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Date: 17/09/2025

Notice

2nd Semester internal Test, 2025

Subject: AEC 201

এতদ্বারা 2nd Semester NEP-এর সমস্ত ছাত্র-ছাত্রীকে জানানো হচ্ছে যে, 2nd Semester AEC 201 Subject-এর internal Test Online-এর মাধ্যমে নেওয়া হবে।

এই Internal Test-এর Google Form Link, Syllabus & Study Material কলেজ Website-এ দেওয়া হয়েছে।

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Syllabus

B.A. English Syllabus according to NEP 2020

Serial	Semester	Course Code	Course Title	Credit	End-sem marks
6	I	SEC201	Business Communication	3	35

Unit	Unit Title	Topics	Prescribed Texts	Types of questions
UNIT I	Written Communication	(i) Writing a project/ fieldwork report (ii) Writing a report on business negotiations (iii) Summarizing annual report of a company (iv) Writing minutes of a meeting (v) Electronic correspondence	"Business Communication" by Basudeb Chakrabarti in <i>Enrich I</i> , Cambridge University Press, 2023.	5 (out of 8) X 1 marks + 2 (out of 4) X 5 marks + 2 (out of 4) X 10
UNIT II	Verbal Communication	(i) Spoken English for Business communication (ii) Making a business presentation with suitable aids		10 marks in viva voce examination as part of the internal assessment for oral component of the course

Serial	Semester	Course Code	Course Title	Credit	End-sem marks
7	II	AEC201	Communicative English	4	40

Unit	Unit Title	Topics	Prescribed book	Types of questions
UNIT I	Language and Communication	(a) History (b) Theory (c) Types (d) Modes (e) Barriers (f) Strategies	"English Communication" by Keya Ghatak in <i>Enrich 1</i> by Basudeb Chakrabarti et al. Cambridge University Press, 2023.	MCQ questions to be set from each unit of the course
UNIT II	Reading and Writing	(a) Strategies (b) Literary texts (c) Content texts (d) Common writing requirements		
UNIT III	Speaking Skills	(a) Dialogue (b) Group discussion (c) Interview (d) Public Speaking		

Study Material

The English word 'language' originates from the Proto-Indo-European language family through Latin 'lingua' and Old French 'language'. Language takes birth from a society and it is the best means of communication.

UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

We have seen in Unit 1 how communication can be classified into various types. Let us now look at a few types in greater detail.

Verbal communication

The act of exchanging ideas, messages and information between individuals by using words is known as verbal communication. The medium of verbal communication can be oral or written. The different types of verbal communication are face-to-face communication, telephonic communication, storytelling, conversation, speech, video, radio, television, Voice over Internet Protocol, letters, emails, brochures, advertisements, etc. While communicating verbally we should be careful about our choice of words, formality and level of language, cultural sensitivities of the recipient/s and use of technical jargon. Verbal communication can be used for fulfilling personal, social as well as business purposes.

Non-verbal communication

As stated in the earlier unit, communication between two or more people without the use of words is called non-verbal communication. It includes the use of visual cues (body language), space or physical distance between the communicators (proxemics), voice modulation, tone, pitch, hesitation, etc (paralanguage) and communication through touch (haptics) that enable us to carry out communication without the use of words.

It is interesting to note that non-verbal communication applies to both speech and written texts. As stated earlier, speech contains non-verbal elements known as paralanguage, namely voice quality, rate, pitch, volume, speaking style, rhythm, intonation and stress. The non-verbal elements of written texts are handwriting style, spatial arrangement of words and the physical layout of a page. Non-verbal communication complements and often enhances the effectiveness of verbal communication.

Written communication

Any type of interaction or exchange of messages between two or more persons by using written words is known as written communication. Personal, social and business problems can be solved by using written communication. Vocabulary, grammar, writing style, precision and clarity of the language influence written communication. Before sending the actual message, it can be edited and revised again and again. There are two types of written communication – printed and hand written. Bulletins, job descriptions, employee manuals, electronic mails, internet websites, proposals, faxes, postcards, contracts, advertisements, brochures and newspapers are some examples of written communication.

Intrapersonal communication

Intrapersonal communication is a person's internal use of language. It could be a thought, reading aloud or repeating what one hears. Generally, intrapersonal communication springs from our tendency to internally explain the mental processes behind our communicative behaviours. If the articulation is sub-vocal, the mouth continues to move without making any sound. Intrapersonal communication can be carried out using both first person and second person pronouns. Scholars point out that while self-talking, people have the tendency to use both these pronouns.

Interpersonal communication

A face-to-face or telephonic exchange of information and feelings between two people through verbal and non-verbal messages is referred to as interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication can also take place through media platforms, such as social media. The following are the three elements in interpersonal communication:

- The communicators – sender and receiver
- The message
- Feedback

There are some environmental factors that determine the outcome of communication. These factors are called 'context'. They include:

- Noise
- Channel
- Situational milieu
- Cultural and linguistic background of the communicators

This type of communication can be used on a regular basis for providing and getting information, controlling the attitudes and behaviour of others, forming contacts and keeping up relationships, making sense of the world and our experiences in it, conveying personal needs and realising the needs of others, providing and accepting emotional support, taking decisions, solving problems and anticipating and predicting behaviour.

