been identified as playing significant roles in ensuring the adequacy of grammar. The chapter also explored the use of punctuation marks and some common errors committed by the users of English. Finally, it touched on various figures of speech used in English.

10.24 END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

10.24.1 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. Which of the following best illustrates the sentence structure in English?
 - A. Simple, compound and complex
 - B. Simple only
 - C. Compound only
 - D. Complex only
 - E. Complex, Simple or compound

2. ONE of the following is basic tense distinction
 - A. Past and future only
 - B. Present and future only
 - C. Past and present only
 - D. Past, present and perfect
 - E. Present, past and future

3. Which **ONE** of the following best defines a verb?
 - A. An action word
 - B. The name of a person or thing
 - C. A word that represents a noun
 - D. A word that represents an adverb
 - E. A word denoting exclamation

4. ONE of the following is **NOT** a case when analysing nouns
 - A. Nominative
 - B. Predictive
 - C. Objective
 - D. Genitive
 - E. Possessive

5. Which of the following is NOT a figure of speech?
 - A. Hyperbole
 - B. Anaphora
 - C. Alliteration
 - D. Onomatopoeia
 - E. Idiom

10.24.2 SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS(SAQ)

1. The substitution of an otherwise “offensive” word with another which is considered inoffensive is called.....
2. An expression containing contradictory terms that appear side-by-side is said to be.....
3. The word in *italics* in the sentence: He is a **big** boy, is a (n).....
4. Whereas basic vocabulary is simple,.....vocabulary is complex in nature.
5. An adverb qualifies a(n)..... or another adverb.

10.24.3 ESSAY

1. Discuss the TWO basic types of vocabulary.
2. Explain briefly with, TWO examples each, the THREE basic types of sentence structure.
3. Identify and discuss briefly ANY three types of tense distinction.

10.25 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

10.25.1 SOLUTION TO MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. A
2. E
3. A
4. B
5. E

10.25.2 SOLUTION TO SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. euphemism
2. oxymoron
3. adjective
4. advanced
5. verb

10.25.3 SOLUTIONS TO ESSAY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

A vocabulary is an assemblage of all the expressions at the disposal of an individual or a group of people. The vocabulary may be basic or advanced.

The basic vocabulary in a language includes all words and expressions that are needed for an individual to minimally function in a language. Words, such as *eye, nose, leg, he, use, die, go, 'come, eat*, etc. are common everyday words that the average user of any language would use from time to time.

Advanced vocabulary is more complex than basic vocabulary in the sense that where as the latter is needed for routine commonplace experience, the former is restricted in its accessibility and use. Complex ideas or concept usually require advanced vocabulary in order to be fully expressed. It is, therefore, not surprising that advanced vocabulary demands greater effort, on the part of the user, for its cultivation and development.

QUESTIONS 2

The major types of sentence structure are: simple, compound and complex. A simple sentence is one in which the user of language expresses an idea through the use of an uncomplicated sentence structure (e.g. *I am a student: He eats regularly*).

A compound sentence is one in which the sentence may be decomposed into smaller ones (e.g. *He is an intelligent student, but he is also humble*) A complex sentence is one in which the several parts making up the sentence may not be easily decomposed (e.g. *Having subjected himself to public*

scrutiny, the experienced politician won the presidential election at his second attempt)

QUESTION 3

In some languages, such as English, the point in time at which an action takes place is very significant.

This is because the form of the verb that is used to describe the action is dictated by its time of occurrence. In contrast, many African languages do not make use of an overt system of tense distinction. There are different forms of tense distinction, though the basic ones are: present, past and future.

The present tense presents the action as taking place at the time of speaking. The present simple tense handles static situations in the present (e.g. He *goes*), where as the present continuous tense expresses *on-going* actions (e.g. He *is going*). The present perfect tense indicates that a current action has been completed (e.g. He *has gone*).

The past tense expresses an event that happened prior to the present moment (e.g. I *went*, I *saw*). The past tense also could be *simple* or *continuous* (e.g. He *went*, He *was going*). The past perfect tense expresses the completion of a past event before another past event (e.g. He *had gone* before I arrived).

The future tense expresses an event that will take place at a later time than now. Just like its present and past counter parts, the future tense could be simple (e.g. I *will go*) or continuous (e.g. He *will be going*) or perfect (e.g. He *will have gone*)

CHAPTER 11

ESSAY WRITING

11.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to

- identify different types of essays;
- know different methods of writing essays;
- Explore ways of generating ideas for essay writing;
- write good essays.

11.1 INTRODUCTION

An essay is a collection of ideas put together by a writer according to a standard format. Essay writing is designed to test candidates' power of expression, the systematic organisation of their thoughts and their knowledge of mechanical accuracy. There are different types of essays, just as there are different methods of writing them. In this chapter, we consider what is general to essay writing, the types and methods of essay writing, as well as the ways of generating the ideas needed for successfully undertaking the task of essay writing.

11.2 GENERAL CONSIDERATION

In essay writing, consideration is given to four aspects when an essay is being graded. These are; Content, Organisation, Expression and Mechanical Accuracy. In assessing the content of an essay, candidates' approach to the topic, points given on the topic and the relationship between the ideas expressed and the demand of the topic are considered. The content the candidate provided can be either through his personal experience or from a secondary source. He can also resort, purely, to his imagination. As a matter of fact, the candidate that is very imaginative always score well in content.

Organisation has to do with the way and manner the candidate's ideas are conveyed to the reader. It shows the state of mind of the candidate because the more organised his mind during the process of writing, the more this is reflected in his writing. Here,

qualities such as coherence, unity and logical development of ideas are looked for. These are reflected in the sentence structures and paragraphs. The candidate's choice of words should reflect the type of essay and paragraphs should be linked by connectives such as *however, because, on the one hand, so far, in other words, firstly*, etc.

Expression is very important in essay writing. This is where the candidate displays his understanding of the English Language. This involves the choice of appropriate words, sentence arrangement and imaginative use of idioms, figurative expressions and proverbs.

Mechanical accuracy involves the application of grammatical rules in writing. Violation of such rules as punctuations, spellings, use of abbreviations, concord, tenses and so on are looked for. Perhaps many of the mistakes the candidate makes here could have been avoided if he were careful enough to read over what he had written.

At this point, it is necessary to say that different essay topics call for different approaches. In other words, every occasion requires the language appropriate to it i.e. conventional forms, spelling, punctuation and diction. Good arrangement will exhibit a suitable and fascinating opening or what is generally called introduction, good paragraphing through the use of appropriate connectives which link paragraphs. A paragraph can serve as introductory, transitional, emphasising and a concluding paragraph.

It is important to stress the usefulness of an outline in essay writing. Writing a good essay can be likened to a beautiful well-built house. It will be difficult, if not impossible, to build such a house without a solid foundation and a building plan. In like manner, it will be difficult to write a good essay without an outline. An outline serves as a guide during the process of the development of the writing; it is also a safety device in the sense that it will not allow the imagination of the candidate to run wild. Outlines may be classified as formal, topic, sentence and paragraph. There is no hard and fast rule as to which to use, so the candidate can choose any one that will benefit him.

11.3 TYPES OF ESSAY

There are two basic types of essays: simple and long. Most people, who have ever been through school, have at one time or the other, experienced the former; the latter is more professional and requires longer schooling experience. In addition to these, there are three

common types of essays – Narrative, Descriptive and Argumentative.

11.3.1 Simple Essay

A simple essay is one in which the writer treats a relatively easy, straight-forward topic. Both the style and content of a simple essay are accessible to the average native speaker of a language in terms of comprehension. Examples of simple essays may be found in primary as well as secondary school class-work, newspaper, articles, community notice boards, etc. Such topics as “My first day in school,” “My best friend,” can easily be handled as simple essays.

11.3.2 Long Essay

A long essay is essentially formal in nature. In terms of size, it is more voluminous than the simple essay. A long essay usually contains details and some times results of scientific findings, which are presented in support or against specific view points in the essay. Long essay writing may be regarded as simplified version of bookwriting.

11.3.3 Narrative Essay

Of all the different types of essay, it seems narrative essay is the easiest to attempt in any examination. Narrative simply means “narrating, giving an account of any occurrence.” Narration, therefore, involves orderly presentation of a series of events. It varies from plain story-telling, recital of facts to an exciting and hilarious account of an actual incident experienced. Whichever way one looks at narrative writing, ORDERLINESS is its essential characteristic. A good narration should have a witty and captivating beginning, liveliness, realistic situation, originality and suitability of style.

11.3.4 Descriptive Essay

This type of essay is quite different from either narrative or argumentative. This is so because it involves different selection and arrangement of materials. Description involves the use of DETAILS, which must be given. The description may be an object, a person, an animal, a place, a scene, etc. A good and attractive beginning is essential to descriptive writing. The success of any descriptive writing depends on such factors as the amount of details available, the way these details are selected and the way they are

arranged. There are two options in the style of writing the description: pure descriptive form or the elaborate and complex form. With the pure simple form, sometimes the candidate may not be able to write the required number of words and thereby the writing will become bare and uninteresting. The elaborate and complex form is also fraught with danger – the danger of laying emphasis on irrelevant points or facts that may be particularly not essential to the description.

11.3.5 Argumentative Essay

Argumentative essay is different from either Narrative or Descriptive essay. Argumentation involves looking at an issue or topic from a standpoint. Anybody involved in argumentation is expected to SUPPORT or GO AGAINST what the argument is about. There are a few ways open to anybody involved in argumentation. The person supporting or opposing a topic may depend solely on facts and figures, or use examples, explanation, comparisons and contrasts in defending his stand. To avoid a weak and an ineffective argument, the speaker/writer MUST take a definite stand. After this, he can then proceed to give clear, cogent/pungent reasons for the stand he has taken. Taking a stand does not mean one cannot talk about the other side, if only to use such move to puncture the point of the opponent. In writing an argumentative essay, for example if the topic requires stating a problem and offering solutions, what need be done is to first clearly define the problem, identify cause(s) and reasons for the problem before stating how the problem can be solved in terms of recommendations.

11.4 METHODS OF ESSAY WRITING

There is a traditional or classical way of writing essays. This is taught from the earliest exposure to the discipline. However, modern technology is beginning to modify this traditional means by introducing novel ideas.

11.4.1 The Classical Method

Ways of assembling materials and writing may vary from one individual to the other, but the fundamental principles involved are essentially the same. A good essay is, therefore, associated with certain features: an appropriate topic, a discernable outline, and a standard structure.

11.4.1.1 The Topic

The topic is of utmost importance in an essay. This is because it not only gives an overview of the entire essay, but at the same time serves as its image-maker. An unimpressive title is enough to put off a potential reader, whereas a stimulating one would arouse the interest of the reader. It is, therefore, necessary to pay great attention to the choice of an appropriate title for an essay. This is done at the foundation stage of the exercise.

11.4.1.2 The Outline

An outline is a sketch which an essay writer makes at the initial stage of the exercise. At this stage, the essay writer is playing the role that the architect does in the building industry: a vision is mapped out while waiting for the full execution when the actual construction starts.

