Communicative Skills I Core – 405 (1) University written examination of Unit 1 to 4 shall be of 40 Marks (10 Marks per Unit) (2) Viva-voce for Unit-5 shall be of 30 marks

Unit Topic Unit – 1 ELT : Position, Problems and Prospects

Unit – 2 Methods of English Language Teaching Audio Lingual Method Direct Method Grammar Translation Method Natural Approach Situational Language Teaching

Unit – 3 Listening : • What is listening ? • Types and functions of Listening • Barriers to Listening • Ways to improve Listening

Unit – 4 Speaking : • What is Speaking ? • Contexts of Speaking 6 • Discussion Skills and Presentation Skills • Class Seminars – Strategies for Success

Unit – 5 Viva –Voce will be based from the Unit I to IV

M.A. Sem I- Core English – 405

M.A. Sem I – Communication Skill - 405

Unit- 1 - ELT : Position, Problems and Prospectus

English as a potent vehicle of communication serves a link language in a multicultural and multilingual society like India, and also as a global Linguistic mediator. The (un)fortunate historical accident in the form of India's encounter with the British brought English in our country, and its continued presence in our classroom eco-socio-political and cultural discourse for different reasons demands re-thinking of its role and its significations. In this age of rapid communications, the relationships of English languages should be of pressing interes. This alludes to a need to (re) define or (re) conceptualize the position of English (as part of the language policy) in new ways. India is a vast country, a country of great variations and contrasts. People from different provinces in India speak different languages. Indians have varied forms of social etiquette, religio-philosophic customs, socio- cultural patterns and socio-linguistic parameters. A multiplicity of language patterns is the hallmark of socio-linguistic reality in India. Language behaviors varies from Socio-geographic group to group, as does the way which

languages are officially Recognized and used for communication purposes. English language (the global code) has been in contact with the local codes in Indian socio-linguistic context. English has been caught in the ceaseless flux of Indian life and thought at the present time. There is a lot of political undercurrent below the championing and opposition to the learning and use of English.

Nevertheless, English is being studied /taught in greater or smaller degree in schools, colleges and the universities all over the country. Teaching of English suffers from the general malaise that afflict the educational system of India. It has been dawned upon the country's educational policy-makers that if English is at all learnt and taught then it should be learnt and taught well. This implies the learning and teaching of English in terms of the well-known four basic skills of language learning, viz., speaking listening, reading and writing. Listening and speaking are the two neglected skills in classrooms in India. English is spoken variously in different parts of the country. We can not expect a uniform standard of pronunciation for a second language in such a vast country, where even the mother tongue is spoken differently by different groups of the people belonging to the same language community. In learning to speak English, the mother tongue generally interferes with its pronunciation. The learners as well as the teachers speak English with regional language habits. Since English is not a medium of instructions in schools and colleges in India, Indian students cannot practice and perfect their English pronunciation. Even during the English periods most teachers teach English without giving the students proper practice in speech because they are not properly equipped enough to practice it. The result is that after learning /teaching English for many years at school and college, most people cannot speak the language with intelligible accuracy.

Listening is an important language learning skill and yet the most neglected skill in Indian class rooms. It is neglected because the teachers take it for granted that learners automatically acquired this skill without any special training. It is an active process. The skill can be depicted as below:

Input -> processing -> output.

Good listeners must process good understanding of phonetics and rules of grammar. They must relate the patterns of intonation, weak forms of sounds and rhythm of connected speech.

The typical Indian English classrooms in educational institutions are characterized by a poor attendance of learners, disinterestedness and constraint of time as well as the burden of an extensive course that fails to address the crucial and current need for attainment of English communicative skills. In order to bring a change in the whole scenario of English learning and teaching it is essential that we are aware of the pits that plague it presently so that we can avoid them in future. The curriculum requires re-assessing and altering, with a view to deal with the need for imparting of communicative skills to the students. The curriculum should be made from the students' need for development of communicative competence.

The people who have proficiency in this language could access large number of jobs and also were seen holding high positions in many National and International Organizations. In the earlier days English was just like a Library language, but now that notion has changed totally. At present the challenges visible before the English language teachers in India are diverse and it is necessary for them to shape up accordingly to meet the demands of the day. If language teachers teach as they taught earlier, then one may not achieve the required goals of teaching English in the present global scenario.

Problems of Teaching English at Elementary School level

[1] *Lack of Clear-cut Aims:* There is a general lack of clarity about the aims and objectives of teaching of English in India. The policy framers have tried but failed to specify clear-cut aims and objectives of teaching English in schools. The teachers know that they have to teach the subject since it is included in the syllabus. The students understand that they must study this subject as they will be examined in it. In English medium schools, English is taught from the very beginning. Whatever the situation, students learn English as a knowledge subject not as a skill subject. It is this reason why teaching and learning of English in Indian schools and colleges is in a muddle.

[2] *Over–crowded classes:* With the expansion of education, there is unprecedented growth of numbers at the higher education stage. This phenomenon

is carried forward to the school stage and from there to secondary and the university stage. Sixty to seventy students is regarded as the normal class-size and in certain cases the class size is 100 to 120 students. Teachers of English experience a lot of problems in handling such a big class. It is difficult to pay due attention to individual students and this is very much desirable in English classroom.

The most important practical problem related to the teaching of English in India is the presence of large number of learners. All the learners don"t come from the same socio-linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds. Generally, teachers are reluctant to divide the class into groups or teams. Some care has to be taken over the allocation of students to groups (to make things better). It is essential that the members of each group be naturally congenial. The teachers may find that they have to make a few changes before the groups are all happily settled. It is practically impossible in Indian class rooms that the groups are approximately equal in ability. There are many varieties of group and tutorial methods.

[3] *Unhygienic Physical Conditions*: English is being learnt in Indian schools under cramped, unhygienic and unfavourable physical conditions. In most of the schools the children are obliged to sit on the old-fashioned type of benches and desks which restrict the movement. The classrooms are neither well ventilated nor enough light is allowed to spread inside.

[4] *Lack of Competent Teachers*: Incompetent teachers are the main source of trouble as far as the teaching of English in our institution is concerned. They are either trained in old methods and have never cared to look for something better in new techniques or there are those who receive new insight but never apply their knowledge to actual teaching work and remain satisfied with routine methods. Sometimes, English is taught by those who did not offer this subject while under training.

[5] *Faulty Methods of Teaching*: The teaching of English in India suffers from the faulty methods of teaching. In most of the schools, the Translation Method is the sole favorite with the teachers. The teacher picks up the textbook, translates the paragraph, writes the meanings of difficult words on the blackboard and assigns some homework and that is all. No attention is ever paid to pronunciation practice,

listening comprehension and structure practice. So, when they pass out, they are as ignorant as they were when they first entered the English class.