Group communication

Communication in both small and large groups that works in relational as well as social contexts, is known as group communication. Sometimes this type of communication helps groups to become better than an individual because of the quality and effectiveness of its decisions. Robert Bales, an American social psychologist made the following observations about group discussions:

- There is a tendency of the discussion to shift among the members of group.
- Decision making in task groups follows the order: exchange of opinion, attentiveness to underlying values and finally the making of the decision itself.
- There is often a dominance of one or two most talkative members in the group, even in large groups.

Bales' most important theory has been the linear phase model. This model was based on the finding that all groups go through four phases of discussion: orientation stage, conflict stage, emergence of the decision and finally, reinforcement of the decision.

BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

Barriers to communication are factors that prevent anyone from receiving and understanding messages, information, ideas and thoughts sent by others. There are two types of barriers – internal and external. Let us look at some barriers that create obstacles in the communication process.

- **Physiological barriers** – Physiological barriers depend on the physical and mental state of the sender or the receiver. Physiological barriers may be any kind of physical or mental condition or even a disability. For example, hearing impairment, vision impairment, speech disorders, loss of memory, etc., are physiological barriers.
- **Physical barriers** – Physical barriers to communication may result from geographical distance between the sender and the receiver, physical disabilities and differences in perception and viewpoint.

- **Systematic barriers** – Systematic barriers to communication may be seen to arise on account of inefficient information systems and communication channels. If there is a lack of understanding of roles and responsibilities for communication among people, nobody knows what is expected of them.
- **Attitudinal barriers** – Attitudinal barriers are the result of personal conflict, poor management, resistance to change, lack of motivation, language differences, difficulty in understanding unfamiliar accents, social prejudices and cultural differences.

STRATEGIES OF COMMUNICATION

In order to improve communication, it is necessary to minimise the barriers that impede it. Some strategies can help us make communication successful by making us focus on every aspect of information relay. Communication strategies can be classified into three types – verbal, non-verbal and visual communication strategies.

Verbal communication strategies

The following verbal communication strategies may be followed to make verbal communication successful and effective:

- Focus on the issue, not the person
- Be genuine rather than manipulative
- Empathise rather than remain detached
- Be flexible towards others
- Value yourself and your own experiences
- Use affirming responses

Non-verbal communication strategies

Extensive psychological research indicates that there are two main traits that are used as non-verbal communication strategies in almost all social interactions. These traits are warmth and competence. According to research, warmth means friendliness, trustworthiness and kindness and competence means intelligence, power and skill.

Visual communication strategies

The crux of visual communication strategies is to capture the attention of an audience easily and provide documentation. In the workplace, especially online, these strategies are very fruitful. To capture people's attention one can use signs, webpages, illustrations, graphic

designs, films, typography, visual signs and symbols. Academically, the study of signs and symbols and visual communication as means of language or communication is called semiotics. Visual communication strategies can be classified into two categories:

- **Picture exchange visual communication strategy** – This is a functional, ground breaking visual communication strategy in which a person can express their desires by using a picture. This strategy is used with children and adults with cognitive impairment and helps them communicate successfully.
- **Communicating with images** – This visual communication strategy is dependent on paintings. The type of painting could be either cave paintings or pictograms.
 - **Cave paintings** are the oldest form of communication that were drawn or engraved into cave walls and ceilings. Those paintings represent the art, culture and lifestyle of the time.
 - **Pictograms** are images used by the people of the past as a means of communicating with others.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Choose the correct answer from the options given.

1. The two types of written communication are
 - a. graphics and pictures
 - b. handwritten and printed documents
 - c. symbols and charts
 - d. cave paintings and pictograms
2. Body language is a type of
 - a. verbal communication
 - b. intrapersonal communication
 - c. psychological communication
 - d. non-verbal communication
3. It has been observed that in intrapersonal communication we use
 - a. first person pronouns only
 - b. second person pronouns only
 - c. third person pronouns only
 - d. first and second person pronouns
4. Group discussion is a useful way of
 - a. ensuring one-way communication
 - b. imposing rules and regulations
 - c. solving problems and resolving conflicts
 - d. delaying decisions
5. Two types of barriers to communication are
 - a. physical and external
 - b. internal and external
 - c. external and experimental
 - d. physiological and external

Speaking is the expression of ideas, information, emotions and feelings through vocal sounds. Many parts of our body like lungs, vocal tract, vocal chords, tongue, lips, teeth, hard palate, soft plate and nose play an important role in making sounds that are eventually modulated to produce speech. These organs are also referred to as articulators. Articulators are divided into two categories – active and passive articulators. The tongue and the lower lips are the only two active articulators. The rest are passive. The active articulators move relative to passive ones, which remain still, to produce speech.