Two types of outline are common: topic and sentence. In drawing up a topic outline, the writer's slices up' the write-up into 'chunks' with each chunk being a 'heading. Each heading may be subsequently sub-divided into smaller headings, which could also be sub-divided further. The sentence outline, on the other hand, though organized along the same lines as the topic outline, employs 'sentences', rather than headings. Good essay writers use both types of outline, starting out with the topic outline, followed by the sentence outline.

ILLUSTRATION 11.1

The topic, *Fraud and the Professional Accountant*, is treated here, using the topic-outline approach:

TITLE: Fraud and the Professional Accountant.

OUTLINE:

INTRODUCTION

-What is fraud?

-Examples of fraudsters: the criminal, the unpatriotic, the egoist, etc.

-Who is the professional accountant?

-Qualities of a trained and competent accountant.

-The meeting point: financial records.

BODY

-The enticing nature of fraud

-The long and short-term effects

-Professional ethics of the accountant.

-Towards building a virile nation: the role of the accountant.

CONCLUSION

-The supremacy of professional ethics

11.4.1.3 Structure of the Essay

Basically, an essay has three parts: introduction, body and conclusion. Each part contributes to the overall image of the essay. So, a defect in any of the three parts soils the overall image.

11.4.1.3.1 Introduction

An introduction is the gateway to an essay. The writer must ensure that the reader's 'entry' is free of obstacles. The introduction may be definitional, historical, philosophical, etc.; depending on the approach the writer chooses to adopt. Usually, the last segment of the introduction presents the issues addressed by the essay.

ILLUSTRATION 11.2

In the sample introduction presented below, it may be observed that the author attempts to define key concepts (sounds, constructions, meanings and forms of words) that relate to the subject under discussion. This is a good example of a definitional introduction.

In the traditional view of language, words are put together to form sentences. The words differ from each other in both sound and meaning. For example, *clock* and *gong*, refer to different sorts of objects and are distinguished by different consonants at the beginning and end. Hence the sentences: *The clock has been sold* being distinguished from *The gong has been sold* also differ in sound and meaning. The function of clock is different from that of gong. However, not only the words but also the construction and the 'forms of words' will vary from one individual

sentence to another. For example, *The gong has been sold* has a passive construction with the *gong* as Subject, while *He has sold the gong* has an Active construction in which it appears as object. Moreover, in both of these sentences the noun is in the singular to match; contrast *The gongs have been sold* or *He has sold the gongs*, where both *have* and *gongs* are in the plural. In such examples, the choice between different forms of words-between the endings of *gongs* and *gong* on the one hand and *have* and *has* on the other – varies independently of the variation in construction (Passive versus Active). But in other cases, the construction itself requires that a word should be in one form rather than another. For example, in *He hit them*, the word *them* is Object and must therefore appear in what is traditionally called the 'accusative' case. Contrast *They have sold the gong*, where the same pronoun is Subject and must, therefore, appear as the 'nominative' *they* instead. In describing a language, all four varying facets-sounds, constructions, meanings, and forms of words-have to be given due attention.

(Adapted from Matthews, P.H.: *Morphology* (1973: 1)).

11.4.1.3.2 Body

The body of an essay is the segment that lies between the introduction and the conclusion. This is where ideas are presented, debated or discussed, depending on the nature of the essay. A balanced body presents both sides of an argument, before synthesizing them and taking a position, which is later reflected in the conclusion.

11.4.1.3.3 Conclusion

The conclusion is the third critical part of an essay. If we take the introduction as the foundation of an essay and the body as its walls, then the conclusion is the roof. A good conclusion first summarizes an essay, gives the stand of the writer in relation to the topic and then opens up future direction(s) of the topic.

11.4.2 Current Trends

In this age of electronic revolution, the traditional mode of essay writing is fast giving way to more contemporary, computer-assisted means. Word processing software programmes, such as *MS Word*, enable the user to be either automatically corrected when a wrong word is used in the text or at least notified, through underlining, when a word is mis-spelt or a sentence has a grammatical fault. Furthermore, the internet has a

whole range of sample essays and offers assistance to would-be writers at little or no cost at all. There is nothing wrong with taking up such offers, especially for training purposes, provided one does not lose sight of the fact that information, even from such seemingly reliable sources, needs to be handled with care.

11.5 IDEA GENERATION

In essay writing, generating ideas is very important since ideas are the focal point of the exercise. As many ideas as are possible need to be generated in order to avoid running out of supply. But then, ideas are thoughts that are produced in the mind. And experience has shown that the mind is nourished by such mental activities as association, dissociation, composition, decomposition and compounding of ideas.

11.5.1 Association of Ideas

The association of ideas is a process through which the presence of an idea in the mind stimulates the presence of another. In other words, the word, *school*, for instance, could bring forth the ideas of *teacher*, *chalk*, *book*, *pupil*, etc. In essay writing, then, the association of ideas is a fertile ground for developing a topic.

11.5.2 Dissociation of Ideas

The process of drawing an idea away from another is called dissociation. This is particularly useful when we are concerned with what separates, rather than what unites them. Dissociation, then, is a means used in generating ideas for contrastive essay writing.

11.5.3 Composition of Ideas

A composed idea may not necessarily be a replica of all the features of its constituent parts. The essential point here is that two or more ideas have been brought together and the resulting idea has its own unique identity. Review essays usually exploit this means of generating ideas.

11.5.4 Decomposition of Ideas

An idea is said to be decomposed, when a deliberate attempt is made to split it up into

its constituent parts. This means of generating ideas may also be referred to as simplification of ideas.

11.5.5 Compounding of Ideas

Compounding is a process of generating ideas, through which the two or more original ideas still retain their individual identities in the new one. A compound idea, then, could easily be split into the smaller units that make it up.

11.6 SUMMARY

This chapter has been able to identify the two basic types of essay writing as the simple and the long as well as the three common types – narrative, descriptive and argumentative. It has also been shown that there are now two basic methods of essay writing: the classical and the current, although both approaches may not be mutually exclusive.

11.7 END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

11.7.1 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. ONE of the following is NOT a major part of an essay.
 - A. Title
 - B. Introduction
 - C. Body
 - D. Conclusion
 - E. Paragraph

2. At which of the following stages is the outline of an essay done?
 - A. Before conception
 - B. After writing the introduction
 - C. At the onset
 - D. At the tail-end
 - E. After writing the conclusion

3. In writing an essay, two common types of outline are
 - A. Title and topic
 - B. Topic and sentence
 - C. Clause and sentence
 - D. Title and phrase
 - E. Clause and phrase

4. The two major types of essay are

- A. Simple and long
- B. Complex and long
- C. Simple and complex
- D. Simple and direct
- E. Direct and long

5. In writing an essay, ideas may NOT be generated in the mind through

- A. Decomposition
- B. Compounding
- C. Association
- D. Cooperation
- E. Dissociation

11.7.2 SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

- 1. The process through which ideas are generated in the mind by relating one idea to another is called.....
- 2. The process of generating an idea in the mind through the assemblage of ideas that retain their identities is called.....
- 3. The type of essay that is short and accessible to all readers is a..... essay
- 4. In terms of size, an essay that is voluminous is called.....essay.
- 5. An overview of an essay is best captured in its.....

11.7.3 ESSAY

- 1. Discuss briefly the structure of an essay.
- 2. Discuss briefly the FIVE methods of idea generation in essay writing.

11.8 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

11.8.1 SOLUTION TO MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

- 1. E
- 2. C
- 3. B
- 4. A

5. D

11.8.2 SOLUTION TO SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. association
2. compounding
3. simple
4. long essay
5. title

11.8.3 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER ESSAY

QUESTION 1

Basically, an essay has three parts: introduction, body and conclusion. Each part contributes to the overall image of the write-up. So, a defect in any of the three parts soils the overall image.

An introduction is the gateway to an essay. The writer must ensure that the reader's 'entry' is free of obstacles. The introduction may be definitional, historical, philosophical, etc.; depending on the approach the writer chooses to adopt. Usually, the last segment of the introduction presents the issues addressed by the essay.

The body of an essay is the segment that lies between the introduction and the conclusion. This is where ideas are presented, debated or discussed, depending on the nature of the essay. A balanced body presents both sides of an argument, before synthesizing them and taking a position, which is later reflected in the conclusion.

The conclusion is the third critical part of an essay. If we take the introduction as the foundation of an essay and the body as its walls, then the conclusion is the roof. A good conclusion first summarizes an essay, gives the stand of the writer in relation to the topic and then opens up future direction(s) of the topic.

QUESTION 2

In essay writing, generating ideas is very important since ideas are the focal point of the exercise. As many ideas as are possible need to be generated in order to avoid running out of supply. But then, ideas are thoughts that are produced in the mind. And

experience has shown that the mind is nourished by such mental activities as association, dissociation, composition, decomposition and compounding of ideas.

The association of ideas is a process through which the presence of an idea in the mind stimulates the presence of another. In other words, the word, *school*, for instance, could bring forth the ideas of *teacher*, *chalk*, *book*, *pupil*, etc. In essay writing, then, the association of ideas is a fertile ground for developing a topic.

The process of drawing an idea away from another is called dissociation. This is particularly useful when we are concerned with what separates, rather than what unites them. Dissociation, then, is a means used in generating ideas for contrastive essay writing.

A composed idea may not necessarily be a replica of all the features of its constituent parts.

The essential point here is that two or more ideas have been brought together and the resulting idea has its own unique identity. Review essays usually exploit this means of generating ideas.

An idea is said to be decomposed, when a deliberate attempt is made to split it up into its constituent parts. This means of generating ideas may also be referred to as simplification of ideas.

Compounding is a process of generating ideas, through which the two or more original ideas still retain their individual identities in the new one. A compound idea, then, could easily be split into the smaller units that make it up.

CHAPTER 12

SPEECH MAKING

12.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to

- identify the elements of speech making
- highlight aspects of visuals in a speech presentation;
- know the different speech delivery methods.

12.1 INTRODUCTION

A speech is the art of disseminating information verbally. It is more advanced than merely talking. Even when the delivery is based on a written text, the aspect of the presentation that concerns us here is the means of delivery, that is, the verbal mode. In this chapter, the elements of speech making are identified. Then, the place of visuals in oral presentations is highlighted before attempting to distinguish speech-making from speech-writing.

12.2 ELEMENTS OF SPEECH MAKING

Generally, there are some characteristics of speech making, which may be regarded as its elements since they ensure its quality. These are: appropriateness, clarity, adequacy and fluency.

12.2.1 Appropriateness

Appropriateness may be defined as the provision of a requirement in the dosage or amount expected in a given situation. It is, therefore, a great yardstick for measuring the success or otherwise of the entire communication process (i.e. source, encoding, channel, decoding, receiver, feedback and context). Indeed, all the elements of oral presentations may be used to evaluate various aspects of the entire communication

process. However, appropriateness is the underlying current that runs through all the other elements of speech delivery (i.e., clarity, adequacy and fluency). For instance, even when the 'source' is clear, is it appropriate on this occasion? Or when the decoding is *adequate*, is it appropriate on this occasion?

12.2.2 Clarity

Clarity, as a feature of an oral presentation, may be viewed from two different perspectives: on the one hand, language choice and use; on the other, the message. As far as language choice is concerned, the oral presenter must ensure that his or her competence in the chosen language is unquestionable and that he or she is able to function very well in it. In some circumstances, code-switching or code-mixing (or both) may be resorted to, provided that such choices, in terms of use, contribute positively to the overall goal of making a successful oral presentation.