[6] *Text Oriented Teaching* : The text books of English used in our schools are sub-standard. The books are edited or written by those who are not actual practicing teachers. No effort is made to select beforehand graded vocabulary for use in the text books. The teaching of English in India has been text-oriented since the beginning (colonial times). Objectives of teaching and learning English have undergone a sea-change in the years after Independence. Still English education in India is text-oriented . The same continues even after sixty or seventy years of time. Bookish knowledge of English does not help the learners at all. Literature can be a means of teaching English. Literature should not be taught for the sake of aesthetic purpose only. There are only a few universities in India, which offer a full paper on language or applied linguistics even at the post-graduate level. English hons. and M.A. course are full of literature staff. Course-designer don't understand(or they don't want understand) the fact text –orientation (mainly canonical text) leads to nowhere.

[7] *Apathy to New Techniques and Procedures*: Most of the teachers working in middle and high schools are both ignorant and apathetic to the new techniques and procedures of teaching of English. The new generation of teachers is being given training in new methods but these teachers fail miserably when they are actually put on the job. "Peer teaching", "role play" , "group activities" are rare in Indian classrooms. In India, lectures speak. The class listens passively. The learners are not encouraged to ask questions. Many lectures are ineffective due to problem of delivery, pace and production. The teachers must involve their students to work in groups and teams and prepare term papers , projects, etc. Even at the PG level, students are not encouraged to go for projects, seminars and conferences. Therefore, in spite of being taught English in school and college for several years, learners fail to learn the language: they cannot write in acceptable English of their own, cannot use English appropriately and fluently in speech and often cannot understand conversations in English. Why does this happen ? Does it mean that the English teachers in India cannot teach? Or does it mean that problem lies elsewhere : in syllabus, text material, methodology of teaching or in evaluation ?

[8] *Inadequate Provision of Teaching Aids*: A general survey of teaching in schools would reveal that most of the teaching is being done without the help of any aid. The teacher of English hardly takes any initiative to prepare even simple charts or flashcards which can greatly help them in teaching their subject well.

[9] *Insufficient Provision for the subject in the Timetable*: In the absence of uniform all India policy, there is insufficient provision for the subject in the time-table. In most of the states, English is introduced in the V or VI class and it is taught for about six hours a week on the average.

[10] *Neglect of Correction Work:* Correction of exercise books which is most essential is not paid proper attention by our teachers. The students are not in the habit of having a remedial practice of the mistakes pointed out by the teacher remain only on the pages of the exercise books of the students which is absolutely useless. In fact, the right method is to correct in the presence of the students which is not possible in the overcrowded classrooms.

[11] *Exam oriented:* The English language learning syllabus is created wholly from the exam point of view; As a result the content does not focus on raising the level of communicative competence of the students and is confined in the narrow confines of the exam paper.

[12] *Impractical*: Today's world is a world based on effective communication and exchange of information on a global scale. Keeping this in mind it is necessary that the language teaching course as implemented should prepare the students for this world. However it is really tragic that it fails miserably in this context for the curriculum does not address this particular aspect of language learning, which is the need of this practical world. The course does not include any kind of practical impairment of knowledge especially in language learning. "In Indian classrooms, lecturers speak, the class listens passively……Indian classroom (up to graduation level) often do not allow projects, seminars, conferences etc" .

Remedies (Prospectus) for the Problems of Teaching English Language
[1]The Policy regarding the Place of English should be well-defined:
English offers vast opportunities to all. The policy regarding the place of English in our education system should be well defined. This should be determined keeping in view its use and vast opportunities in the field of science, technology, social sciences, philosophy, area studies, journalism, international trade and diplomacy.

[2] **Building a rapport with your class:**
When you enter the class for the first time, it is very important that you give a welcoming smile to your students and greet them saying, 'Good morning, class! How are you feeling today?' or something like that. This is a very significant first step. There are many levels at which this works. First, your class is probably intimidated about the very fact that they are learning the most important language of the world. Your assuring smile and greeting them in a familiar manner helps them bond with you instantly. When they bond with you, they will find learning the language easier. Remember a smile always welcomes people to interact with you. Same way if you have a smiling face, then the students will feel free to express their views to you.

[3] **Adopting the different methods of Teaching in the classroom teaching-learning process:**
The teacher while teaching English should use the different methods of teaching English to the students. The different methods will make her teaching and the learning of the students effective. Language education usually takes place at a language school. There are many methods of teaching languages. Some have fallen into relative obscurity and others are widely used; still others have a small following, but offer useful insights. The teacher can also make use of the Language Lab. Some of the methods of teaching English are as follows:
1. The grammar translation method.
2. The direct method.
3. The series method.
4. Variation of direct method.
5. The oral approach/Situational language teaching.
6. Audio-lingual method
7. Communicative language teaching.
8. Language immersion. Minimalist/Methodist.
9. Directed practice.
10. Learning by teaching

[4] **Building confidence for the language in the students:**
 At the first meeting itself, train your students to ask some simple English questions, and give their answers. Examples are 'What is your name?', 'Which country are you from?', 'Who is your best friend?' etc. Many teachers of English as a second language make the mistake of beginning with the alphabet. This is wrong. When you train them to ask questions on the first day itself, your students will definitely show off these questions to their folks. And their interest in the language will be built. They will come with higher hopes of learning more things the next day. Starting out with the alphabet cannot achieve this 'English is fun' feeling

in the minds of your students. Same way, the teacher should emphasize more on the language learning skills than the portion completion at the under-graduate level.

[5] **The teacher should keep in mind the aims of teaching English:**
The teacher should always emphasize on the aims of teaching English. It will help her to teach effectively.

These aims are:
1. To enable the students to understand English when spoken,
2. To enable him to speak English,
3. To enable him to read English,
4. To enable him to write English.

[5] **Improvement in the teaching facilities:** Special efforts should be made to ensure that teachers get proper teaching facilities, including space, books, and teaching aids. The school and the college libraries should subscribe good journals which may enable them to know the latest developments in the field of linguistics and English Language Teaching.

[6] **UGC should play active role:**
The University Grants Commission should play an active role in the development of foreign language discipline in the country. Research in the field of methodology, materials production, textbook writing and original research in English and foreign languages should be liberally financed.

[7] **Starting a thought process in the students' minds:**
Make it a very firm rule, but subtly implied, that there will be no other language spoken in your class other than English. This will be very difficult at first, especially when the students are hell-bent on translating new English words they learn into their own language. Do not encourage this. But also remember that the students are trying their best. Be gentle with them when they attempt to translate English into their language. Exhort them to think in English. This is a mammoth task, and can be achieved only after some weeks, or probably months, of teaching.

[8]**The teachers should be competent:** Special efforts should be made to ensure that teachers of English themselves possess a good command of English. The teachers appointed should be very competent, and should always update their knowledge from time to time.

[9] **Building basic communication skills in the students:** Never teach your students. Always speak with them. Converse with the students about day-to-day things. Keep talking with them in simple English. They will talk when the initial icebreakers are done with. And when they will talk, they will learn. Encourage your students to talk.

[10] **Handling Mistakes with care:** Do not convert your English class into a caricature of Mind Your Language. Mistakes will happen in the class, and you

have to learn how to handle them deftly. If you laugh at the students, they will be too embarrassed to make any further attempts at speaking the language. If you do not laugh, students will feel you are only being too kind to them, and might always think they have said something wrong, but you are hiding your amusement. In time, some of the students in your class will point out the mistakes of others. When this happens, follow a subtle approach at correcting the mistakes, laughing with them wherever appropriate.