Speech can be of various kinds – fully interactive, partially interactive or non-interactive. Dialogues, conversations and discussions are examples of fully interactive speaking situations whereas monologues are non-interactive. A presentation, on the other hand, can be partially interactive if the presenter wishes it to be. Let us consider a few of these speaking scenarios in detail in order to determine how they can be made more effective.

DIALOGUE

The term 'dialogue' comes from the Greek word *dialogos*. It is the combination of two roots – *dia* means 'through' and *logos* means 'speech' or 'reason'. A written or spoken medium of communication between two or more people is known as a dialogue. It is a literary and theatrical medium of exchanging conversation. The use of dialogue as a genre was found in ancient works of Middle East and Asia. Plato is the first person to use the term in his works. The systematic use of dialogue as an independent literary form was founded by Plato on the basis of mime. The mime form of dialogue was simplified and turned into pure argumentative conversation by Plato. His sincere efforts had made dialogue a major literary genre in ancient times. The present form of dialogue is the contribution of thinkers like Mikhail Bakhtin (Russian philosopher, literary critic, semiotician and scholar), Martin Buber (Austrian-born Israeli-Jewish philosopher best known for his philosophy of dialogue) and David Bohm (American theoretical physicist) and educators like Paulo Freire (Brazilian educator) and Ramon Flecha (Professor of sociology at the University of Barcelona).

Let us briefly consider the following four types of dialogue here:

- Classroom dialogue
- Structured dialogue
- Egalitarian dialogue
- Dialogical leadership

Classroom dialogue

It is a kind of dialogue which is used to converse in a variety of classroom settings. It is a formal type of dialogue used to make teaching and learning more effective and interactive. It promotes active participation where students get the chance to share their ideas. This type of dialogue helps students to improve their thinking power. Classroom dialogue can be both written and spoken. This book is an example of written dialogue. In order to write such type of dialogue, we have to follow certain formal rules. But spoken dialogue can be more effective owing to its spontaneity which comes from the use of body language, tone, pitch and intonation. A certain level of formality has to be maintained in classroom dialogues. Spoken dialogues can be effectively used in workplaces too.

Different types of classroom dialogues are:

- Question and answer
- Think / pair / share
- Small group discussion
- Informal debate
- Formal debate
- Presentation
- Oral examination

Egalitarian dialogue

In the egalitarian type of dialogue the conversation depends on the validity of reasoning and not on the status, position and power of the people engaged in the dialogue. Egalitarian dialogue motivates individuals to create meaning collectively and thus generates solidarity among them. This kind of dialogue is based on the recognition of people's cultural intelligence and respect for differences, from an egalitarian standpoint. In other words, it stems from a belief that each person has something to share, something different and equally important. Therefore, the wider the diversity of voices engaged in egalitarian dialogue, the better the knowledge that can be dialogically constructed. In this sense, dialogic learning is oriented towards equality of differences, stating that true equality includes the right to live in a different way. We find the use of this type of dialogue in social sciences. The first person to use it was Ramon Flecha.

Structured dialogue

Structured dialogue is a disciplined form of dialogue in which participants agree to follow a dialogue framework or a facilitator enables a group to address complex shared problems

through dialogue. It is often used by groups to discuss and resolve complex problems. The contribution of two leading personalities, Aleco Christakis and John N. Warfield, were the two leading developers of this form of dialogue. Structured dialogue is useful in peace-making efforts and to address challenges in community development. The application of structured dialogue requires one to know the distinction between discussion and deliberation. This dialogue is also used as an effective communication tool for married couples to help them foster a better mutual relationship.

Dialogical leadership

According to Karl-Martin Dietz (expert in classical philology, German language and philosophy, Co-founder Friedrich von Hardenberg Institute for Cultural Sciences) and Thomas Kracht (Co-founder Friedrich von Hardenberg Institute for Cultural Sciences), dialogical leadership is an effective form of organisational management. A dialogue is different from a discussion where people tend to hold on to their differences of opinion and in fact defend them. In contrast, when you have a dialogue, you explore the uncertainties and questions that no one has answers to. In this way you begin to think together – not simply report out old thoughts. In dialogue, people learn to use the energy of their differences to enhance their collective wisdom. Hence dialogical leadership is preferred in modern workplaces as an effective means of organisational management.

MONOLOGUE

Monologue means a long speech presented by a single character in a play; sometimes a soliloquy; in order to convey mental thoughts aloud in front of others. It originated from the Greek root word *monologos*. *Monos* means 'alone' and *logos* means 'speech'. The translation of the Greek root is 'speaking alone'. In the world of dramatic media like plays and films and non-dramatic media like poetry, monologue is a familiar device. In ancient Greek theatre, three types of monologue were used:

- Linking monologue – Monologue used to point out the passage of significant amount of time between scenes
- Entrance monologue – Monologue used by the actors on entering the stage
- Exit monologue – Monologues used by actors at the end of the play

In the theatres of Renaissance, actors used monologues to highlight characters. The actors of postmodern theatre use monologue to focus on the difference between external acting and internal workings of mind. At present five types of monologue are used:

- Interior monologue – It is used by a dramatist to exhibit the thoughts passing through the minds of protagonists.