The clarity of the message itself is also important. If, at the end of an oral presentation, the audience does not get the essence of the message, then the exercise, as a whole, has been futile. Sometimes, simplicity is the key to clarity. An oral presentation should use simple, clear and concise language to enhance coding and decoding obligations on the part of the sender and receiver respectively. Other factors that may enhance clarity include adequate preparation (based on the perceived needs of the entire communication process), rehearsal (may be dressed, *insitu*) and self-appraisal by the oral presenter.

12.2.3 Adequacy

Adequacy is a measure of sufficiency. In speech delivery, the adequacy of the preparation, delivery and feedback comes into play. There should be no shortfall. Neither should there be an over-supply in the quantity of each contributory factor to the overall communication process. Adequacy in terms of coverage (i.e. setting specific goals and achieving them) and time (i.e. executing the delivery within a specific time-frame) needs to be given special attention. For instance, gauging the attention-span of

the audience, its taste and its mood are all important in ensuring effective delivery.

12.2.4 Fluency

Fluency is a measure of the rate of flow. Inconsistency in the rate of flow of speech signals breaks in transmission. And who likes to listen to disconnected speech? Nobody! Connecting the new information to the old, inconclusive one may be hard on the listener, who may have been forced to swim in ignorance for sometime. To maintain a smooth ride for the train of thought of both speaker and audience, therefore, delivery should be vivid and smooth, rather than bumpy.

12.3 USE OF VISUAL AIDS IN SPEECH DELIVERY

Technically, speech delivery is primarily meant to be decoded through listening. However, since the ultimate aim of communication is to get information as accurately as possible across, there is nothing wrong with exploiting the other human senses of perception, especially sight, to get the job done fully. Speech delivery is greatly enriched by visual aids since the latter essentially perform a reinforcing or demonstrative role.

12.3.1 Conventional Visual Aids

The long history of visual aids dates back to the beginning of speech delivery when drawings were made on rocks and other large surfaces to serve as illustrations. In modern times, especially since the advent of paper, cardboards have been extensively used in classrooms as well as at other public functions to complement the traditional blackboard. At a certain point in the evolution of the cardboard, flash cards emerged and were hailed as the visual aid *par excellence*, in view of their multi- functionality and interactive use. Nowadays, props (live objects of various sizes) such as oranges, chopsticks, loaves of bread and even a hammer may be brought to an oral presentation and used as aids in order to address such themes as simplicity, experimentation, basics of life and power respectively.

Posters and flip charts too come in handy both in the regular classroom and in corporate board rooms. The ease with which they can be presented, amended and recalled makes them very appealing to the average oral presenter.

12.3.2 Electronic Visual Aids

Electronic devices have continually offered man great opportunities to perfect his dreams of visual aids. From the early days of film projectors and slide projectors to the more recent times of extremely more and more complex appliances, such as close-circuit television and internet conferencing, electronic visual aids have made an impressive mark on oral presentation. Indeed, PowerPoint presentation has gained prominence as the most powerful visual aid ever developed by man to date. This is because it not only permits one to create slides that contain digitalised images and texts, but also makes room for alterations, allowing for additional charts and images, sounds and motion pictures.

On the whole then, visuals are a great presentation-enhancing tool. However, care should be taken not to allow them to divert attention away from the presentation itself. Visuals should be strictly limited to the supplementary role they are supposed to play in enhancing the delivery.

12.4 SPEECH MAKING AND SPEECH WRITING

Speech making and speech writing are two contiguous activities, which may not necessarily be performed by the same individual within the same context. This means that an individual could perform either of the activities without necessarily performing the other. In logical sequence, speech writing precedes speech making. However, a speech could be made without it ever having been written at all. It is unusual for speech to be written after it has been made-except in the case of the transcript of a recorded version of the speech being made for record purposes. Nonetheless, there are different forms of each of these activities.

12.4.1 Speech Making

Speech Making may be classified as either closed or public. Whereas the former is less formal, the latter is very much so. In closed speech making, the audience is usually limited to a few individuals who are reasonably familiar with one another. A speech at a family dinner or a cabinet or board meeting may be regarded as closed. Even when made at a public forum, a speech may still be considered closed.

ILLUSTRATION 21.1

Consider the speech of the old man in Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People* as described in the following passage:

An elderly man who I believe was also a local councilor now stood up. He had sat on the edge of his seat directly opposite the microphone, his hands like a climber's grasping his iron staff. His attitude and posture had shown total absorption in what was being said:

'I want to thank the young man for his beautiful words, he said. Every one of them has entered my ear. I always say that what is important nowadays is no longer age or title but knowledge. The young man clearly has it and I salute him. There is one word he said which entered my ear more than everything else-not only entered but built a house there. I don't know whether you others heard it in the same way as I did. That word was that our own son should go and bring our share. There was great applause from the crowd. That word entered my ear. The village of Anata has already eaten, now they must make way for us to reach plate. No man in Urua will give his paper to a stranger when his own son needs it; if the very herb we go to seek in the forest now grows at our very backyard are we not saved the journey? We are ignorant people and we are like children. But I want to tell our son one thing: He already knows where to go and what to say when he gets there; he should tell them that we are waiting here like a babe cutting its first tooth: anyone who wants to look at our new tooth should know that his bag should be heavy. Have I spoken well?

(Culled from Chinua Achebe: *A Man of the People*, pp.140-141).

Public speech making, on the other hand, takes place in an open environment, in which the audience is large and the setting formal. It usually generates anxiety or even fear in the inexperienced speaker, presumably because of the possibility of 'not getting it right'. However,

there are ways of surmounting the obstacle. Aristotle is reported to have taught his followers that there were three different areas in which the persuasive ability of a speaker may be judged: *ethos* (ethical appeals, i.e. of the speaker), *pathos* (emotional appeals, i.e. to the listener) and *logos* (logical appeals of the text). These areas are popularly referred to as The Rhetorical Triangle by rhetoricians. It means a successful public speaker is one who is able to secure a balance (*note*: the triangle is equilateral) among the three inter - dependent areas: an over flow of one into another would cause an imbalance and impede success. For instance, if a speech is excessively emotional, it may lose grounds on logic, just as it may lose grounds on emotional appeal if the speaker is dull and unimpressive.

ILLUSTRATION 12.2

The speech made by Mr. Ikem Osodi in Chinua Achebe's *Ant hills of the Savannah* in response to a question, portrays a character versed in the exploitation of The Rhetorical Triangle:

I think I should take the advantage of this forum to propound the new radicalism which I believe we should embrace... First and foremost this radicalism must be clear-eyed enough to see beyond the present clap trap that will heap all our problems on the door step of capitalism and imperialism... Please don't get me wrong. I do not deny that external factors are still at the root of many of our problems. But I maintain that even if external factors were to beat the root of *all* our problems we still must be ready to distinguish, for practical purposes, between remote and immediate causes, as our history teachers used to say... May I remind you that our ancestors-by the way you must never under rate those guys; some of you seem too ready to do so, I'm afraid. Well, our ancestors made a fantastic prove on remote and immediate causes. If you want to get at the root of murder, they said, you have to look for the blacksmith who made the matchet...Wonderful proverb, isn't it? But it was only intended to enlarge the scope of our thinking not to guide policemen investigating an actual crime.

(Culled from Chinua Achebe:*Ant hills of the Savannah*,p. 146)

12.4.2 SpeechWriting

Speech writing is the art of putting an oral presentation into a written form. As an art, it demands specific skills to be successful. It is indeed believed to be more demanding than its sister-activity, speech making. This is because speech writing is essentially

prognostic—the writer envisages given situation (in future), into which what is being written (at present) will fit. This implies predicting the audience (its mood, taste and desire), the event (its trajectory) and the objectives and the image of the speaker. In addition, it must adhere strictly to the pertinent writing conventions (e.g.the use of relevant punctuation marks and grammatical rules). In short, speech writing must not only conform to orthographic rules, but must also obey the basic principles of The Rhetorical Triangle explained in the previous section. It is pertinent to note at this juncture that speech writing may be personal or professional.

12.4.2.1 Personal Speech Writing

In personal speech writing, the one going to deliver a speech takes it upon himself or herself to write the speech. The major advantage of this approach is that it is much easier to read what one has written than what somebody else has written. But this places a great responsibility on the (personal) speech writer - he or she must write appropriately! This means avoiding unpalatable idiosyncrasies in one's speech (since we tend to write the way we speak). In any case, there is nothing wrong with seeking professional advice at any given point of the exercise.

12.4.2.2 Professional Speech Writing

Some people earn a living by writing speeches. Such people undergo professional training in order to qualify for such practice. In principle, the professional writer knows the nature of the appropriate text for each occasion, when to throw in a joke, when to present statistical evidence, when to tell a story (and for how long), etc. In practice, however, it is not easy to accurately predict these often delicate matters. The professional speech writer knows all too well that he or she must obey the principles of The Rhetorical Triangle to the letter. Unfortunately, great orators have been known to dispense with the services of professional speech writers – even when these are attached to their offices.

12.5. SPEECH DELIVERY METHODS

Speaking has more formality than talking; it has less formality than reading. Speaking allows for meaningful pauses, eye contact, small changes in word order, and vocal emphasis. Reading is a more or less exact replication of words on paper without the use of any nonverbal interpretation. Speaking provides a more animated message. There are four methods of speech delivery.

12.5.1 Impromptu Speech

Impromptu speaking is the presentation of a short message without advance preparation. Impromptu speeches often occur when someone is asked to “say a few words” or give a toast on a special occasion. You have probably done impromptu speaking many times in informal, conversational settings. Self-introduction in group settings is an example of impromptu speaking. An impromptu speech is generally most successful when it is brief and focused on a single point.

A step-by-step guide that may be useful if you are called upon to give an impromptu speech in public is as follows:

- a. Take a moment to collect your thoughts and plan the main point you want to make.
- b. Thank the person for inviting you to speak.
- c. Deliver your message, making your main point as briefly as you can while still covering it adequately and at a pace your listeners can follow.
- d. Thank the person again for the opportunity to speak.
- e. Stop talking.

The advantage of this kind of speaking is that it is spontaneous and responsive in an animated group context. The disadvantage is that the speaker is given little or no time to contemplate the central theme of his or her message. As a result, the message may be disorganized and difficult for listeners to follow.

12.5.2 Extemporaneous Speech

Extemporaneous speaking is the presentation of a carefully planned and rehearsed speech, spoken in a conversational manner using brief notes. By using notes rather than a full manuscript, the extemporaneous speaker can establish and maintain eye contact with the audience and assess how well they understand the speech as it progresses. Speaking extemporaneously has some advantages. It promotes the likelihood that you, the speaker, will be perceived as knowledgeable and credible. In addition, your audience is likely to pay better attention to the message because it is engaging both verbally and nonverbally. The disadvantage of extemporaneous speaking is that it requires a great deal of preparation for both the verbal and the nonverbal components of the speech. Adequate preparation cannot be achieved the day before you're scheduled to speak.