Conclusion

Teaching English as a second language is really fun if you do it the right sporting way. You have to make it fun for your students too – that's the way they will learn better. English occupies a place of prestige in our country but at the same time we must accept that the standard of its teaching has deteriorated vastly and that is why it is essential to know the problems of teaching English in India at Elementary level in the schools. Then alone we can remove these problems and teach students effectively for better results. The whole approach is very flexible and eclectic, without being rigid and dogmatic. These above underlying principles of successful foreign language teaching can be applied to real classroom situation in Indian schools to impart good knowledge and improve learning conditions

The methods of Teaching English

Introduction:

The history of Language teaching in India, as we know, has a long tradition. Memorization of vocabulary and translation of sentences often formed the major part of such learning process in the past. Ancient languages such as Sanskrit and Pali were mastered in India through the process of memorization of texts and vocabulary lists. Learning vocabulary lists indeed formed the core of language learning. But this tradition of language teaching has been subjected to a tremendous change, especially, throughout the 20th century.

In case of English language teaching in India, there are some milestones in the development of this tradition. According to D. Kanta Rao and J.M.Kanthi Thilakha: "If language teachers teach as they taught earlier, then one may not achieve the required goals of teaching English in the present global scenario. So, there could be as many ways of learning languages as there are people learning them. The way one learnt English is not exactly the way one is teaching it. Again, the way one acquired one's mother-tongue may be quite different from the way one learnt English. The following observation by V. Saraswathi is very important to quote in this connection. She says: "There is no best method. The history of language teaching presents a fascinating variety of methods. If there is such a variety of methods, which one are we to choose? There is no definite answer to this question, what works with one learner may not work with another. One may be a wizard in grammar but another may just hate it. Others might enjoy memorizing sentences."

With this backdrop, it would be proper at this juncture to review the methods and approaches that have been used by the teachers of English in India in general and Maharashtra in particular. A teacher at times uses a single approach, a single method, or even resorts to multiple approaches and methods in view of several factors including the background, age of learners, and the teaching items. The skill of a teacher lies in shifting to and evolving

new approaches and methods of teaching English comfortably in the Indian context. Therefore, an attempt has been made to review some of the methods and approaches which are being used commonly by the teachers of English in India.

English Language Teaching Methods:

The Grammar - Translation method, the Direct method, Audio-lingual method, The Natural Method and the Situation Method etc., are among the methods used commonly by the teachers of English in India. An attempt, therefore, has been made to review these methods as below:

[1] The Grammar - Translation Method:

This method, also known as the classical method, is one of the oldest or traditional methods of teaching English. In Europe it was used in the teaching of Latin and Greek for several centuries, and got introduced in India with the arrival of the British. This method as Tickoo said: "came to English Language Teaching in most of Asia in general and India in particular with support in the long- established tradition of teaching classical languages in the United Kingdom. The system of education in the country served as a model for schools in most of its colonies. The psychological beliefs that prevailed then were (a) that classical languages with their intricate systems of grammar were capable of training human faculties including memory, and (b) that learning these languages was part of a truly liberal education. Teaching and learning primarily aimed at the ability to read full texts rather than to communicate orally in everyday situations".

Thus, the above statement makes it clear that this method makes no provision for training in speech but lays stress on reading.

This method, according to Pahuja, "has no psychological basis but has two suppositions: that a foreign language can easily be learnt through translation and that grammar is the soul of language." Criticizing this method, Rouse remarks that the aim of this method was "to know everything about something, rather than the thing itself." Students found the method frustrating as they had to memorise words and rules. The use of 'L_1' in the classroom prevented the learner from developing confidence to communicate in English. The learners found it very difficult to emancipate themselves from the clutches of their mother- tongue. They were unable to use English in their day-to-day communication. The excessive obsession

with accuracy and competence in written rather than oral language inhibited learners who often preferred to remain silent rather than expose their ignorance.

The emphasis in this method is mainly on translation of English words, phrases, and passages into and from the mother-tongue of a learner. A number of methods and techniques have evolved for the teaching of English and also other foreign languages in the recent past, yet grammar-translation method is still in use in many parts of India. This method dominated European and other foreign language teaching for nearly a hundred years (1840 to 1940), till the advent of structural linguistics.

The popularity of this method among generations of teachers in India can be related to factors that are universal. As we know, it maintains the mother- tongue of the learner as the reference particularly in the process of learning the second / foreign languages. Again it does not require special training or specialised skills on the part of the teacher. Its special appeal for teachers in India lies in the long established beliefs in the power of memory and its successful use in early learning of not only languages but other subjects as well.

The method could best be put in use by discarding the overemphasis on the grammatical rules and by making a room for imparting training in the spoken aspects of English. The grammar-translation method in its modified form continues to be widely used in some parts of the world even today. In the mid-and late 19th century opposition to it gradually developed, and as a result of this it lost its hold in the domain of teaching of English.

[2] The Direct Method:

The direct method, sometimes also called as the 'reform' method, 'natural' method, 'psychological' method, 'phonetic' method, and 'anti- grammatical' method, was established in France and Germany around 1900, and introduced in India in the early 20th century as a reform which was needed in the methods of teaching English. This was developed, as Rao has pointed out, "as a reaction against the grammar-translation method".

The major assumptions of this method were in opposition to the grammar-translation method. Hence, it is considered as a reaction against the grammar-translation method with a distinct grammatical bias.   Again this

method is a logical extension of the Natural method. It is also an offshoot of the Behaviourist school of psychology. It insists that the key to all language learning lies in association. It stresses the need for direct association between experience and expression in the foreign language. The aim is to enable the learner to think in foreign language and to cultivate an unerring language sense. It recognises that language sense has its roots in the spoken language and lays stress on the oral approach.

In the opinion of Diller this method has one basic rule: "no translation is allowed". In fact, this method receives its name from the fact that meaning is to be conveyed directly in the target language through the use of demonstration and visual aids, with no recourse to the students' native language. For example, in a reading lesson to class V, a new word 'watch' occurs. If we associate it with its intermediate in the vernacular, i.e. 'Gharee', we are teaching the meaning indirectly; but if on the other hand, we associate the word with an actual 'watch' or with the picture of a watch, we are teaching the meaning directly.

If such a direct association is not possible, the teacher can explain the meaning of new words by giving synonyms, definitions, explanations, or by inference from the context. The same technique with a few modifications here and there, can be followed in teaching compositions-oral or written. Many new words can be added to the vocabulary of the learner without the intervention of the mother-tongue.

According to Bhatia and Bhatia, the main aim of teaching English by this method is to enable the learner: "to think in English and to discourage the practice of inwardly thinking in one's vernacular and then overtly translating the thought into the foreign language. He should be able to grasp what he hears or reads in English and should be able to express his thoughts and wishes directly and fluently so that in due course of time he obtains a real command over the language".