- **Dramatic monologue** – It is a speech made by a single fictional character in order to reveal an aspect of his own character in front of the audience.
- **Active monologue** – This type of monologue is used by a character in order to achieve a clear goal.
- **Narrative monologue** – This type of monologue is used by a character to narrate a story from the past.
- **Audition monologue** – It is used by an actor in theatre, film and television to fulfil the purposes of audition.

GROUP DISCUSSION

It is a type of formal or informal discussion in which more than one person with the same interest participate in order to introduce ideas, express opinions and solve problems to achieve a common goal. The main purpose of a group discussion is to improve the participants' power of critical and reflective thinking, their skill of analysis and their ability of collectively coming up with solutions to complex problems. There are two types of group discussions: offline and online group discussions.

Offline Group Discussions

Group discussions which take place among the members of a group without using the Internet are called offline group discussions. There are two types of offline group discussions:

- **Academic offline group discussion:** Group discussions that are held among the members of a group on academic topics in order to fulfil some academic purpose are known as academic offline group discussions. Such type of group discussions are held among students as well as students and teachers. Sometimes technicians, physicians, industrialists and social workers too involve in discussions exchanging ideas on academic topics.
- **Non-academic offline group discussion:** In this type of group discussion, members participate to deal with some non-academic problem. Members of business organisations generally follow such non-academic offline group discussions.

Online Group Discussions

Any type of group discussion which is held among the members of a group online, is called online group discussion. This type of group discussion is generally completed using any of the following social media platforms: Facebook, Whatsapp, X, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND MISCOMMUNICATION

Effective communication is communication which has the power to produce the effect required in the given situation desired by the communicators involved. For example, when a negotiation by a salesperson results in the desired sale of product or service, it is deemed to be a successful scenario where effective communication led to a desired outcome. Generally, people communicate to exchange ideas, information, thoughts, emotions, feelings, opinions and concepts. The communication is considered successful if the recipient of the information can understand the intended meaning of the communicated information clearly and act upon it as desired. Take for example, the following conversation between two persons as an example of effective communication.

Ram: Will you help me to cross the road? I am feeling uneasy.

Raja: Yes. I will help you.

The above example proves that the recipient understood what Ram has communicated.

Sometimes the person who receives information can't understand the intended meaning of the communicated information. This type of unsuccessful communication is known as miscommunication. It is the result of misunderstanding and failure to realise the intended meaning of the information. Here is an example:

Ashraf: Can you help me reboot the computer, please?

Naveen: Sorry? Reboot?

Here the recipient can't understand the intended meaning of Ashraf's request as he does not understand the meaning of the technical phrase 'reboot' which means 'to restart a computer'. This leads to miscommunication.

INTERVIEW

An interview is a face-to-face communication between an interviewer and an interviewee in which questions are asked by the interviewer and answers are given by the interviewee. Communication technologies have helped interview processes evolve over time. The possibilities available to modern-day interviewers are:

- Spoken conversation
- Unstructured conversation
- Structured conversation
- Ladder interview

- Interview through telephone
- Interview through video conference

We are aware that interviews are generally preferred as a means of recruitment by organisations. However, interviews can also be held in a variety of other contexts such as psychological counselling, interviews of public personalities by the media and interviews of respondents for survey and research purposes.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Public speaking is an effective means of communication in which a speech is delivered in front of a live audience for fulfilling one or more of the following three purposes: informing, persuading and entertaining. A speech is usually delivered with the help of a public address system through a microphone and loudspeaker. Telecommunication and video conferencing have widened the scope of public speaking and made it possible over long distances.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Choose the correct answer from the options given.

1. Which of the following is the most comprehensive definition of 'speaking'?
 - a. expression of ideas through vocal sounds
 - b. expression of information through vocal sounds
 - c. expression of ideas, information, emotions and feelings through vocal sounds
 - d. expression of emotions and feelings through vocal sounds
2. Who founded the systematic use of dialogue as an independent literary form?
 - a. Mikhail Bakhtin
 - b. Paulo Freire
 - c. Martin Buber
 - d. Plato
3. Dramatic monologue is a speech made by a single fictional character in order to reveal an aspect of his own character in front of the
 - a. speakers
 - b. listeners
 - c. readers
 - d. writers
4. Offline group discussion takes place among the members of a group
 - a. without using the Internet
 - b. without using voice
 - c. without using speech
 - d. without using a microphone
5. Effective communication has the power of producing the
 - a. required effort
 - b. required effect
 - c. required capacity
 - d. required achievement

There is a close relation between reading and understanding. Without understanding, reading will not be successful. Traditional reading as a core skill plays an important part even in this age of advanced technology. People still read magazines and books, students read textbooks, at the workplace you might be required to read official communication material such as letters, emails, notices etc. Some job roles will involve the reading of technical manuals, safety manuals, process descriptions, research articles etc.