12.5.3 Speaking from a Manuscript

Speaking from manuscript is the word-for-word iteration of a written message. In a manuscript speech, the speaker maintains his or her attention on the printed page except when using visual aids. The advantage to reading from a manuscript is the exact repetition of original words. Unless the speaker has rehearsed the reading as a complete performance animated with vocal expression and gestures, the presentation tends to be dull. Keeping one's eyes glued to the script precludes eye contact with the audience. For this kind of "straight" manuscript speech to hold audience attention, the audience must be already interested in the message before the delivery begins.

The success of this medium depends on two factors: the speaker must be an accomplished public speaker who has learned to use a conversational tone while delivering a prepared script, and the speech written in a style that sounds conversational.

12.5.4 Speaking from Memory

Memorized speaking is the rote recitation of a written message that the speaker has committed to memory. Actors, of course, recite from memory whenever they perform from a script in a stage play or movie. When it comes to speeches, memorization can be useful when the message needs to be exact and the speaker doesn't want to be confined by notes.

The advantage to memorization is that it enables the speaker to maintain eye contact with the audience throughout the speech. Because the speaker is free of notes he can move

freely around and use hands to make gestures. If the speech involves the use of visual aids, this freedom is even more of an advantage. Unless the speaker plans and memorizes every vocal, gesture, and facial expression, the presentation will be flat and uninteresting, and even the most fascinating topic will suffer. The speaker might end up speaking in a monotone or a sing-song repetitive delivery pattern.

12.6 PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE SPEECH DELIVERY

Delivering a speech is a task that needs the application of appropriate elements, techniques and resources in order to produce an effective speech that connects with the audience and achieves the aims of the speaker. In order to do this, the speaker has to employ the principles of effective speaking. These principles are: use of gestures, use of vocal resources, appropriate posture, right setting, use of humour, proper structuring of the speech and use of audio and visual aids.

12.6.1 Use of Gestures

Gestures complement the word of mouth. Gestures could be used as illustrators, initiators and facilitators of speech. A speaker is advised to use diverse and appropriate gestures as non-verbal complements along with facial expressions to heighten the expressive nature of the speech and communicate effectively.

12.6.2 Use of Vocal Resources

An effective speaker would make use of vocal resources at his disposal. Resources such as tempo and rhythm of voice, pitch of voice, volume of voice should be varied and tailored to the message and the event. By doing this, the speech will not be delivered in monotone. These dynamic acoustic properties would ensure that the speaker connects effectively to his audience.

12.6.3 Appropriate Posture

The posture of the speaker matters. The speaker must maintain erect posture. The posture of the speaker has a way of contributing significantly to the impression the audience forms of the speaker. It is then important that the speaker should maintain a posture that

would encourage the audience to have a positive impression of him as someone that deserves to be heard.

12.6.4 Right Setting

When the speaker has an input into the choice of the venue that is appropriate, the speaker should choose a venue that is appropriate for speech delivery. It should be a venue where the audience would not be in any form of discomfort. It should also be a venue whose location is appropriate in the sense that the noise level in the environment is low and other environmental factors are conducive to speech delivery.

12.6.5 Use of Humour

An effective speaker inserts humour into the speech. He must use light humour in a way that it would not be a distraction. Light humour introduces a form of entertainment which serves to elicit the interest of the audience in the topic and speech. In using humour, however, the speaker should limit it so that it is not over-used.

12.6.6 Structuring the Speech

It is important that the speaker structures his speech properly. The speech should have an introduction, body and conclusion. The speech would be an effective piece if it has a very strong and interesting introduction; the body should contain the heart of the topic, illustrated with examples, formulae with internal connectives while the conclusion must a short and powerful summary of the discourse.

12.6.7 Use of Audio and Visual Aids

Audio aids such as a public address system and audio visual aids such as overhead projectors or slides are aids that enhance public speaking. The speaker should use public address system where necessary. This would help him and prevent him from shouting himself hoarse. He could also use visual aids such as charts and flash cards to illustrate information to give quality to his speech.

ILLUSTRATION 12.3

Before you start working on your talk or presentation, it is important that you really understand

what you want to say, who you want to tell and why they might want to hear it. To do this, ask yourself: Who? What? How? When? Where? and Why? Who are you speaking to? What are their interests, presuppositions and values? What do they share in common with others? How are they unique?

What do you wish to communicate? One way of answering this question is to ask yourself about the “success criteria”. How do you know if and when you have successfully communicated what you have in mind?

How can you best convey your message? Language is important here, as are the non-verbal cues discussed earlier. Choose your words and your non-verbal cues with your audience in mind. Plan a beginning, middle and end. If time and place allow, consider and prepare audio-visual aids.

When? Timing is important here. Develop a sense of timings that your contributions are seen and heard as relevant to the issue or matter at hand. There is a time to speak and a time to be silent. “It’s better to be silent than sing a bad tune.”

Where? What is the physical context of the communication in mind? You may have time to visit the room, for example, and rearrange the furniture. Check for availability and visibility if you are using audio or visual aids.

Why? In order to convert hearers in to listeners, you need to know why they should listen to you—and tell them if necessary. What disposes them to listen? That implies that you know yourself why you are seeking to communicate—the value or worth or interest of what you are going to say.

(Adapted from *MindTools.com*)

12.7 Checklist of Effective Speaking

Creating the message: In order to create a well-structured oral message, the speaker should:

- (a) First consider the context of the oral communication and the desired outcome.
- (b) Establish the key points to get across and what running order would best link them together at the beginning, middle and end.
- (c) Advance the salient facts and figures which will support the argument.
- (d) Decide on what the delivery style of the message should be before embarking on

it.

- (e) Constantly monitor the feedback he receives from his audience
- (f) Know when he has said enough and stop on a positive note.

12.8 Important speech features to master

- (a) **Accent:** This is a distinctive manner of oral expression which shows the relative prominence of a syllable or musical note with regard to stress or pitch. It may also be the usage or vocabulary that is characteristic of a particular group of people. Accents of different people may be accepted but they should be devoid of being confused with local dialect words.
- (b) **Pronunciation:** This is the way and manner in which a word or a language is customarily spoken. People will not like to hear speeches marred by ugly or resentful habits.
- (c) **Enunciation:** This is the aspect of pronunciation that brings articulatory organ together so as to shape the sounds of speech in such a way that the sound(s) uttered will be intelligible to the audience. Good oral communication—especially over a poor telephone line or in a large hall—depends on vowels being well rounded and not swallowed.
- (d) **Intonation:** This is the rise and fall of voice or pitch according to due measure and proportion. Nothing causes listeners to ‘switch off’ as the ponderous utterance of drab monotones.
- (e) **Projection:** This is a calculated attempt by the speaker to raise the volume of his voice to the volume of the space occupied by the audience. A well-projected speech is clear and understandable to the entire audience.

12.9 SUMMARY -

In this chapter, appropriateness, clarity, adequacy and fluency as the elements of oral presentation have been identified. Also highlighted are aspects of visuals in speech making before attempting to distinguish speech-making from its sister-art, speech-writing. In all aspects of oral presentation then, the principles of The Rhetorical Triangle seem to be necessarily obeyed to guarantee success.

Finally, a checklist of items that facilitate effective speaking has been presented, complemented by some important speech features that should be mastered.

12.10 END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

12.10.1 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. ONE of the following is NOT a characteristic of speech making.
 - A. Appropriateness
 - B. Clarity
 - C. Clumsiness
 - D. Adequacy
 - E. Fluency

2. Which of the following is most appropriate to use in facilitating an oral presentation?
 - A. Aid
 - B. Aids
 - C. Visual Aids
 - D. Manual Aids
 - E. Drawing board

3. Which **ONE** of the following is a basic type of speech?
 - A. Poetry
 - B. Written
 - C. Public
 - D. Prose
 - E. Précis

4. A speech-writer who earns a living by writing speeches is a
 - A. Professional
 - B. Personal
 - C. Elementary
 - D. Illiterate
 - E. Semi-literate

5. All the following lists are NOT components of The Rhetorical Triangle EXCEPT
 - A. Appeal and logic
 - B. Appeal, emotion and logic
 - C. Appeal, resolution and logic
 - D. Resolution and appeal
 - E. Resolution, logic and emotion

12.10.2 SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. The persuasive ability of a speaker is judged from ethical, emotional and.....appeals.
2. In speech making, the mode of delivery is.....
3. A speech delivered without advance preparation is called
4. In speech delivery.....is a measure of the rate of flow.
5. Speech delivery is primarily meant to be decoded through

12.10.3 ESSAY

1. Discuss briefly any THREE elements of speech making.
2. Explain briefly the interrelatedness of the three components of The Rhetorical Triangle.

12.11 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

12.11.1 SOLUTION TO MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. C
2. C
3. C
4. A
5. B

12.11.2 SOLUTION TO SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. logical
2. verbal/Oral
3. Impromptu
4. fluency
5. Listening

12.11.3 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER ESSAY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

Generally, there are some characteristics of speech making, which may be regarded as its elements since they ensure its quality. These are: appropriateness, clarity, adequacy and fluency.

Appropriateness may be defined as the provision of a requirement in the dosage or amount expected in a given situation. It is, therefore, a great yardstick for measuring the success or otherwise of the entire communication process (i.e. source, encoding, channel, decoding, receiver, feedback and context). Indeed, all the elements of speech making may be used to evaluate various aspects of the entire communication process. However, appropriateness is the underlying current that runs through all the other elements of speech making (i.e., clarity, adequacy and fluency). For instance, even when the 'source' is clear, is it appropriate on this occasion? Or when the decoding is *adequate*, is it appropriate on this occasion?

Clarity, as a feature of an oral presentation, may be viewed from two different perspectives: on the one hand, language choice and use; on the other, the message. As far as language choice is concerned, the oral presenter must ensure that his or her competence in the chosen language is unquestionable and that he or she is able to function very well in it. In some circumstances, code-switching or code-mixing (or both) may be resorted to, provided that such choices, in terms of use, contribute positively to the overall goal of making a successful speech.

The clarity of the message itself is also important. If, at the end of the speech, the audience does not get the essence of the message, then the exercise, as a whole, has been futile. Sometimes, simplicity is the key to clarity. A speech should use simple, clear and concise language to enhance coding and decoding obligations on the part of the sender and receiver respectively. Other factors that may enhance clarity include adequate preparation (based on the perceived needs of the entire communication process), rehearsal (may be dressed, *in situ*) and self-appraisal by the oral presenter.

Adequacy is a measure of sufficiency. In oral presentation, the adequacy of the preparation, delivery and feedback comes into play. There should be no shortfall. Neither should there be an over-supply in the quantity of each contributory factor to the overall communication process. Adequacy in terms of coverage (i.e. setting specific goals and achieving them) and time (i.e. executing the delivery within a specific time-frame) needs to be given special attention. For instance, gauging the attention – span of the audience, its taste and its mood are all important in

ensuring effective delivery.

Fluency is a measure of the rate off low. Inconsistency in the rate off low of speech signals breaks in transmission. And who likes to listen to disconnected speech? Nobody! Connecting the new information to the old, inconclusive one may be hard on the listener, who may have been forced to swim in ignorance for some time. To maintain a smooth ride for the train of thought of both speaker and audience, therefore, delivery should be vivid and smooth, rather than bumpy.