Teaching of receptive skills (listening and reading) rather than teaching of productive skills (speaking and writing) was encouraged as the first step. Contrastive analysis of the native language of the learner with the target language was done. Teachers are required to have a good knowledge of phonetics of the language they teach, but they would use it to teach

pronunciation and not phonetics. As this method uses conversation as the main tool in the teaching of a foreign language, the other tools are discussion and reading in the target language itself. Grammar is taught inductively.

W.F. Mackey points out the main characteristics of this method as: "there is an ample scope for the use of everyday vocabulary and structures; grammar is taught by creating situations through visual presentations. There is ample scope for extensive listening and imitation until form becomes automatic." Thus, it becomes evident that there is almost no scope for the learners' mother- tongue. The method presupposes that a second language could be acquired as one acquires one's mother-tongue through its ample natural exposure.

From the aforesaid statement it becomes clear that this method discards the use of L_1, even in teaching grammatical rules, favours the situational use of English, considers meaningful sentences at the core, teaches grammatical rules inductively, provides with ample opportunities to the students of using target language, takes care of the spoken aspects of the target language, and above all seeks gradual development of all, the basic linguistic skills viz-LSRW.

According to William E. Bull "any given method is only as effective as its implementation". He further adds that "the superior teacher has regularly gotten superior results regardless of the method." From the comments cited above it becomes evident that no method could be a complete one in itself. What makes it important is the man (the teacher) who does not allow the explanations in the students' native language creating English environment in the classroom. The main reason of the failure of this method in Indian context is perhaps the dearth of the expert teachers.

Therefore, the direct method considered better than the previous grammar-translation method, was not completely free from certain weaknesses either. For one thing the method is not all that direct, for only a limited number of words can be directly associated with their meanings or the objects they represent. Moreover, its main claim that it teaches a foreign language directly, and not through the mother-tongue, is only partly true.

[3] The Audio-Lingual Method:

During the World War II, American soldiers had an urgent need to learn languages like-German, French, Chinese or Japanese to communicate effectively when posted in various countries. The Army Specialised Training Programme (ASTP) was established in 1942 by American linguists to meet this urgent need. 55 American Universities were involved in the programme by the beginning of 1943. This technique of teaching was initially called the 'Army Method' and was the first to be based on linguistic theory and behavioural psychology.

The objective of this programme, as stated by Richards Jack, C. and T.S. Rodgers, was for students "to attain conversational proficiency in variety of foreign languages." Since this was not the goal of conventional foreign language courses in the US, new approaches were necessary. Leonard Bloomfield, a linguist at Yale, had already developed training programmes as a part of their linguistic research that were designed to give linguists and Anthropologists mastery of American-Indian languages and other languages they were studying. Textbooks did not exist for such languages. The technique which Bloomfield and his colleagues used was sometimes called as the 'informant method". Excellent results were achieved by this method.

The 'ASTP' lasted only two years but attracted considerable attention in the popular press and in the academic community. For the next ten years the army method and its suitability for use in regular language programmes were discussed.

Charles Fries of the University of Michigan led the way in applying principles from structural linguistics in developing the method and for this reason, it has sometimes been referred as the 'Michigan Method'.

Later in its development, principles from behavioural psychology were incorporated. It was thought that the way to acquire the sentence patterns of the target language was through conditioning- helping learners to respond correctly to stimuli through shaping and reinforcement. Learners could overcome the habits of their native language and form the new habits required to be target language speakers.

The term 'Audiolingualism' was coined by Nelson Brooks in 1964, highlighting the basic belief of structuralism that: 'speech is primary'. Language is viewed as a set of structures. The behaviourist theory of

learning was adopted. Language learning was assumed to involve a chain of stimulus-response-reinforcement; and it was believed that one learnt a language by acquiring a series of stimulus-response chain.

The Audio-lingual method, according to Thirumalai, in some sense: "represents a return to the Direct Method, as its main goal is to develop native-like speaking ability in its learners. It is an extension as well as refinement of the direct method. Translation and reference to 'L$_1$' are not permitted."

From the statements cited above it is evident that Audio-lingualism had its theoretical roots in the direct method; which was an extension of the Natural method. Again the audio-lingual method used exhaustively the linguistic structures identified in the descriptive analysis of the target language. It was skill oriented, with a practical emphasis on 'Oracy'.

This method provided 'contextualized' language practice in true-to-life situations including dialogue. Again, it provided a wide variety of activities to help maintain interest, and it made extensive use of visuals. It arranged for abundant practice although "the grammar based audiolingual approach moved cautiously from supposedly simple to more and more linguistically complex features, often without adequate consideration for what might be needed in everyday situations."

William Moulton has stated five important characteristics of this method as follows: "(i) Language is speech, not writing. (ii) Language is a set of habits. (iii) Teach the language, not about the language. (iv)A language is what its native speakers say, not what someone thinks they ought to say; and (v) Languages are different."

Thus, it becomes clear that this method emphasises teaching through oral presentation prior to written presentation. It believes in the fact that the children learn to speak before they learn to read or write. Thus, the teaching materials, that we prepare, should be based on the 'primacy of speech.'

B.F. Skinner strongly believes that 'a language is a set of habits.' He further adds that "language is verbal behaviour." Followers and supporters of this method were extremely influenced by its 'operant conditioning' theories. For them, the linguistic behaviour of the child can

change as does its social behaviour through the process of habit forming. The kind of thinking introduced mimicry, memorization, and pattern drill into foreign language teaching.

The increasing use of Audio-visual aids in second language teaching, according to Allen H.B. is based on the modern Audio-lingual theory which stresses on a 'listening-speaking-reading-writing sequence' in second language learning situations. The theory insists that 'learning to speak a language becomes easier, if the learner has enough training in comprehension.' Linguists and language teaching experts lay emphasis on planned listening experiences.

The Natural Method

In 1977, Tracy Terrell, outlined "a proposal for a 'new' philosophy of language teaching which (he) called the Natural Approach" . This was an attempt to develop a language teaching proposal that incorporated the "naturalistic" principles researchers had identified in studies of second language acquisition. The Natural Approach grew out of Terrell's experiences teaching Spanish classes, although it has also been used in elementary-to advanced-level classes and with several other languages. At the same time, he joined forces with Stephen Krashen, an applied linguist at the University of Southern California, in elaborating a theoretical rationale for the Natural Approach, drawing on Krashen's influential theory of second language acquisition. Krashen and Terrell's combined statement of the principles and practices of the Natural Approach appeared in their book The Natural Approach, published in 1983.

Krashen and Terrell identified the Natural Approach with what they call "traditional" approaches to language teaching. Traditional approaches are defined as "based on the use of language in communicative situations without recourse to the native language" – and, perhaps, without references to grammatical analysis, grammatical drilling, or a particular theory of grammar. Krashen and Terrell noted that such "approaches have been called natural, psychological, phonetic, new, reform, direct, analytic, imitative and so forth". There was an interest in developing principles for language teaching out of naturalistic principles of language learning, such as are seen in first language acquisition. This led to what have been termed

natural methods and ultimately led to the development of what came to be known as the Direct Method.