For reading to be effective, one needs to not only read the given material but also comprehend it in the intended way. The result of not being able to comprehend the instructions in a safety manual, for instance, may prove disastrous. So, one needs to use techniques that can make reading successful.

Here are some useful techniques for effective reading:

- **Reading purposefully:** A reader must identify the purpose of their reading. Once there is clarity on the objectives of reading, the reader can approach the text in a way that will help fulfil the purpose.
- **Skimming:** Skimming is a type of fast reading where you look through a text quickly to get the gist. Skimming helps the reader get a general understanding of the main points. We do this by reading headings, looking at pictures, graphs, tables and key paragraphs. For example, we may just skim the newspaper in the morning to get the most important news of the day as we do not have the time to read all of it in detail. Skimming prepares the memory of the reader, sets their direction of thinking and helps form an overall sense of the material.
- **Scanning:** Scanning is a reading technique in which we focus on the minute details within a text, unlike skimming where we only aim at a general idea of what the text covers. For instance, we might skim a railway time table to find out the arrival or departure timings of a particular train. In scanning, we are looking for specific details. Technical documents are often scanned for specific details, like for instance, the technical specifications of a particular product.
- **Highlighting and note-taking:** Highlighting with a pen and taking notes while reading helps readers to think and form their own opinions on a text.
- **Thinking with the help of mental images:** Forming images in the mind when reading a text, helps the reader to comprehend the reading material in a better way.

- **Repetition:** Repetition of main points in texts is a technique that aids understanding by reinforcement.
- **Concentration:** Proper attention and concentration can help a reader focus better while reading. They will be able to derive the right information and draw apt conclusions from the reading material.

READING COMPREHENSION

The process of reading, understanding and then explaining a piece of a text is called comprehension. A large vocabulary, efficiency in reading, integrating ideas, thinking and reasoning can increase the comprehension power of a reader. Readers need to read a passage carefully and try to get a general idea of the subject it deals with. Then they must answer questions based on the passage, if required.

Reading comprehension passages form a significant part of several competitive examinations where learners' reading skills are assessed. The difficulty level and nature of the reading material is determined on the basis of the course in which the candidate is seeking admission.

READING STRATEGIES

To improve our reading skills and power of understanding, it is necessary for us to adopt a suitable reading strategy. Here are a few useful strategies that can be used:

Close reading

The type of reading in which a reader reads a text in an attentive and disciplined way is known as close reading. It is a fundamental strategy employed for critical reading. A close reader pays attention to different parts of the reading material like individual words, syntax and hidden ideas. In literature, close reading should be followed by a skilful explanation of a passage by the reader.

Summary and paraphrasing

Both summary and paraphrasing are representation of the main points of a passage in a reader's own words without changing the meaning of the given passage. Summary highlights the central idea of the passage. Paraphrasing is the translation or rewriting of the passage containing short quotations from the given passage. A summary is selective and the length of a summary should be one third of the original passage. However, a paraphrased passage need not be shorter than the original passage. Follow these steps to paraphrase a text:

- Read the text and set it aside
- Make notes in your own words

- Write a rough draft of the paraphrase
- Compare the length of the paraphrase with that of the original to make sure it is not shorter
- Use quotation marks to denote borrowed words and phrases
- Credit the original

The same points can be used to write a summary. Make sure to compare the length of the summary to the original. A summary needs to be shorter than the original.

Analysis and interpretation

Analysis means breaking down a text into components in order to study a complex concept or theory. This method can be applied to analyse a text linguistically for studying prosody, alliteration, rhyme, figurative language and other parts of a poem. This method can also be applied to contexts like history, geography, biology, psychology, sociology, etc. This method is useful in analysing sounds and their meaning, theory, words, sentence construction and word combinations. Analysis has been applied in the world of Science, Business, Computer Science, Economics, Engineering and Mathematics.

Interpretation indicates the act of explaining, translating, reframing and constructing one's own understanding of a concept or theory. This method is used in the following fields: Business Management and Finance, Marketing, Psychology, Adult Education, Tourism Planning, Media Planning and Advertising.

At work, employees in certain job roles are expected to analyse and interpret data. There may be graphs and charts to analyse and explain; schedules and time tables to read and figure out; statistical data to be analysed and interpreted in words. Hence it helps to equip oneself with the skill the above tasks require. You can practice this skill by trying to analyse pictograms, bar graphs, pie charts, statistical tables et cetera used to represent information in the media like newspapers and magazines. You should be able to analyse and describe trends in data, for example, the voting patterns in elections, rising and falling popularity of television programmes, rise and fall of inflation rates etc.