QUESTION 2

Public Speech Making takes place in an open environment in which the audience is large and the setting formal. It usually generates anxiety or even fear in the inexperienced speaker, presumably because of the possibility of 'not getting it right'. However, there are ways of surmounting the obstacle. Aristotle is reported to have taught his followers that there were three different areas in which the persuasive ability of a speaker may be judged: *ethos* (ethical appeals, i.e. of the speaker), *pathos* (emotional appeals, i.e. to the listener) and *logos* (logical appeal soft he text). These are popularly referred to as The Rhetorical Triangle by rhetoricians. It means a successful public speaker is one who is able to secure a balance (*note*: the triangle is equilateral) among the three inter dependent areas: an overflow of one into another would cause an imbalance and impede success. For instance, if a speech is excessively emotional, it may lose grounds on logic, just as it may lose grounds on emotional appeal if the speaker is dull and unimpressive.

CHAPTER 13

CORRESPONDENCE

13.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to

- identify different types of correspondence;
- exploit different methods of correspondence.

13.1 INTRODUCTION

Correspondence is a written communication activity that involves a minimum of two parties – one supplying to the other information needed for the promotion of the interests of both and all other parties that may be involved. All correspondences are documented- even television network correspondents have their reports documented, despite the fact that they are often transmitted verbally on air. In this chapter, we shall first identify the two basic types of correspondence and then, present a few methods of correspondence such as letters, memoranda, circulars and press releases

13.2 TYPES OF CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence could take place within or outside an organisation. This means there are basically two different types of correspondence: internal and external.

13.2.1 Internal Correspondence

Internal correspondence is intended for consumption within an organisation or an establishment. It is, therefore, addressed to a member (or members) of the organisation or establishment. Sometimes, organisational secrets may be involved. In such cases, a greater burden is placed on anyone receiving or sending an internal correspondence. Nevertheless, internal correspondence may be secret (i.e. restricted to the parties directly involved) or open (i.e. to all members of the organisation).

13.2.2 External Correspondence

External correspondence, on the other hand, is destined for consumption outside the organisation or establishment. It may also be secret or open. In either case, every organisation endeavours to closely monitor all its correspondence with persons or bodies outside its borders. This is a kind of quality-control measure to ensure that any out-going information would not eventually damage the image or operations of the organisation. Information that is already in the public domain is usually difficult to control.

ILLUSTRATION 13.1

The following Press Release serves two purposes: it dissociates the company from its former employee and reassures the public of its commitment to rendering excellent services. Apart from fulfilling legal obligations, the press release is used as an image-maker for the company.

Press Release

This is to inform the general public that Mr. XYZ, whose photograph appears below, is no longer an employee of Ada John Mohammed Group. Any member of the public, who transacts any business with the said Mr XYZ, on behalf of A. J. Mohammed Group, does so at his or her own risk. We continue to provide you excellent import and export services.

SIGNED

Management

13.3 METHODS OF CORRESPONDENCE

As an information resource, correspondence needs a channel, through which it is conveyed. Letters and memoranda are two reputable methods of correspondence.

13.3.1 Letters

A letter is a piece of writing directed *in absentia* at an individual as if there were face-to-face contact. Letters come in different shapes and sizes. Long or short, letters distinguish themselves from other texts through their well-defined structure. Depending on the type of letter to be written, all or some of the following features must be present:

- a. Correspondence address
- b. Date
- c. Addressee or Addressee's address

- d. Salutation
- e. Subject matter
- f. Body of the letter
- g. Closing
- h. Name of writer (and/or Signature)
- i. Designation/Position

Letters distinguish themselves from other texts through well-defined structure: the address of the writer and the date are indicated at the top of the page; the addressee is identified by name or title; the body of the letter contains the message, which is intended to be delivered. Finally the sender signs off. It should be noted, at this juncture, that a letter could be formal/official (adhering strictly to structural and grammatical rules) or informal/private. Consequently, a more categorical distinction is made between personal and official letters.

The outline looks like this:

Correspondence Address
Date
Addressee/Addressee's Address
Salutation
Subject matter
Body of the letter
Closing
Name (and/or Signature)
Designation/Position

13.3.1.1 Personal Letter

A personal letter is one written by an individual in his or her capacity as a being. Personal letters offer us the opportunity to express our feelings, worries, anxieties, emotions, needs, desires, etc., to our relations, friends, colleagues, acquaintances, neighbours, etc. The language used in a personal letter is usually informal.

ILLUSTRATION 13.2

The letter cited below illustrates the general features of a personal letter: absence of a formal structure (*note*: absence of letterhead); use of informal form of address (*note*: use of first names); sharing of 'given' information (shared by writer and addressee) and use of informal

language.

Abuja,

13th May, 2006

Dear Soji,

'How are you? I arrived safely in Abuja about two hours ago. The journey was very smooth and the scenery was great. Have you heard from Mohammed yet? I hope he keeps his promise. Any way, you understand him better than the rest of us do.

I don' t hope to belong here – just want to have a look around town, visit a few friends and arrive in Jos before the weekend, so as to take along rest before the conference begins next Monday.

Let's know what you'd appreciate most to have from Jos. Meanwhile take good care of yourself. Cheers!

Yours sincerely,

Fagge.

13.3.1.2 Official Letters

An official letter is usually formal, devoid of personal feelings or emotions and is written to convey an official position on an issue. An official letter is usually written on the headed paper of a company or an establishment. The company's name, address (postal and electronic), telephone numbers as well as the name of the Chief Executive are regular features of the top (or bottom) of the headed paper.

An official letter may bear a reference number, which is usually indicated just below the address at the top of the page. Below this is the area (i.e. the left-hand side of the page); reserved for the name and address of the addressee. The next line is the official take-off point of the letter since this is where the addressee's attention is drawn by 'calling out' his or her name, using a title (e.g. *Dear Mrs Black,*).

Still moving downwards, we arrive at the next line, which indicates the subject matter of the subject at hand. A single line is usually sufficient. Then, we come to the body of the letter (laid out in form of introduction, body and conclusion). Finally, there is a signing-off or closing of the letter through the use of such a phrase as *Yours faithfully*, followed under by a signature, which is in turn followed by the title (and function) of the person signing the letter. (In some instances, when copies of the letter are sent to other addressees, their names or initials are indicated at the bottom of the page on the left hand side).

Applications for employment as well as response to such matters fall within this category of letters.

ILLUSTRATION 13.3

Consider this letter of appointment issued to a successful applicant.

ASSOCIATION OF ACCOUNTANCY BODIES IN WEST AFRICA

AABWA House
21-27, Accountancy Layout,
Abuja, Nigeria

Tel. +234 66 482 177717

E-mail:registrar@aabwa.org

Registrar: Goki O. Kugba, FCAA

Your Ref.

Our Ref.: R/App/39.Vol.II

March 22, 2005

Mr. Abdullahi Kureto,

33, Freedom Street, New Town. 4001

Dear Mr. Kureto,

Appointment as Manager-in-Training (Finance)

Sequel to your application dated January 21st, 2005 and your successful performance at the just-concluded interview, the President, acting on behalf of Council, has approved your appointment as Manager-in-Training (Finance) with effect from June 1st, 2005. Your appointment shall be due for confirmation after two years, subject to satisfactory performance.

As a Manager-in-Training (Finance), you are directly responsible to the Director Finance, who will give you assignments from time to time in addition to your regular duties.

Please let me know in writing by the 30th April, 2005 if this offer is acceptable to you.

Meanwhile, I seize this opportunity to congratulate you.

Yours faithfully,

Kogi O. Kugba

Registrar

13.3.2 Memorandum

Memorandum is a term that may be used indifferent contexts and it usually appears in its shortened form: *Memo*. Which is derived from *memorandum* (the singular). When used in the context of an agreement (e.g. a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)), it involves a multi-party arrangement, through which responsibilities, privileges and other matters are clearly spelt out. In this sense, it is a document that prepares the grounds for a contractual agreement. In another sense, the term, memo, is used for a special type of correspondence that takes (place within an organisation. In this sense then, the memo is an official, though simplified method of correspondence. All the writer needs to do is to fill all the relevant sections of the document. A memo has a rigid format (made up of headings): sender, receiver, subject and date-all stated at the 'head' of the paper.

The memo has for long been the conventional means of corresponding quickly and efficiently in an organisation primarily because of the simplicity of its ready-made format. Consider the example given below, in which a junior partner (assigned the identity A³) is corresponding with the Principal Partner in an Accounting firm (CSS is the Chief of Security Services; LCWs are Late-Comers-to-Work):

MEMO	
FROM: A ³ (Signed)	TO: Chief Security Officer
SUBJECT: Lateness to work	DATE: 3 rd June1986
As directed at the breakfast meeting, CSS has been informed of the decision to turn back all LCWs at the gate with effect from tomorrow morning.	

Nowadays, electronic mail (popularly referred to as e-mail) and other internet-based means of text messaging have greatly borrowed from the traditional format of the memo.

13.4 SUMMARY

In this chapter, we have defined correspondence as an activity 'that involves a sender getting information across to a receiver for the mutual benefit of both parties involved and the general interest of the organisation to which they both belong. Two types (internal and external) and two methods (letters and memoranda) have been discussed. There is no doubt that correspondence plays a major role in the day-to-day running of an organisation.

13.5 END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

13.5.1 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. In an organisation, the two basic types of correspondence are
 - A. External and international
 - B. International and regional
 - C. Internal and external
 - D. Internal and regional
 - E. External and regional

2. ONE of the following is NOT a characteristic of internal correspondence.
 - A. May not be disclosed to outsiders
 - B. Sometimes restrictive
 - C. Must be kept within the organisation
 - D. Sometimes secretive
 - E. Maybe disclosed to outsiders

3. Internal correspondence maybe either secret or
 - A. Closed
 - B. Open
 - C. International
 - D. National
 - E. Departmental

4. An external correspondence issued to the mass media on a specific issue which is meant for public consumption is
 - A. House release
 - B. Press release
 - C. Press note
 - D. House report
 - E. Situation report

5. Which of the following is NOT a feature of an official letter?
- A. Written on the letterhead
 - B. Contains personal feelings
 - C. Carries a reference number
 - D. Conveys an official position
 - E. contains address and telephone number(s)

13.5.2 SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. In an official letter, the receiver is known as the.....
2. A letter may be personal or.....
3. Feelings, desires, needs, emotions and anxieties are all permissible in a(n).....letter.
4. When copies of an official letter are sent to other addressees, their names or positions are indicated at the.....
5. A.....is the conventional means of sending information quickly and 'efficiently in an office primarily because of the simplicity of its ready-made format.

13.5.3 ESSAY

1. Discuss briefly the TWO basic types of correspondence.
2. Discuss briefly, giving an example, the greatest appeal of a memorandum.

13.6 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

13.6.1 SOLUTIONS TO MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. C
2. E
3. B
4. B
5. B

13.6.2 SOLUTIONS TO SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. addressee
2. official

3. personal
4. bottom
5. memorandum

13.6.3 SOLUTIONS TO ESSAY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

Correspondence could take place within or outside an organisation. This means there are basically two different types of correspondence: Internal and External.

Internal correspondence is intended for consumption within an organization or an establishment. It is therefore addressed to a member (or members) of the organization or establishment. Sometimes, organizational secrets may be involved. In such cases, a greater burden is placed on any one receiving or sending an internal correspondence. Nevertheless, internal correspondence may be secret (i.e. restricted to the parties directly involved) or open (i.e. to all members of the organization).