THE DIRECT METHOD

Gouin had been one of the first of the nineteenth-century reformers to attempt to build a methodology around observation of child language learning. Other reformers toward the end of the century likewise turned their attention to naturalistic principles of language learning, and for this reason they are sometimes referred to as advocates of a "natural" method. In fact, at various times throughout the history of language teaching, attempts have been made to make second language learning more like first language learning.

Among those who tried to apply natural principles to language classes in the nineteenth century was L. Sauveur (1826 - 1907), who used intensive oral interaction in the target language, employing questions as a way of presenting and eliciting language. He opened a language school in Boston in the late 1860s, and his method soon became referred to as the Natural Method. Sauveur and other believers in the Natural Method argued that a foreign language could be taught without translation or the use of the learner's native language if meaning was conveyed directly through demonstration and action. Rather than using analytical procedures that focus on explanation of grammar rules in classroom teaching, teachers must encourage direct and spontaneous use of the foreign language in the classroom.

Learners would then be able to induce rules of grammar. The teacher replaced the textbook in the early stages of learning. Speaking began with systematic attention to pronunciation. Known words could be used to teach new vocabulary, using mime, demonstration, and pictures. Thus the Natural Method is another term for what by 1900 had become known as the Direct Method.

The term natural, used in reference to the Direct Method, merely emphasized that the principles underlying the method were believed to conform to the principles of naturalistic language learning in young children. Similarly, the Natural Approach, as defined by Krashen and Terrell, is believed to conform to the naturalistic principles found in successful second language acquisition. Unlike the Direct Method, however, it places less

emphasis on teacher monologues, direct repetition, and formal questions and answers, and less focus on accurate production of target-language sentences. In the Natural Approach there is an emphasis on exposure, or input, rather than practice; optimizing emotional preparedness for learning; a prolonged period of attention to what the language learners hear before they try to produce language; and a willingness to use written and other materials as a source of comprehensible input.

THE NATURAL APPROACH ; View of language: Krashen and Terrell see communication as the primary function of language, and since their approach focuses on teaching communicative abilities, they refer to the Natural Approach (NA) as an example of a communicative approach. The Natural Approach "is similar to other communicative approaches being developed today". They reject earlier methods of language teaching, such as the Audiolingual Method, which viewed grammar as the central component of language. According to Krashen and Terrell, the major problem with these methods was that they were built not around "actual theories of language acquisition, but theories of something else.

6. **The Situation Method;**

This approach is also known as situational language teaching. British applied situational approach developed by linguists. It dated from 1930s to the 1960s and which had an impact on language courses. Many teachers are still using this approach. This approach is based on the structural view of language. In this approach speech is emphasized as the basis of the language and structure is very important for developing speaking ability. In this method there is direct bond between speech and expression. This approach suggests to present different structures in meaningful situations. Learners are to know the situation in which different structures are used for transmitting message or expressing ideas. The American psychologist also insisted this approach. British linguists Firth and Halliday gave the idea that structure must be used in different situations in which they could be used. So they gave it distinctiveness to Situational language teaching.

Principles :

The situational approach is based on the theory established by the behaviourists. It includes the following principles:

• Language learning is just a habit formation.

• The mistakes should always be avoided because they create bad habit among learner.

• The language skill can be learnt more effectively if they are presented orally first and after in written form.

• Similarity is better foundation for language learning than analysis.

• The meaning of the words can be learnt only in a linguistic and cultural context.

Advantage:

. • This approach is very useful in teaching of foreign language. Through structural items and creating situation, the subject matter can be explained easily.

• With the help of situation the students can understand effectively and can master the structure effectively and have durable impression in their mind.

• It helps to introduce the vocabulary including abstract vocabulary by using rear as well as planned situation.

It makes teaching very effective and interesting and alive instead of a burdensome process.

Disadvantage :

• It is useful to lower class only. Higher class students are not benefited by this method. Only few selected items can be taught through this method not all language items.

• Such as a prose, poetry, rapid readers, and composition items can not be taught through this approach. Only intelligent and bright students can take the benefit of this approach, not average students .

M.A. Sem I Unit III - Listening

What is Listening?

INTRODUCTION

Language scholars of today regard language as a social activity, an activity of four fundamental kinds or uses, namely, speaking, listening, writing and reading . Of the four linguistic activities, it is listening that most speakers are often unaware of, in both its importance and practice. Importance of listening lies in the fact that it enables students become aware of language and how it is used. It gives students the creative use of grammar. This is why teachers need to be prepared to use a variety of techniques to help students acquire effective listening skills, learn grammar and vocabulary which they need at their level, as well as words which they want to use. Listening helps students acquire detailed comprehension. It assists students approach the foreign language with more confidence and a greater expectation of success. Small group activities in listening stimulate students to use their imagination, challenge them to think and ginger them to speak. Listening and

vocabulary are so well interrelated that their knowledge could enable students to acquire a great deal of experience of a variety of kinds, and at different levels of listening. Students highly involved in listening learn better and faster. They make sound judgments about what is heard. Good note taking could supplement listening.

Nature of Listening Skills:

If you ask a group of students to give a one word description of listening, some would say hearing; however, hearing is physical. Listening is following and understanding the sound---it is hearing with a purpose. Good listening is built on three basic skills: attitude, attention, and adjustment. These skills are known collectively as *triple-A listening.*

Listening is the absorption of the meanings of words and sentences by the brain. Listening leads to the understanding of facts and ideas. But listening takes attention, or sticking to the task at hand in spite of distractions. It requires concentration, which is the focusing of your thoughts upon one particular problem. A person who incorporates listening with concentration is actively listening. Active listening is a method of responding to another that encourages communication.

For someone to claim to have listened with comprehension, he/she must have passed the stages of hearing, listening, auding and cognizing. By hearing, we mean the process by which speech sounds are received and modified by the ear. Listening is the process of identifying the component of sounds and sound sequences, whereby known words are recognizable. The process by which the continuous flow of words is translated into meaning is regarded as auding. Cognizing deals with the various aspects of knowing which are characterized by different conceptualizing experiences of which comparison is made, inferences drawn and categorized and sensory images formed. In other words, when one listens, certain activities, although not as easily noticed as those of the speaker, are performed.

Types of listening
Here are six types of listening, starting with basic discrimination of sounds and ending in deep communication.

Discriminative listening
Discriminative listening is the most basic type of listening, whereby the difference between difference sounds is identified. If you cannot hear differences, then you

cannot make sense of the meaning that is expressed by such differences. We learn to discriminate between sounds within our own language early, and later are unable to discriminate between the phonemes of other languages. This is one reason why a person from one country finds it difficult to speak another language perfectly, as they are unable to distinguish the subtle sounds that are required in that language.

Likewise, a person who cannot hear the subtleties of emotional variation in another person's voice will be less likely to be able to understand the emotions the other person is experiencing. Listening is a visual as well as auditory act, as we communicate much through body language. We thus also need to be able to discriminate between muscle and skeletal movements that signify different meanings.

Biased listening

Biased listening happens when the person hears only what they want to hear, typically misinterpreting what the other person says based on the stereotypes and other biases that they have. Such biased listening is often very evaluative in nature.