Translation

In literature, translation means the conversion of a text from one language to another. It is the medium of communication in which the meaning of a text is adjusted to meet the linguistic requirements and limitations of the target language. The tone and intent of the original text are conveyed while keeping an eye on the regional and cultural differences between the language of the original and the language of the translation. At the time of translation, the

translator has to at times change the original order and structure of the text in keeping with the needs of the target language. For example, passive voice can be changed into active voice if necessary. Sometimes translators have to borrow from the language of the original text, terms that are not found in the target language. This helps enrich the target language. For example, the English translation of Wycliffe Bible pointed out the weaknesses of English prose.

LITERARY TEXTS

Literary knowledge is the familiarity with facts relating to literature including literary traditions and expressions. In literature, text means a literary writing consisting of multiple glyphs, characters, symbols or sentences. A piece of written material, like a book or poem created with the purpose of telling a story or amusing the reader, is known as a literary text. Though literary texts sometimes contain political messages or beliefs, their primary role is to entertain and not inform. According to literary theory, any written material that can be read is called a text. The study of literary texts and textual analysis helps to increase literary knowledge.

KNOWLEDGE TEXTS

Knowledge is defined as the 'understanding of a subject or information that you get by experience or study, either known by one person or by people generally'. Texts that aim to inform and provide knowledge are knowledge texts. There are three types of knowledge texts:

- Analytical texts – Analytical texts have written responses to questions or topics as well as argumentative points of view regarding the texts being studied.
- Textbooks – Texts in printed format which are prescribed in the syllabi by universities or schools for their students
- Electronic texts – Texts in digital form readable on the screen of a computer or other electronic devices

Note: Nowadays both literary and knowledge text can exist in the electronic form.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Choose the correct answer from the options given.

1. There is a close relation between
 - a. Reading and Writing
 - b. Reading and Understanding
 - c. Reading and Listening
 - d. Reading and Speaking

2. _____ is a fundamental strategy employed for critical reading.
- a. Comprehension
 - b. Translation
 - c. Highlighting
 - d. Close reading
3. In which reading technique does the reader look for specific information in a text?
- a. skimming
 - b. note-making
 - c. scanning
 - d. none of the above
4. In which reading technique does the reader seek to get an overall gist of the text?
- a. skimming
 - b. note-making
 - c. scanning
 - d. none of the above
5. Which of the following statements is true?
- a. A summary is of the same length as the original text.
 - b. A summary is shorter than the original text.
 - c. A paraphrase is shorter than the original text.
 - d. A paraphrase is longer than the original text.

IMPORTANCE OF WRITING SKILLS

Writing skills play an important role in communication as writing is one of the four language skills. Good writing skills help us to put our ideas and thoughts clearly and easily into words and present them in a planned, precise and direct manner. Written communication also has great significance in official matters as letters, notices, circulars, bulletins, mails, reports, etc., provide a written record of all communication. Written documents are also legally accepted as evidence in courts of law. Hence, they carry greater significance than spoken words.

In the academic sphere, strong writing skills are an asset as they also allow us to turn our knowledge and beliefs into convincing arguments and to express proper meaning through well-constructed writing. In order to acquire good writing skills, a command over grammar, punctuation and spelling is essential. The author can capture the mind of the reader with the help of proper and meaningful presentation of content. As a student, it helps if you can maintain a record of all that is taught within classes by taking down notes in an organised and easy-to-access manner.

In this module we will look at four kinds of writing skills which can prove useful to you in your academic as well as professional life – documenting, report writing, note-making and letter writing.

DOCUMENTING

A document is 'a paper or set of papers with written or printed information, especially of an official type'. Documentation is important from an organisational point of view as documents offer a written record of official communication; they are permanent, easy to file, acceptable as legal records, minimise the possibility of miscommunication (unlike spoken communication) and allow wide access or coverage. Moreover, the digital age has transformed how businesses communicate with consumers, vendors and partners. Written business communication today is professional, clear and concise. Organisations rely heavily on documents to conduct their day-to-day business.

In short, written communication in the modern-day world brings the following advantages to organisations. They

- create a permanent record
- define the brand
- establish professional relationships, and
- offer ease of dissemination of information.

In order to be effective in our official written communication, we need to be conscious that writing is a deliberate activity that requires adequate planning and systematic organisation of thoughts on paper. The following are the steps in the process of creating and maintaining official documents: drafting, revising, formatting, reviewing, approving, submitting/ circulating, reposting, tracking and maintaining records for future reference and use.

REPORT WRITING

A report is a piece of writing that presents information in a clear and cogent manner. It has a specific purpose and a well-defined structure. There are three kinds of reports – business reports, official reports and academic reports. For all the three kinds of reports you have to plan in advance. While planning a report, keep in mind the purpose of the report, the audience it is intended for and your relationship with the audience.