External correspondence, on the other hand, is' destined for consumption outside the organization or establishment. It may also be 'secret or open. In either case, every organisation endeavours to closely monitor all its correspondence with persons or bodies outside its borders. This is a kind of quality-control measure to ensure that any out-going information would not eventually damage the image or operations of the organization. Information that is already in the public domain is usually difficult to control.

QUESTION 2

The greatest appeal of a memorandum is the simplicity of its ready-made format, coupled with its ability to dispose of issues quickly and efficiently.

Memoranda is a term that may be used in different contexts and it usually appears in its shortened form: *Memo*, which is derived from *memorandum* (the singular). When used in the context of an agreement (e.g. a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)), it involves a multi-party arrangement, through which responsibilities, privileges and other matters are clearly spelt out. In this sense, it is a document that prepares the grounds for a contractual agreement. In another sense, the term, memo, is used for a special type of correspondence that takes (place within an organisation. In this sense then, the memo is an official, though simplified method of correspondence. All the writer needs to do is to fill the relevant sections of the document. A

memo has a rigid format (made up of headings): sender, receiver, subject and date- all stated at the 'head' of the paper.

The memo has for long been the conventional means of corresponding quickly and efficiently in an office, primarily because of the simplicity of its ready-made format. Consider the example given below, in which the Group Managing Director (GDM) of an organization sends a memorandum to all the staff of the establishment:

MEMORANDUM	
GDM/Gen./vol.II	
FROM: GMD (Public Relations) (SIGNED)	TO: All Staff
SUBJECT: Public Holiday	DATE: 29 th June, 2012
The Federal Government has declared Monday the 3 rd of July, 2012 as a public holiday. All offices will therefore remain closed on that day. Regular activities will resume on Tuesday the 4 th of July, 2012 at 8.00am.	

CHAPTER 14

MEETINGS

14.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to

- identify the various categories of meetings that take place in an organisation;
- identify the fundamental tools associated with meetings;
- discuss the utilization of meeting tools.

14.1 INTRODUCTION

A meeting is the bringing together of all parties concerned with an issue. There are two types of meetings: formal and informal. Whereas the former is official, the latter is not. In this chapter, we concentrate on formal meetings. A general meeting may involve all members of an organisation. Other meetings may be restricted in terms of membership, e.g. Executive Council Meeting, Management Meeting, Board Meeting, Departmental Meeting, etc. In this chapter, different categories of meetings and the fundamental tools associated with them are also discussed.

14.2 CATEGORIES OF MEETINGS

Irrespective of the size of its membership, a formal meeting may be categorized as regular, special or emergency, depending on the circumstances in which it is called.

14.2.1 Regular/Statutory Meetings

An organisation may have its regular meetings once a month, for instance, on the last Thursday of the month at 3.00pm. All members of the organisation that are expected to attend regular meetings are supposed to give them priority in their schedule. This means avoiding scheduling other organisational or even personal matters to times that may clash with the regular meeting day.

14.2.2 Special Meetings

A special meeting of a body or an organisation could be summoned in case there is a specific matter that needs to be addressed on its own (i.e. outsider outline matters which are discussed at regular meetings). This is usual for elections to specific positions,

briefings or other big events.

14.2.3 Emergency Meetings

An emergency meeting of a body or an organisation is called when there is a case of an unforeseen matter that requires immediate attention. In view of the urgency attached to it, an emergency meeting tends to create higher levels of tension in its participants than those observed in people attending other categories of meetings.

14.3 FUNDAMENTAL TOOLS OF A MEETING

Whatever the category of meeting, there are three fundamental tools of a meeting. Each contributes significantly towards the success of the meeting. They are: notice of meeting, meeting agenda and minutes of meeting.

14.3.1 Notice of Meeting

A notice of meeting is the means through which the intention to hold a meeting is publicised. Its circulation may be restricted to only those expected to attend or it may be unrestricted and therefore made public. In either case, it is necessary to give ample time for the notification to reach its target in time to give room for participants to include the meeting in their schedule. Poor notification usually leads to poor meeting attendance. Even a regular meeting needs a notice of meeting.

ILLUSTRATION 14.1

In this illustration, the bank is satisfying its legal obligation and, at the same time, making its AGM as enticing as possible.

LAGOON SIDE BANK LTD.

11-22 Bank Lane
Ramadi. Akobo State.

<http://www.lagoonside.com>

Office of the Secretary

February 1st, 2016

Tel. +234 33 234 0566

e-mail: sec@lagoonside.com

Dear Sir/Madam,

Notice of the 5th Annual General Meeting.

This is to inform you that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of shareholders comes up in the auditorium of Lake Kaba Holiday Resort on Monday the 16th of May, 2016 at 10.00am. In case you are unable to be personally present at the meeting, a proxy-form is hereby enclosed for your use so that you can be adequately represented.

This year's meeting promises to be exciting as the AGM is taking place in the south-east zone of the country for the first time ever.

Your copy of the 2014/2015 Annual Report which will be presented to the AGM is hereby enclosed.

We look forward to seeing you at Lake Kaba Holiday Resort. Yours

Yours faithfully,

A. O. Gamadi, J.P.

Company Secretary

14.3.2 Meeting Agenda

A meeting agenda is a step-by-step listing of all the activities that are billed to take place during a meeting. The singular form, *agendum*, though logically appropriate, is never used in this context. This is prepared by the secretariat responsible for planning the meeting, in consultation with the chairman of the meeting. It is usually circulated, along with the minutes of any previous meetings and the papers submitted for discussion, before the meeting in order to give those attending a chance to prepare their contributions well in advance. It is normal practice for the agenda to be adopted at the beginning of the meeting. And any issue that is of paramount importance that is not included in the circulated agenda may be taken before the commencement of the meeting.

At regular meetings, in particular, it is usual to start with the chairman's opening remarks, followed by the consideration and adoption of the minutes of a previous meeting. Next to be discussed are matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting(s). And finally the substantive issues of the current meeting are addressed.

ILLUSTRATION 14.2

A sample Agenda is presented here:

IKOFA LANDLORDS ASSOCIATION

5TH REGULAR MEETING OF THE IKOFA LANDLORDS ASSOCIATION HOLDING AT CITY HALL, IKOFA ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2006 AT 10.00AM.

AGENDA

1. Adoption of the Agenda.
2. Chairman's Opening Remarks
3. Adoption of the minutes of the 4th Regular Meeting held on Saturday, 23rd September, 2006
4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of 4th Regular Meeting
5. Reports from Committees:
 - Sanitation Paper No. 5/011/01

- Health Paper No. 5/011/02
- Schools Management Paper No. 5/011/03
- 6. Auditor's Report (Year ending June, 2006)
- 7. Report of an inquiry into the collapsed building at No. 2, Market Road.
- 8. Any Other Business
- 9. Adjournment
- 10. Date of next meeting

14.3.3 Minutes of Meeting

The third tool (in terms of sequence of acquisition) is the minutes of meeting. The minutes of a meeting are defined as the official record of all that transpires during the meeting. They are, therefore, written out and are formally adopted as the correct record of the proceedings of the meeting, usually at a subsequent meeting. There is a standard format for writing minutes: the title of the meeting, including details of place and time, is stated at the top of the title page; next, membership of the meeting is indicated, with provision to show whether a member was actually present or absent or sent in an apology (at the particular meeting); then come the 'substantive' matters for discussion. Such issues could be staff matters, reports from various committees or administrative and financial reports. The motion for adjournment comes at the end since it marks the formal closure of the meeting. Date of the next meeting may be decided just before the close at the meeting

ILLUSTRATION 14.3

The minutes of the meeting, whose agenda is presented in Illustration 13.2 above, could look as follows:

MINUTES OF THE 5TH REGULAR MEETING OF THE IKOFA LANDLORDS ASSOCIATION HELD AT CITY HALL, IKOFA, ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2006 AT 10.00AM.

5.1 Membership

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. | Chief I.O Akowonjo | Chairman |
| 2. | Justice Z. U Odo | Vice Chairman(AWA) |
| 3. | Dr. P. IEze | Member (Abs) |
| 4. | Madam C.U. Cashy | Member |
| 5. | Honourable N.M.I. Takeam | Member |
| 6. | Alhaji Mohammed Isa Abdul | Member |
| 7. | Rev. Teke Kulopodo | Member |
| 8. | Mr. S. A Juro | Member & Secretary |

AWA – Absent with apology

Abs– Absent

5.2 Adoption of the Agenda

The motion for the adoption of the agenda was moved by Madam Cashy and seconded by Hon. Takeam.

5.3 Chairman’s Opening Remark

The Chairman welcomed members to the 5th Meeting and expressed his satisfaction with the punctuality and large turnout of members.

5.4 Adoption of the Minutes of the 4th Regular Meeting held on Saturday, 23rd September, 2006.

The minutes of the 4th Regular Meeting were read and later adopted following a motion to that effect moved by Alh. Abdul seconded by Madam Cashy.

5.5 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 4th Regular Meeting

It was reported that the issue of the provision of adequate road traffic signs,

especially at Zebra Crossings, had been brought to the attention of the Chief Vehicle Inspection Officer, who had promised to look into the matter...

5.6 Reports from Committees

- Sanitation (Paper No. 5/011/01)

As its 10th regular meeting held on Saturday, 8th July, 2006, it was observed that 9th Street on 2nd Avenue had not had its refuse cleared for two consecutive weeks.

The Committee, therefore, directed the Zonal Supervisor (D), to take up the matter with the Ministry of Environment. The report was accepted, but the Chairman asked the Committee to maintain its vigilance and ensure that refuse did not pile up on the streets.

- Health (Paper No. 5/011/02)

The Committee was unable to submit a written report. But its Chairman, Justice Odo, was reported to have headed a team that visited the General Hospital last month.

- Schools Management (Paper No. 5/011/03)

The committee's submission could not be discussed for technical reasons.

5.7. Auditor's Report (Year ending Jun, 2006).

The Auditor's Report was presented by Mr. P.J. Sofu, Principal Partner, Sofu and Partners. The report ...

A motion for the acceptance of the report was moved by Madam Cashy and seconded by Hon. Takeam. The report was, therefore, accepted.

5.8. Report of an Inquiry into the collapsed building at No.2, Market Road.

It was reported that the Ad-hoc committee set up to look into the matter had not yet concluded its sittings. However, a verbal report was given by its Chairman, Rev. Kulopolo. A member pointed out the urgency of the matter and wondered why it was taking so long to conclude the case. The Chairman urged the Committee to speed up action so that it could submit its report at the next meeting.

5.9. Any Other Business

No issue was raised.

5.10 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4.00pm when a motion to that effect was moved by Rev. Kulopolo and seconded by Alh. Abdul.

5.11 Date of next meeting

The date of next meeting was fixed for Saturday, 24th January, 2007 at the usual time and venue.

Chairman

Secretary

14.4 TECHNICAL TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH MEETINGS

There are several operational terms, associated with meetings, which are designed to ensure the smooth conduct of such gatherings. Such terms as: quorum, motion, point of order, proxy, chairman, secretary voting and casting vote, etc. are hereby discussed.