Evaluative listening

In evaluative listening, or *critical listening*, we make judgments about what the other person is saying. We seek to assess the truth of what is being said. We also judge what they say against our values, assessing them as good or bad, worthy or unworthy. Evaluative listening is particularly pertinent when the other person is trying to persuade us, perhaps to change our behavior and maybe even to change our beliefs. Within this, we also discriminate between subtleties of language and comprehend the in ner meaning of what is said. Typically also we weigh up the pros and cons of an argument, determining whether it makes sense logically as well as whether it is helpful to us. Evaluative listening is also called critical, judgmental or interpretive listening.

Appreciative listening

In appreciative listening, we seek certain information which will appreciate, for example that which helps meet our needs and goals. We use appreciative listening when we are listening to good music, poetry or maybe even the stirring words of a great leader.

Sympathetic listening

In sympathetic listening we care about the other person and show this concern in the way we pay close attention and express our sorrow for their ills and happiness

at their joys.

Empathetic listening
When we listen empathetically, we go beyond sympathy to seek a truer understand how others are feeling. This requires excellent discrimination and close attention to the nuances of emotional signals. When we are being truly empathetic, we actually feel what they are feeling. In order to get others to expose these deep parts of themselves to us, we also need to demonstrate our empathy in our demeanor towards them, asking
sensitively and in a way that encourages self-disclosure.

Therapeutic listening
In therapeutic listening, the listener has a purpose of not only empathizing with the speaker but also to use this deep connection in order to help the speaker
understand, change or develop in some way.This not only happens when you go to see a therapist but also in many social situations, where friends and family seek to both diagnose problems from listening and also to help the speaker cure themselves, perhaps by some cathartic process. This also happens in work situations, where managers, HR people, trainers and coaches seek to help employees learn and develop.

Relationship listening
Sometimes the most important factor in listening is in order to develop or sustain a relationship. This is why lovers talk for hours and attend closely to what each other has to say when the same words from someone else would seem to be rather boring. Relationship listening is also important in areas such as negotiation and sales, where it is helpful if the other person likes you and trusts you.

False listening
False listening occurs where a person is pretending to listen but is not hearing anything that is being said. They may nod, smile and grunt in all the right places, but do not actually take in anything that is said. This is a skill that may be finely honed by people who do a lot of inconsequential listening, such as politicians and royalty. Their goal with their audience is to make a good impression in very short space of time before they move on, never to talk to that person again. It is also something practiced by couples, particularly where one side does most of the talking. However, the need for relationship here can lead to this being spotted ('You're not listening again!') and consequent conflict.

Initial listening

Sometimes when we listen we hear the first few words and then start to think about what we want to say in return. We then look for a point at which we can interrupt. We are also not listening then as we are spending more time rehearsing what we are going to say about their initial point.

Selective listening
Selective listening involves listening for particular things and ignoring others. We thus hear what we want to hear and pay little attention to 'extraneous' detail.
Partial listening Partial listening is what most of us do most of the time. We listen to the other person with the best of intent and then become distracted, either by stray thoughts or by something that the other person has said. We consequently dip inside our own heads for a short while as we figure out what they really mean or formulate a question for them, before coming back into the room and starting to listen again. This can be problematic when the other person has moved on and we are unable to pick up the threads of what is being said. We thus easily can fall into false listening, at least for a short while. This can be embarrassing, of course, if they suddenly ask your opinion. A tip here: own up, admitting that you had lost the thread of the conversation and asking them to repeat what was said.

Full listening
Full listening happens where the listener pays close and careful attention to what is being said, seeking carefully to understand the full content that the speaker is seeking to put across. This may be very active form of listening, with pauses for summaries and testing that understanding is complete. By the end of the conversation, the listener and the speaker will probably agree that the listener has fully understood what was said. Full listening takes much more effort than partial listening, as it requires close concentration, possibly for a protracted period. It also requires skills of understanding and summary.

Deep listening
Beyond the intensity of full listening, you can also reach into a form of listening that not only hears what is said but also seeks to understand the whole person behind the words. In deep listening, you listen between the lines of what is said, hearing the emotion, watching the body language, detecting needs and goals, identifying preferences and biases, perceiving beliefs and values, and so on.

BARRIERS TO LISTENING

This part includes a number of different barriers to listening. As you'reading through them – identify if any of the barriers apply to you. Do some apply when you are listening to certain people!

Selective listening

We all listen selectively at some time or other. It is a necessary skill in order to survive in often very noisy environments, however our selectivity can sometimes be based on two things.

1) our preconceptions about the other person

2) our preconceptions about the importance of what's being said

Identifying any preconceptions before the review meeting will help reduce this barrier.

Talking speed vs speed of thought

There is a considerable difference between the speed at which people talk and the speed at which they think. The average person speaks at about 125 words per minute, whereas thinking speed is in the region of 500 words per minute. We all think a lot faster than we realise! The result is that when listening to someone we are continually jumping ahead of what is actually being said. Try to avoid jumping to conclusions in the review meeting. Keep an open mind!

Lack of interest

This could be due to lack of interest in the individual speaking or being distracted by things that are happening to you personally (e.g. poorly child, deadline for research project funding/reporting) Remember, the review meeting is the opportunity for the reviewee to talk about themselves, their thoughts and feelings.

Beliefs and attitudes

We all have opinions on a variety of current issues; we feel strongly about certain subjects; we value certain behaviours. How do you react when someone inadvertently challenges your beliefs and attitudes? Try to avoid getting emotional particularly in the review situation, remember, the review is about the reviewee not you!

Reactions to speaker

Our reactions to the person speaking rather than what they are saying can cause us to listen less effectively.

Our preconceptions

Our preconceptions often mean we don't even give another person a chance tospeak. We can prejudge what they have to say. The implication of this behaviour is that it implies we don't value what they might have to offer.

The words we hear

Over-repetition of words and phrases is one distraction, the use of unfamiliar (e.g. jargon) words is another. Another important point to remember is that words can mean different things to different people. Good – to one person may mean only just acceptable, to another it might mean 'perfect'.

Physical distractions

This can come in a number of different guises and ranges from the background noises that are going on (i.e. a telephone ringing or a fire engine racing down the road), whether we are physically comfortable (i.e. too warm, too cold, the seat is uncomfortable – too high/too low, thirsty), the lighting in the room, to distracting pictures on the wall. Some distractions are within our control (i.e telephone calls) and where possible it's important to try and stop them from becoming distractions (e.g. divert all calls).

Ways to Improve Listening

Listening is a key counselling skill. It is the art of obtaining the information you need from a speaker, whilst encouraging them to open up and share their issues.

"You cannot truly listen to anyone and do something else at the same time." M. Scott Peck. Effective listening requires full concentration. No matter how good we think we are at doing several things at once, good listening skills require us to give the person we are listening to our full attention.

[1] Learn to listen effectively

When listening you should use the following strategies to acquire what you really need to know from either speakers, or anyone who is providing you with information you need to process:

(a)Put them at their ease) (b) Converse in a friendly and relaxed manner to encourage them to open up. (c) Use positive body language to show you are

listening. (d) Face the person and make eye contact. (e) Smile and nod as they speak to inspire them to carry on with their story.