Writing different types of reports

Let us now look at the purpose and key features of different types of reports, their structure and how to write them effectively.

Business report: A business report is a type of document in which you analyse a situation (either a real situation or a case study) and apply business theories to produce a range of suggestions or recommendations for improvement of a service or product, possibility of launching a new product, solving a business related problem etc. It is often written when a decision is required to be taken and some research is required to base the decision on. A business report presents the author's findings on a particular issue or problem and then recommends a course of action for the organisation to take. A good report is one in which the author has convincingly interpreted his/her findings. It ensures that readers understand the basis on which conclusions are drawn as well as the rationale behind the recommendations.

A business report has a certain structure. Following are the parts of a business report:

- Covering letter
- Introduction
- Title page

- Executive summary
- Table of contents
- Conclusion
- Recommendations
- Findings and discussion
- Appendices

official report: The second kind of report is the official report. The characteristics of a business report also apply to this kind of report. Official reports need to be simple and have clarity. They should focus sharply on the area of study they cover and should be written in such a way that the content is easily comprehensible to busy officials who may need to refer to them in a hurry.

Academic report: Project reports and research reports fall under the category of academic reports. These reports contain details of different stages of a project or research. A report of this kind should be written at the end of the research and should contain answers to different questions regarding the project such as:

- What is the research question?
- What is the scope of the project?
- What are the aims and objectives of the study?
- What data was gathered?
- What were the tools that were used to gather the data?
- How was the data analysed?

Following are the parts of an academic report:

- Title page
- Abstract
- Table of contents
- Introduction
- Main body
- Conclusion
- Recommendations

- References
- Appendices

The structure of an academic report is similar to that of a business report, but the content of each structural part will be different.

NOTE-MAKING

Note-taking / -making is a very important writing skill. A lot of people have to take notes regularly. For example, students take notes when they listen to class lectures. They also make notes when they read something or engage in research activities. Personal secretaries take notes when they are instructed by their bosses or prepare synopses of large matters for presentation to their bosses. Reporters take notes when they hear public speeches or take interviews.

Uses of note-taking / -making

Note-making is a useful skill. Making notes about what we must do or 'Things-to-do' help in organising a day's work. Notes help to:

- Break down chunks of matter into smaller units
- Use your own words and phrases for units. This will help you paraphrase academic resources and save you from charges of plagiarism.
- Organise information better
- Recall important details
- Identify connections between ideas
- Develop a future course of action

Strategies for note-taking / -making

The objective of taking notes from a talk / speech or making notes from a written / printed material is to capture the essence of the matter and help you recall it later. You have to keep in mind that notes are not verbatim copies of the original source. You have to analyse the matter and categorise the information provided in the source intelligently. Use your own words and phrases to condense information and put it in words which you can remember.

Methods of note-taking / -making

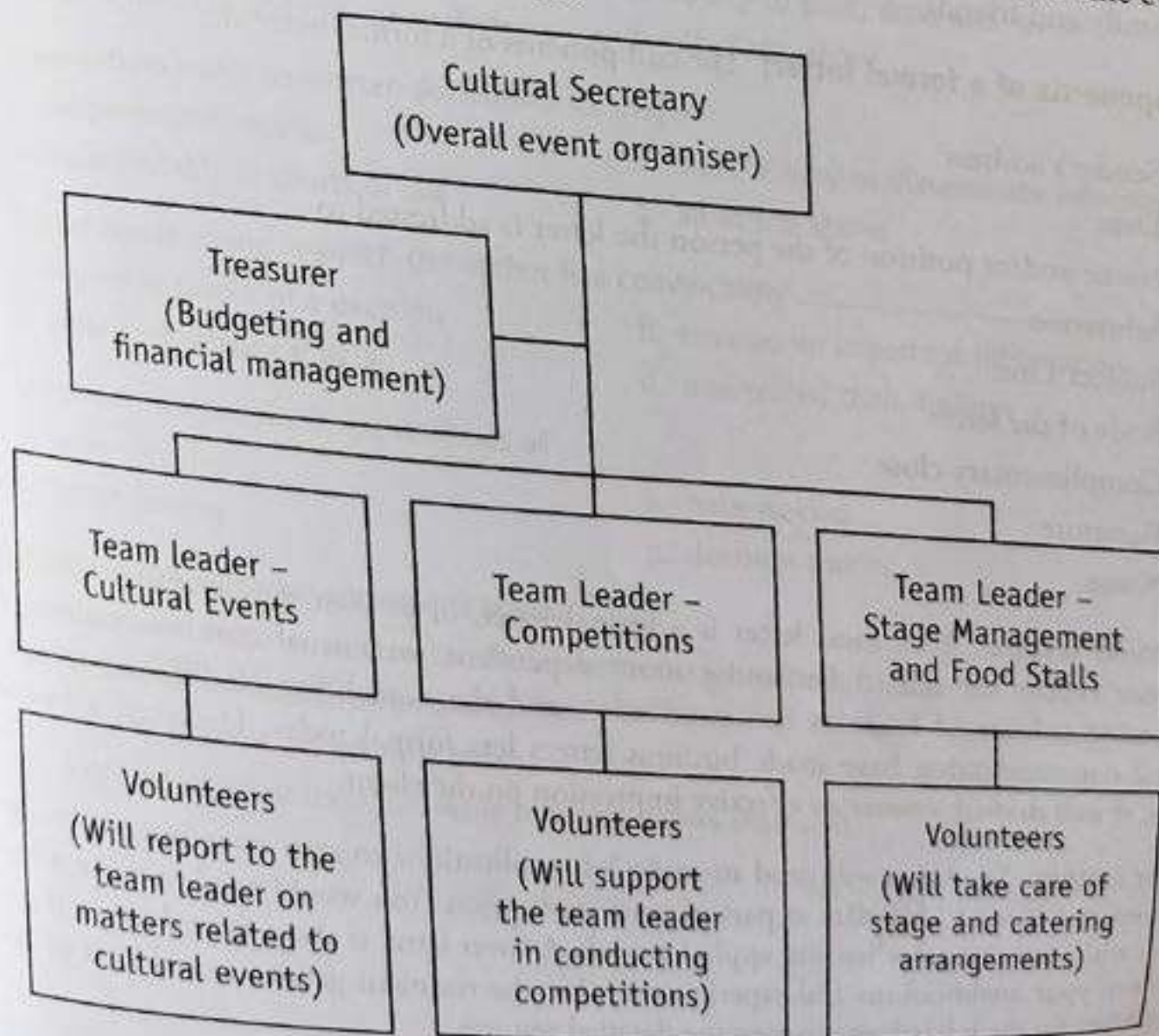
Notes can be made in two ways. Let us take a close look at both these methods.