14.4.1 Quorum

A quorum is the minimum number of the members of an assembly or society that must be present at a meeting in order for the meeting to be considered as valid. This is usually stated in the Constitution or the legal document setting up the body. It is a device to protect the body from any minority group that may meet and take decisions on behalf of the entire group. A meeting is called to order when the Chairman is satisfied that the quorum has been formed.

14.4.2 Motion

At a meeting, a motion is a formal proposal made by a member for the body to adopt the position taken by the house. Usually, a seconder of the motion is required before it is put up for adoption. However, there could be a counter motion, which takes the opposite view of the motion on the floor of the house. A decision to adopt either the motion or counter motion is made through voting: the majority decides which way to go.

14.4.3 Point of Order

When a member of a meeting feels that the correct procedure is not being taken in handling a matter, he raises a point of order, which temporarily stops all other discussions until the chairman decides whether it is “in order” or “out of order”. In the former case, the procedure must be corrected, whereas in the latter, the procedure would continue (since the point of order is not valid).

14.4.4 Proxy

A proxy is someone who has been authorized to represent someone else, especially in voting. An Annual General Meeting (AGM) of a company usually makes provision for such representation. A proxy has all the rights of a full member of a meeting.

14.4.5 Chairman

The Chairman presides over a meeting. Guided by the agenda, he dictates what is to be discussed at any point in time.

14.4.6 Secretary

The secretary is the scribe of the meeting. He takes the minutes of the meetings and ensures that the notice of meeting gets to all members ahead of each meeting. He or She is usually in charge of the logistics of the meeting.

14.4.7 Vote

A vote is the principal instrument used to decide the majority opinion at a meeting. The ballot may be open or secret.

14.4.8 Casting Vote

When voting is dead locked because no majority has emerged, the chairman has the right of a casting vote. The casting vote, then, is the extra vote (cast by the chairman) in order to decide an issue when votes on each side are equal.

14.4.9 Resolution

This is a formal decision passed by simple majority after necessary voting has been taken by members at any meeting.

14.4.10 Standing Order

This is a body of rules governing the conduct of meeting held by any particular Committee in the organisation.

14.4.11 *Sine die*

When a meeting is adjourned, or postponed, indefinitely, the Latin phrase, *sine die* is used. What this means is that one specific date has been fixed for the next meeting.

14.4.12 Ad-hoc

This is a Latin word and is used when a committee is set up for a specific or special purpose and is wound up as soon as the task for which it is set up is completed. An ad-hoc committee is opposed to standing committee.

14.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter, the reader has been exposed to the two basic types of meeting: formal and informal. It was shown that the former may be categorised into regular, special and emergency meetings. Finally, it has been demonstrated that the three fundamental tools of meetings are notice of meeting, meeting agenda and minutes of meeting. The success of a meeting is highly dependent on the judicious use of these tools. Some terms associated with meetings are also explained.

14.6 END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

14.6.1 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. ONE of the following is NOT a feature of a special meeting.
 - A. Handling of routine matters
 - B. No consideration of minutes of any previous meeting
 - C. Taking of minutes
 - D. Notice of meeting
 - E. Called to consider a specific issue or issues

2. Which of the following is NOT a feature of a regular meeting?
 - A. Notice of meeting
 - B. Consideration of minutes of a previous meeting

- C. Agenda
 - D. Motion for adjournment
 - E. Call to the bar
3. Which of the following is the purpose for convening an emergency meeting?
- A. There is a ceremony to be performed
 - B. There is a member of staff to be sent off
 - C. There is an urgent matter at hand
 - D. There is money to be shared
 - E. It is the middle of the month
4. ONE of the following is NOT a purpose for which a notice of meeting is sent to members of a meeting.
- A. Invite participants to an event
 - B. Inform participants prior to the take-off of an event
 - C. Inform participants after the take-off of an event
 - D. Give ample time for participants to plan to attend an event
 - E. Give room for participants to include an event in their schedule
5. Which of the following states the three fundamental tools of a meeting?
- A. Notice of Meeting, Chairman's Opening Remarks and Agenda
 - B. Notice of Meeting, Agenda and Minutes of Meeting
 - C. Minutes of Meeting, Chairman's Closing Remarks and Agenda
 - D. Agenda, Chairman's Opening Remarks and Chairman's Closing Remarks
 - E. Notice of Meeting, Chairman's Closing Remarks and Agenda

14.6.2 SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. A meeting convened to consider a particular issue is called a(n).....meeting.
2. A notice of meeting is essentially an indication of the intention to.....a meeting.
3. A meeting usually ends with a motion for.....
4. A motion must be.....for it to be valid.
5. Recording the minutes of a meeting is the responsibility of the.....

14.6.3 ESSAY

1. Discuss briefly the THREE different categories of meeting that may take place in an

organization.

2. Discuss briefly the THREE fundamental tools of meetings.

14.7 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

14.7.1 SOLUTION TO MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. A
2. E
3. C
4. C
5. B

14.7.2 SOLUTION TO SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. special
2. hold
3. adjournment
4. seconded
5. secretary

14.7.3 SOLUTIONS TO ESSAY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

Irrespective of the size of its membership, a formal meeting may be categorized as regular (statutory), special or emergency, depending on the circumstances in which it is called.

An organisation may have its regular (statutory) meetings once a month, for instance, on the last Thursday of the month at 3.00pm. All members of the organisation that are expected to attend regular meetings are supposed to give them priority in their schedule. This means avoiding scheduling other organisational or even personal matters to times that may clash with the regular meeting routine.

A special meeting of a body or an organisation could be summoned in case there is a specific matter that needs to be addressed on its own (i.e. outside routine matters, which are discussed at

regular meetings). This is usual for elections to specific positions, briefings or other big events. An emergency meeting of a body or an organisation is called when there is a case of an unforeseen matter that requires immediate attention. In view of the urgency attached to it, an emergency meeting tends to create higher levels of tension in its participants than those observed in people attending other categories of meeting

CHAPTER 15

REPORT· WRITING

15.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to

- identify different types of report writing;
- demonstrate different styles of writing reports;
- explore different ways of collating materials for report writing;
- exploit formatting techniques in report writing.

15.1 INTRODUCTION

Report writing is the art of recording an event or activity that has taken place through the use of conventional means and methods of writing. The Oxford English Dictionary defines a report as a statement of the results of an investigation or any matter on which definite information is required. It is the documentation of this "statement of...results" that constitutes the main aim of report writing. In this chapter, therefore, different types of report writing are identified while different styles that may be used for the exercise are examined. Furthermore, different ways of collating materials will be explored before presenting different formatting techniques used in the exercise.

15.2 TYPES OF REPORT

Broadly speaking, reports may be classified as technical or non-technical. While non-technical report is informal, technical report is very formal. In educational, especially academic circles, it is the latter that comes to mind whenever report writing is mentioned. Nonetheless, there are different types of technical reports covering: laboratory (research or experimentation), hard-core technical (subject-specific research), industrial (research or experience) or field trip (research or experience). In spite of their variety, all these forms of reports writing share certain features in terms of style and format.

15.2.1 NON-TECHNICAL REPORT

Any literate person writes non-technical report from time to time. When we witness an event, we may be asked to write a report on what we have witnessed. For instance, a lady's handbag is snatched at a bus stop. If the police, in their investigation, request two eye-witnesses to write separate reports on what they saw, it is not impossible that the two reports may not look alike in terms of format and even details. This is essentially due to the fact that a non-technical report is not bound by strict guidelines. The writer is free to express himself or herself in his or her own way.

15.2.1.1 Eye-witness Reports

An eye-witness report is one in which an individual is called upon to relate his or her own account of an evidence. In law court and similar establishments where such reports are called for, one is at liberty to use one's personal style.

15.2.1.2 Feedback Reports

The feedback report is also non-technical. It is a way of supplying information to an authority or any inquirer. A popular type of the feedback report is one in which a large box is provided within an organisation. All that the feedback reporter needs to do is to feed the box with the quantum of information he or she wishes to divulge. There is no regulated format of presentation.

15.2.1.3 Anonymous Reports

An anonymous report is one in which the writer seeks to hide his or her identity. As in all other non-technical reports, anonymous report is a personalised account of the information a writer wishes to pass on to his or her reader.

15.2.2 TECHNICAL REPORTS

Technical reports are essentially different from non-technical reports in terms of format. The former are regulated, while the latter are not. Technical reports come in various forms. Virtually any branch of human knowledge can generate a technical report peculiar to its discipline e. g. law report, investigative panel report, administrative panel report, sales report, parliamentary report, committee report, etc. In short, a technical report is characterised by the following features: a laid-down format, formal language, accuracy of account and an elaborate style. Some technical reports are discussed below.

15.2.2.1 Administrative Panel Report

An administrative panel report is usually initiated by a constituted authority. When such a panel is set up, it is usually given certain terms of reference to guide its operation. When the panel finishes its assignment, it must submit a report. That report is guided by specific principles as far as its format is concerned.

Information about the setting up of the panel, its member, terms of reference and its *modus operandi*, is contained in the introductory part of the report. The body of the report presents the core of the investigation. Thereafter, a conclusion is arrived at. It is not unusual to make recommendations.

15.2.2.2 Sales Reports

A sales report is a specialised technical report with the ultimate aim of presenting a picture of a business organisation in terms of the sales of its products. As in all technical reports, a sales report is guided by specifications in terms of format: introduction, body and conclusion (including recommendations where necessary)

15.2.2.3 Research Reports

A research report is an academic document *per excellence*. This implies that one needs several years of schooling in order to be able to handle it successfully. Virtually every higher institution and research centre adopts a format that is suitable for its purpose. Nevertheless, it should be noted that there are general features that are common to all of them.

ILLUSTRATION 15.1

To illustrate a Non-Technical Report, we present a newspaper correspondent's report (*Note the structure and language*):

Obasanjo commissions N24b Ibom power plant

From Taiwo Hassan. Uyo

The nation inched forward towards achieving 10,000 Mega Watts(MW) power generation capacity target by the end of this year, as President Olusegun Obasanjo yesterday in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State capital, commissioned the State's Independent Power Project (IPP), expected

to add 191 MW to the national grid.

The plant, which is the first phase of the Ibom Power Project, cost \$19.1million (N24.4 billion) and is expected to be connected to the national grid in July, when it will fully come on stream.

Construction on the second phase is billed to take off in 24months time with an installed capacity for 586 MW at an estimated cost of \$400 million.

Speaking at the commissioning yesterday in Uyo, President Obasanjo said the coming of the Ibom Power Plant is a dream come true as it would further increase the nation's power generation capacity.

Besides, the president noted that the power plant would open a window of opportunities for the manufacturing industries to harness their business and boost power supply to the households.

He said: "I have come here to celebrate with you, the governor and people of Akwa Ibom State because this project is worthy of being celebrated. As we can see, we have a dream when looking at the financial involvement risks in this project, so we have cause to dream economically because of the delivery of such a significant power plant. We uphold the dream and the dream has come to reality.

"I must say here that out of the 36 states in the country, your State is one of the very few States that have put more efforts and commitments towards the development of the power sector.

Also, I am particularly delighted that this Ibom Power Plant, when it fully comes on stream, would also add to the national grid in attaining the10,000 MW I have promised that will come at the end of this year."

In his welcome address at the occasion, the State Governor, Obong Victor Attah said that it became clear to his administration, right from its inception, that anun reliable, erratic supply of electricity would impede the desire to stimulate economic growth and build a knowledge-based economy.