Another trick to show you are listening is to mirror their body position and lean slightly towards them as they are speaking to you. You should also stay still as you listen – if you fidget you're showing distraction. Don't cross your arms across your body.

[2]Listen to the words the person uses to assess their emotions.

If they are using aggressive language they are likely to be angry and upset. The opposite of this is if the person is very quiet and hardly speaks and needs you to encourage them to open up. What tone and pitch of voice are they using? A raised and high voice is also a sign of anger. Plus, of course, tears are a sign of emotional stress and losing control. When listening to someone who is crying you should ensure you maintain a neutral position and don't become emotionally involved yourself.

[3] Paraphrase the main points of what the person has said to check your understanding.

This ensures the person knows you have been listening and you know you have gathered the right information. Repeat what they have said in different words, which will also help them to realise what information they have given you.

TIP

Never, ever, finish sentences for the person you are listening to. This says you know more about the situation than they do and implies you are cleverer than them. Let the person find their words in their own time.

[4] Open and closed questions

Open questions are best asked when listening as they allow the speaker to recount their story in their own words and will provide you with the information you need to give the appropriate advice. Open questions also keep the speaker talking, as it is important they speak more than you. For example:

"How do you feel about _____?" is an open question and encourages a much longer answer than "Are you happy with _____?", which would prompt a 'yes' or 'no' answer and halt the conversation.

Other examples of open questions are:

What made you come here today?

What do you think caused the situation?

What do you think you will do if _____?

Tell me more about _____

Closed questions can be used to stop the conversation if the speaker is going off at a tangent.

TIP

Don't interrupt unless you need to move the conversation in a different direction or bring it to a close. Otherwise, allow the client to speak freely. You should just interject with occasional comments such as 'I see', 'I understand', 'of course' and 'mmm'. Interrupting is rude and indicates you don´t have time to listen.

[5] Active listening

This is another key listening skill. Your objective is to say as little as possible and not ask too many questions. As the listener (particularly with counselling) you should not give your personal opinion on the speaker's situation. You must remain neutral and only offer advice that is relevant to the speaker's issues. This is quite a difficult skill to learn as our instinct as human beings, particularly in our culture, is to fill the silence.

Tips for effective listening:

(a)Remember – silence is golden

(b) Empathise with what the person is saying, but don't link their situation with your own. As a counsellor you should never bring your own personal experiences into the situation.

© Paraphrase to check and show your understanding.

(d) Wait for natural pauses from the speaker before asking questions.

(e) Give verbal ("yes, I see") and non-verbal acknowledgements (nodding) to show you are listening.

(f)Maintain eye contact and face to face communication.

(g) Concentrate on what the person is saying. This can be hard as our mind often wanders after a short time (what shall I have for dinner? I really need to send that

email). However, you must empty your mind of all distractions and really focus on listening to what the speaker is saying.

[6] Listen to what's being said and what's NOT being said

The unspoken words are almost as important as the spoken.

You can identify these from body language:

If the person is slumped in their chair rather than sitting upright, they don't make eye contact or they can´t sit still they are likely to be very agitated and perhaps want to say more than they feel able.

Your skill as the listener is to identify these signs and encourage the speaker to open up.

Tone of voice is also a giveaway for non-verbal communication. If a person is stressed they will speak very fast and in a high pitched tone. You may find it hard to listen to them as they are not making sense. A listening skill here is to identify the main point and encourage the speaker to focus on this in a calm manner.

TIP

When listening avoid distractions such as the TV, mobile phones and other people. If someone has the courage to open up to you they should not be interrupted by the often unnecessary complications of everyday life.

M.A. Sem I Unit IV - Speaking

[a] What is Speaking?

Speaking is the delivery of language through the mouth. To speak, we create sounds using many parts of our body, including the lungs, vocal tract, vocal chords, tongue, teeth and lips.

This vocalized form of language usually requires at least one listener. When two or more people speak or talk to each other, the conversation is called a "dialogue". Speech can flow naturally from one person to another in the form of dialogue. It can also be planned and rehearsed, as in the delivery of a speech or presentation. Speaking can be formal or informal:

- Informal speaking is typically used with family and friends, or people you know well.

- Formal speaking occurs in business or academic situations, or when meeting people for the first time.

Speaking is probably the language skill that most language learners wish to perfect as soon as possible. It used to be the only language skill that was difficult to practise online. This is no longer the case. English learners can practise speaking online using voice or video chat and services like Skype. They can also record and upload their voice for other people to listen to.

[b] Importance of speaking skill

While a picture may be worth a thousand words, those words will no doubt come in handy if the picture is distorted or poorly understood. After all, the most effective way to communicate is through speech. Thus, speaking skills are a vitally important method of communication.

The four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are all interconnected. Proficiency in each skill is necessary to become a well-rounded communicator, but the ability to speak skillfully provides the speaker with several distinct advantages. The capacity to put words together in a meaningful way to reflect thoughts, opinions, and feelings provides the speaker with these important advantages:

• **Ability to inform, persuade, and direct**. Business managers, educators, military leaders, lawyers, and politicians develop their speaking skills to such a level that they are transformed into master communicators. Speaking clearly and confidently can gain the attention of an audience, providing the golden opportunity for the speaker to make the message known. The speaker can be considered wise who gains and then holds the attention of an audience, with well-chosen words in a well-delivered presentation, forming a message that is effective, informative, and understood.

• **Ability to stand out from the rest.** When one thinks of speaking skills, one tends to think of it as a common skill. The ability to stand before others and speak effectively is not an ordinary ability. Many people are terribly afraid of public

speaking; others have little ability to form thoughts into sentences and then deliver those words in a believable way. The good speaker is one whose skills are honed and developed with constant application and hard work.

• **Career enhancement**. Employers have always valued the ability to speak well. It is, and always will be, an important skill, and well worth the effort in fully developing.

Speaking skills are important for career success, but certainly not limited to one's professional aspirations. Speaking skills can enhance one's personal life, thereby bringing about the well-rounded growth we should all seek.

[c] **Discussion Skills**

Asking questions and joining in discussions are important skills.

- - To understand a subject or topic area more deeply.
- • To explore ideas and exchange information.

- • To expand and clarify your knowledge.

- • To improve your ability to think critically.

- • To improve your language skills.

- • To increase your confidence in speaking.

- • A discussion can change your attitudes and ideas.

- • A discussion can helps a group make a particular decision or come to a conclusion.

- • A discussion gives you the chance to hear the thoughts and ideas of other students.

Strategies for improving discussion skills

[1] Observe

Attend as many seminars and tutorials as possible and notice what other students do. Ask yourself:

- How do other students enter into the discussion?

- How do they ask questions?

- How do they disagree with or support the topic?

- How do other students make critical comments?

- What special phrases do they use to show politeness even when they are voicing disagreement?

- How do they signal to ask a question or make a point?

[2] Learn to listen

Listening is an essential skill and an important element of any discussion. Effective listeners don't just hear what is being said, they think about it and actively process it.