The linear method: In this method the information is organised in the order of importance using indentation, listing, numbering / lettering, etc. For example:

- 1
- i
- ii
- 2
- 3

The diagrammatic method: Diagrams such as mind maps, tree diagrams and flow charts can also be used to make and take notes.

Look at the following notes prepared using a tree diagram by a student leader after attending a meeting to plan the college Annual Day. This diagram represents the structure of the event management team set up to organise the event:



LETTER WRITING

Advancement in information technology has influenced our methods of communication drastically. Now we write letters in the virtual space. A quick email or an SMS has taken the place of older forms of long handwritten letters. However, letter writing has far from died out. Organisations and governments often require that all correspondence be physically documented. There are moments when you would prefer to convey your feelings to your best friend in a physical manner so that they can imagine your presence. In that way personal letters of the physical kind are still very relevant.

Formal and informal letters

As is evident from the discussion above, there are two kinds of letters – formal letters and informal letters. Formal letters are written for official purposes and informal letters are written to family and friends.

Components of a formal letter: The components of a formal letter are:

1. Sender's address
2. Date
3. Name and/or position of the person the letter is addressed to
4. Salutation
5. Subject Line
6. Body of the letter
7. Complimentary close
8. Signature
9. Name

Business letters: A business letter is a formal letter, or at least it was written in such a manner before we started becoming more dependent on virtual communication. The increasing volume of business communication and the availability of different means of digital communication have made business letters less formal today. However, a business letter, if well drafted, creates an effective impression on the client.

Cover letters: Soon you will need to make job applications to start your career. You have to prepare a résumé / bio-data as part of your application. You would need to write a cover letter with your résumé when you apply for a job. A cover letter is also a formal letter. It gives a gist of your qualifications and experience so that the recipient gets an initial idea of your suitability for the job before perusing the detailed résumé.

CONCLUSION

As is evident from this brief glimpse into various applications of writing skills, it is one of the most important of the four language skills, both from an academic as well as professional point of view. People who can write effectively are considered assets in modern-day organisations. Writing requires not only a grasp of good language, grammar and punctuation but also logical thinking, critical analysis, disciplined planning and the patience to draft and revise one's writing till it adequately serves the required purpose.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Choose the correct answer from the options given.

1. Which of the following is essential for effective writing?
 - a. knowledge of grammar and punctuation
 - b. ability to plan, draft and revise
 - c. logical thinking and critical analysis
 - d. all of the above
2. Organisations insist on written documents as they:
 - a. are permanent records.
 - b. make it easy to disseminate information.
 - c. are acceptable in courts of law.
 - d. all of the above
3. A good report is one in which the author has convincingly _____.
 - a. argued in favour of a decision
 - b. covered up important information
 - c. presented numerical data
 - d. interpreted their findings
4. Linear and diagrammatic are methods of
 - a. report writing
 - b. note-making
 - c. letter writing
 - d. decision making
5. Which of the following statements is true?
 - a. A personal letter is written to officials on personal matters.
 - b. A cover letter accompanies a résumé.
 - c. A cover letter is an informal letter.
 - d. Digital communication has made business letters irrelevant.