According to Attah, the electricity power situation in the State was so poor that it could not open opportunities for both the private and public sector to utilise their economic potentials that would have driven the State's investments forward.

He confirmed that the Ibom Power Project phase one cost over \$191million, out of which the state government contributed about \$140million, while about \$80million was coughed out by the Federal Government, as part of its commitments to ensure that the power plant sees the light of the day.

The Governor said that the cost of the plant is very competitive and below estimates for similar plants elsewhere. "A financial model has been developed to determine the optimal refinancing plan for this project and to evaluate the anticipated returns on capital invested."

(Culled from *The Guardian*, May18, 2007).

15.3 FORMAT OF A TECHNICAL REPORT

Style relates to language choice and use. There is no restriction as to the choice of language in which a report should be written; virtually any written language could serve the purpose. However, social and financial considerations sometimes favour widely- used languages. Language use, on the other hand, is more restrictive. The report writer must use standard language. It should be formal, but not unnecessarily complex. In fact, simple, comprehensible language is highly recommended.

In report writing, there is a standard format, which is universally accepted. The report comes in book form with sections appearing in the following serial order: Title Page, Acknowledgement, Table of Contents, Abstract, Introduction (including Background Information; Literature Review; Theoretical Framework), Methodology, Results or Findings, Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations, References and Appendices.

15.3.1 Title Page

Apart from the title of the report, the title page contains information such as the name of the author (sometimes indicating titles held and institutional address), the sponsor, programme or context within which the report is done and the date (especially the month and year).

15.3.2 Acknowledgements

This is the section that gives the writer an opportunity to thank individuals or bodies that rendered service or assistance during the collection of information and the subsequent production of the report.

15.3.3 Table of Contents

All sections and sub-sections of the report are indicated here including their titles and the pages where they are located. Tables and Figures are entered separately on the list.

15.3.4 Abstract

The abstract page contains a summary of the entire report, highlighting what it set out to do, how it did it, what the major findings or results were and what it could, therefore, conclude and recommend.

ILLUSTRATION15.2

Here is an abstract of a report:

ABSTRACT

This report commissioned by the Federal Government (FG), gives, in its preliminary pages, background information on the circumstances that led to the constitution of an investigative panel into allegations of fraud in the Federal Ministry of Finance. As part of its introductory chapter, the report gives an overview of the Ministry, pointing out the specific departments that were targeted. The interview method was the main instrument of data collection, as explained in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 gives details of the findings of the panel, which include over-centralisation of power, high levels of job dissatisfaction, especially among members of the lower cadre staff, and lack of adequate monitoring. The report, therefore, concludes, in Chapter 4, that there are enough grounds on which to uphold five out of the seven allegations of fraud and, therefore, recommends that the Ministry is due for a complete overhaul of its activities in order to forestall a recurrence of the incidence.

15.3.5 Introduction

The introduction is the section that opens the gate to what the research has to offer. It may include such sub-sections as Background Information, Literature Review, Theoretical Framework, Statement of the Problem, Aims and Objectives, Delimitation of the Study and Significance of the Study, depending on the nature of the report.

15.3.6 Methodology:

This is the section of the report that describes how the investigation was carried out: the types of instrument used (e.g. questionnaire or interview) sample selection and the method of analysis adopted.

15.3.7 Results or Findings

Results or findings are presented sequentially, sometimes with the aid of tables, graphs, pie charts, bar charts and diagrams.

15.3.8 Discussion

This sub-section may sometimes be merged with 15.3.7 above. The important thing is that results or findings should not just be simply presented- they should be rigorously discussed and analysed.

15.3.9 Conclusion and Recommendations

This section closes the report after giving a summary of what was presented, highlighting the major findings and the conclusions that could be deduced from them. Recommendations as to what still needs to be done by future studies or the possible solutions to matters yet unresolved are stated in this section. In some reports, the conclusion section may be separated from the recommendations section.

15.3.10 References

References are all the written materials alluded to in the body of the report. Details of author's name (surname first), title of the material, place of publication, publishers as well as date of publication (and in case of journal articles, volume and page numbers) are supplied in this section. References are arranged alphabetically, based on authors' surnames. References list may use any of the well-known referencing formats such as American Psychological Association (APA), Turabian Citation, Modern Languages Association (MLA), Internet Citation formats, etc. For example:

The American Psychological Association referencing format has the following features:

- i. Book

Author(s); Date; Title of book; Place of publication; Publisher; page(s)

- ii. Journal or magazine article
Author(s); Date; Title of journal/magazine; Publisher; Title of article;
Volume; page(s)
- iii. Reference from Website
Author(s); Date; Title; Date of retrieval; e.g.
<http://www.bradley.edu/campusorg/...>

It should be noted that whereas a list references includes all materials in the body of the writeup, the induction of materials not referred to in the text transforms the list into a bibliography. In current practice, a list of references is preferred to a bibliography

15.3.1.1 Appendice.

Appendices constitute supplementary information which the writer puts at the disposal of the reader of the report. These may include details of interview questions or questionnaire items used in the study or maps and other illustrative materials.

15.4. ORGANIZATION OF A REPORT

In writing a report, order is essential. Information should neither be scattered nor disorganised. The entire report should have a logical sequence, which the average reader is able to perceive. Headings and sub-headings should be clearly visible and precise so as to guide the reader's train of thought appropriately. There may be several drafts of the same report, since the writer must "cross the *t's*" and dot the *i's*" of the report before submitting it. This may involve reviewing the structure, order of presentation of findings, clarifying terms, abbreviations, special usages, etc.

15.5 REPORT PRESENTATION

The final outlook of a report should be given close attention. Margins should be wide enough to give room for possible binding; paragraphing should not be disproportionate; headings should be emboldened or underlined; diagrams, examples and all other illustrations should be numbered, labelled and placed appropriately in the body of the report.

15.6 SUMMARY

In this chapter, report writing is defined as the art of documenting an event or activity

that has taken place through the use of conventional means and methods of writing. Two basic types of reports were identified: technical and non-technical. It has been shown that the former is regulated by a standard format, which is analysed step-by-step. Finally, it is demonstrated that the organisation and layout of a report are crucial elements to its appeal. Report writing, then, must be handled with care.

15.7 END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

15.7.1 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. Which of the following is **NOT** a type of technical report?
 - A. Research report
 - B. Scientific report
 - C. Committee report
 - D. Spectator's report of a football match
 - E. Investigative report of a communal riot

2. **ONE** of the following is **NOT** a part of a technical report.
 - A. Title Page
 - B. Table of Contents
 - C. Acknowledgement
 - D. Invitation
 - E. Conclusion

3. The general appeal of a report is **NOT** dependent on **ONE** of the following.
 - A. Language choice
 - B. Language use
 - C. Format
 - D. Organization
 - E. Launching ceremony

4. Which of the following is **NOT** included in the appendix section of a report?
 - A. Conclusion
 - B. Maps
 - C. Transcripts of interviews
 - D. Questionnaire
 - E. Graphs

5. The reference section of a report contains the following **EXCEPT**

- A. Author's names are arranged alphabetically
- B. Titles of cited works are indicated in full
- C. Year of publication for each entry is indicated
- D. Acknowledgement
- E. Names of publishers

15.7.2 SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. The main aim of writing a report is to _____ an event.
2. A report maybe technical or _____
3. A technical report is _____ in nature.
4. Maps and tables that provide additional information in a report are contained in the _____ section of the report.
5. The section where the writer of a report thanks those who contributed to the success of the report is known as _____

15.7.3 ESSAY

1. Identify and discuss briefly any FIVE features of a technical report.
2. Discuss briefly THREE types of non-technical report.

15.8 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

15.8.1 SOLUTION TO MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

1. D
2. D
3. E
4. A
5. D

15.8.2 SOLUTION TO SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (SAQ)

1. record/document
2. non-technical
3. formal

4. appendix
5. acknowledgement

15.8.3 SOLUTIONS TO END OF CHAPTER ESSAY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

In report writing, there is a standard format, which is universally accepted. The report comes in book-form with sections appearing in the following serial order: Title Page, Acknowledgement, Table of Contents, Abstract, Introduction (including Background Information; Literature Review; Theoretical Framework), Methodology, Results or Findings, Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations, References and Appendices.

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Acknowledgement

This is the section that gives the writer an opportunity to thank individuals or bodies that rendered service or assistance during the collection of information and the subsequent write-up of the report.

Table of Contents

All sections and sub-sections of the report are indicated here including their titles and the pages where they are located. Tables and Figures are entered separately on the list.

Abstract

The abstract page contains a summary of the entire report, highlighting what it set out to do, how it did it, what the major findings or results were and what it could, therefore, conclude and recommend.

Introduction

The introduction is the section that opens the gate to what the research has to offer. It may include such sub-sections as: Background Information, Literature Review, Theoretical

Framework, Statement of the Problem, Aims and Objectives, Delimitation of the Study and Significance of the Study, depending on the nature of the report.

Methodology

This is the section of the report that describes how the investigation was carried out: the types of instrument used (e.g. questionnaire or interview); samples selection and the method of analysis adopted.

Results or Findings

Results or findings are presented sequentially, sometimes with the aid of Tables, Graphs, Pie Charts, Bar Charts and Diagrams.

Discussion

This sub-section may sometimes be merged with “results or findings”. The important thing is that results or findings should not just be simply presented - they should be rigorously discussed and analyzed.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This section closes the report after giving a summary of what was presented, highlighting the major findings and the conclusions that could be deduced from them. Recommendations as to what still needs to be done by future studies or the possible solutions to matters yet unresolved are stated in this section. In some reports, the conclusion section may be separated from the recommendations section.

References

References are all the written materials alluded to in the body of the report. Details of author's name (surname first), title of the material, place of publication, publishers as well as date of publication (and in case of journal articles, volume and page numbers) are supplied in this section. References are arranged alphabetically, based on authors' surnames. Reference list may use any of the well-known referencing formats such as American Psychological Association (APA), Turabian Citation, Modern Language Association (MLA), Internet Citation formats, etc.

It is no longer fashionable to have a Bibliography section (i.e. a list of all materials that may be connected with the subject in question) because there is no evidence that all such materials have been consulted in this case. So, the list of references is considered adequate.

Appendice.

Appendices constitute supplementary information which the writer puts at the disposal of the reader of the report. These may include details of interview questions or questionnaire items used in the study or maps and other illustrative materials.

QUESTION 2

There are several types of non-technical reports. These reports are generally short in length, simple, may be given in chronological order and follow no specific format. Three of them are discussed below:

(a) Eye-witness Reports

An eye-witness report is one in which an individual is called upon to relate his or her own account of an event. In the law court and similar establishments where such reports are called for, one is at liberty to use one's personal style.

(b) Feedback Reports

The feedback report is also non-technical. It is a way of supplying information to an authority or any enquirer. A popular type of the feedback report is one in which a large box is provided within an organization. All that the feedback reporter needs to do is to feed the box with the quantum of information he or she wishes to divulge. There is no regulated format of presentation.

(c) Anonymous Reports

An anonymous report is one in which the writer seeks to hide his or her identity. As in all other non-technical reports, an anonymous report is a personalised account of the information a writer wishes to pass on to his or her reader.

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