- Be an active listener and don't let your attention drift. Stay attentive and focus on what is being said.

- Identify the main ideas being discussed.

- Evaluate what is being said. Think about how it relates to the main idea/ theme of the discussion.

- Listen with an open mind and be receptive to new ideas and points of view. Think about how they fit in with what you have already learnt.

- Test your understanding. Mentally paraphrase what other speakers say.

- Ask yourself questions as you listen. Take notes during class about things to which you could respond.

[3] Prepare

You can't contribute to a discussion unless you are well-prepared. Attend lectures and make sure you complete any assigned readings or tutorial assignments. If you don't understand the material or don't feel confident about your ideas, speak to your tutor or lecturer outside of class.

[4] Practise

Practise discussing course topics and materials outside class. Start in an informal setting with another student or with a small group.

Begin by asking questions to fellow students. Ask them about:

- the course material

- their opinions

- information or advice about the course

Practice listening and responding to what they say. Try out any discipline-specific vocabulary or concepts. Becoming accustomed to expressing your views outside class will help you develop skills you can take into the more formal environment of a tutorial group.

[5] Participate

If you find it difficult to participate in discussion, set yourself goals and aim to increase your contribution each week. An easy way to participate is to add to the existing discussion. Start by making small contributions:

- agree with what someone has said or;

- ask them to expand on their point (ask for an example or for more information)

- prepare a question to ask beforehand.

You can then work up to:

- answering a question put to the group

- providing an example for a point under discussion

- disagreeing with a point.

[6] Voicing an opinion and arguing a point effectively

What is an argument?

To 'argue' in an academic context is to put forward an opinion through the process of reasoning, supported by evidence. An argument attempts to persuade through rational and critical judgement. In academic writing an argument is sometimes called a claim or a thesis statement, which is also supported with evidence. The aim of academic argument is to explore a question, a proposition or an area of knowledge and achieve reasoned mutual understanding. It is not important who 'wins'—what matters most is the quality of the argument itself. When you engage in academic argument in your classroom discussions, you are developing your ideas, advancing and clarifying your knowledge and learning to think critically.

[7] Leading a discussion

You may be in a seminar group that requires you to lead a group discussion, or lead a discussion after an oral presentation. You can lead a discussion by:

- introducing yourself and stating the purpose of the discussion

- asking questions to stimulate the discussion

- making sure no one dominates the discussion by inviting and encouraging contributions from all students

- ensuring only one member of the group speaks at a time

- ensuring the discussion remains relevant and doesn't drift off topic

- summarising or rephrasing a speaker's point

- summarising the discussion

[d] Presentation skill

The formal presentation of information is divided into two broad categories: **Presentation Skills** and **Personal Presentation**.

These two aspects are interwoven and can be described as the preparation, presentation and practice of verbal and non-verbal communication.

Many people feel terrified when asked to make their first public talk. Some of these initial fears can be reduced by good preparation that also lays the groundwork for making an effective presentation.

A Presentation is...

A presentation is a means of communication that can be adapted to various speaking situations, such as talking to a group, addressing a meeting or briefing a team.

A presentation is a means of communication that can be adapted to various speaking situations, such as talking to a group, addressing a meeting or briefing a team. A presentation can also be used as a broad term that encompasses other 'speaking engagements' such as making a speech at a wedding, or getting a point across in a video conference. A presentation requires you to get a message across to the listeners and will often contain a 'persuasive' element. It may, for example, be a talk about the positive work of your organisation, what you could offer an employer, or why you should receive additional funding for a project.

Presentation skills are the skills you need in delivering effective and engaging presentations to a variety of audiences. These skills cover a variety of areas such as the structure of your presentation, the design of your slides, the tone of your voice and the body language you convey. To be an effective presenter, step-by-step preparation and the method and means of presenting the information should be carefully considered.

Planning your Presentation

It can be helpful to plan your presentation in terms of key steps, as follows:

a) Set your objective. A simple sentence can be a good means of defining your purpose in giving the presentation, and will begin to determine the content.

(Objective is a short statement which tells what you plan to achieve. For example, you may plan that)

Try to complete the following sentence:

'As a result of my presentation, my audience will be able to…..

i) Explain the methods of preventing HIV/AIDS.'

ii) See their role in interdisciplinary learning more clearly,

b) Decide what the main purpose of your talk is e.g;-

-to inform, persuade, motivate or change things.

-What do you want your audience to do as a result of your talk?

c) Understand your audience: Try and have a basic idea of the size of the audience and who they are. Think about what they will be expecting from the presentation, but be realistic about this. Find out what level of knowledge and experience those attending will have about your topic, so that you know where to aim the material. Is the audience likely to have any preconceptions or misconceptions about the subject that you need to address and put right? How might your audience use what you have to say?

d) Know your setting: Find out about the equipment –audiovisual aids etc. that will be available. Check out the location of the presentation; the size of the room (to help you decide on type of seating arrangements), and other facilities.

e) Write down the 'central theme' of the talk.

f) Write your outline: Ask yourself: What are the main points I need to make to get my message across? What supporting information will I need? Where will I get this? How much time will I need?

g)Structure your talk.

Structuring Your Presentation

This is one of the most important aspects of the presentation. The structure should be clear to both you and your audience. Develop your visual aids: For example, will you use a flipchart, whiteboard power point, overhead projector or data projector etc. to clarify important points and aid understanding?

NB: Do not use too many slides/points.

Prepare your delivery notes, according to the structured outline.

The structure of a presentation should have an introduction, body and conclusion.

i) Introduction:

Through the introduction you should grab your audience's attention and set the scene.

Ways of getting your audience's attention include;

• asking a rhetorical or intriguing question,

• providing a relevant and interesting fact,

• giving an anecdote,

• outlining the valuable information you hope the audience will gain from the presentation,

• telling them why they need to know the information,

• giving a quote or making a dramatic prediction.

Your theme should be made clear from the start. Start the audience thinking about the subject matter of your presentation by, for example, a statement of your main objective. It can also be helpful to present the structure to your talk, by explaining briefly how you plan to proceed with it.

ii)The Main Body:

Select the main points that support your argument but only include as much detail as your audience needs. Also, be aware that people will not remember too many points. Once you have decided on the key points, organize them into a sequence that makes sense to you. This sequence may take various forms, including being chronologically based, problem-solution based, simple-complex based etc.

Explain and build your points using supporting information and evidence.

iii) Conclusion:

There are various ways of concluding a presentation including

• changing the pace,

• using a new visual aid,

• summarizing your main points,

• drawing the conclusion and its importance,

• making recommendations,

• asking for questions,

• getting feedback,

• asking for or recommending particular actions,

• getting some sort of commitment from the group to the advocated course of action,

• Finally end by thanking the group for their time and attention.

Do not end suddenly. Give your audience some idea that you are coming to a close; eg. 'And now, before I finish' or 'In conclusion' etc.

Try to end on a strong note through the use of tactics detailed above. Research has long since shown that we tend to remember the opening and closing parts of a presentation over the detail in the middle.