MODULE 4   CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH SPEECH/WRITING

Unit 1   Forms of Contemporary English Writing
Unit 2   Contemporary Speech Forms in English
Unit 3   Formal and Informal Language Style
Unit 4   Linguistic Meaning and Speaker Meaning
Unit 5   Business English/Business Writing

UNIT 1   FORMS OF CONTEMPORARY WRITING

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the concept of writing, the beginning of writing, what writing is all about, the types of writing and the types of writers. The intention is to enable the students understand what it entails to write or communicate in English. Arming oneself with the grammar of a language also means that one can write in English using the appropriate methods, styles or the acceptable writing patterns for each situation. A writer is a person who writes according to specific ideals or required information. Thus, there are different writings for the medical fields, academic fields, scientific fields, legal fields etc. and each of these fields of writing requires the writer to adopt the appropriate English language expressive form that is adequate for each.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand the concept of writing;
- learn the methods of writing;
- distinguish the different types of writing;

- know the importance of ghostwriting; and
- apply the appropriate writing style for each writing pattern/field

HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT
a. Read this unit as diligently as possible.
b. Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
c. As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
d. Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
e. Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

Writing is the representation of language in a textual medium through the use of a set of signs or symbols (known as a writing system). It is distinguished from illustration, such as cave drawing and painting, and the recording of language via a non-textual medium such as magnetic tape audio. Writing began as a consequence of the burgeoning needs of accounting. Around the 4th millennium BC, the complexity of trade and administration outgrew the power of memory, and writing became a more dependable method of recording and presenting transactions in a permanent form. *Writing*, more particularly, refers to two things: *writing* as a noun, the thing that is written; and *writing* as a verb, which designates the activity of writing. It refers to the inscription of characters on a medium, thereby forming words, and larger units of language, known as texts. It also refers to the creation of meaning and the information thereby generated. In that regard, linguistics (and related sciences) distinguishes between the written language and the spoken language. The significance of the medium by which meaning and information are conveyed is indicated by the distinction made in the arts and sciences. For example, while public speaking and poetry reading are both types of speech, the former is governed by the rules of rhetoric and the latter by those of poetics.

A person who composes a message or story in the form of text is generally known as a writer or an author. However, more specific designations exist which are dictated by the particular nature of the text such as that of poet, essayist, novelist, playwright and journalist. A person who transcribes, translates or produces text to deliver a message authored by another person is known as a scribe, typist or typesetter. A person who produces text with emphasis on the aesthetics of glyphs is known as a calligrapher or graphic designer. Writing is also a distinctly

human activity. It has been said that a monkey, randomly typing away on a typewriter (in the days when typewriters replaced the pen or plume as the preferred instrument of writing) could re-create Shakespeare but only if it lived long enough (this is known as the infinite monkey theorem). Such writing has been speculatively designated as coincidental. It is also speculated that extra-terrestrial beings exist who may possess knowledge of writing. The fact is that the only known writing is human writing.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What is writing? Explain the reasons why writing is a pure human activity?

3.2 Writing and Style

One particular question that arises in any attempt to study or describe style is, to what extent is it the writer's style, and what extent the form's? The statements, *the journalist has a very journalistic style, or the scholar's style is too scholarly*, reveal the redundant and misleading nature of talking about style. At the same time, it does not sound strange to say, this journalist has a very descriptive and narrative style. Even in this case, however, the question may persist of whether this can truly be called a 'personal' style, or merely an ironic substitution of styles.

While style can typically be identified as the writer's choices among identical propositions - between, for example, the propositions 'That play was lousy as hell,' and 'That play struck me as quite dull' - several kinds of constraints affect, pre-determine, or reduce the choices that can be made. One kind of constraint is audience, which affects the writer's diction, the degree of complexity in the syntax, and the use of figures of thought such as metaphor. For example, a letter of complaint by one writer will be different from a letter of condolence by the same writer, which will be different from a letter of business. Another kind of constraint involves issues of legality or discretion: for example, avoiding libel, defamation, obscenity, sedition, and other social taboos. The presence of such constraints will eliminate options such as 'That play was ####!' A third kind of constraint requires a minimal grammatical coherence, eliminating options like 'That play hell as lousy was.' However, the constraint which commonly has the most impact is purpose, as it determines the major rhetorical mode of a given piece of writing.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Explain the relationship between writing and style.

3.3   Types of Writers

A *writer* is anyone who creates written work, although the word more usually designates those who write creatively or professionally, or those who have written in many different forms. The word is almost synonymous with *author*, although somebody who writes, say, a laundry list, could technically be called the writer or author of the list, but not an author. Skilled writers are able to use language to portray ideas and images, whether fiction or non-fiction. A writer may compose in many different forms including (but certainly not limited to) poetry, prose, or music. Accordingly, a writer in a specialist mode may rank as a poet, novelist, composer, lyricist, playwright, mythographer, journalist, film script, etc. Writers' output frequently contributes to the cultural content of a society, and that society may value its writerlycorpus -- or literature -- as an art much like the visual arts, music, craft and performance art (like drama, theatre, opera, musical). In the British Royal Navy, *Writer* is the trade designation for an administrative clerk.

One important writer to be discussed is the *ghostwriter*. A *ghostwriter* is a professional writer who is paid to write books, articles, stories, reports, or other content which are officially credited to another person. Celebrities, executives, and political leaders often hire ghostwriters to draft or edit autobiographies, magazine articles, or other written material. In music, ghostwriters are used in classical music, film composition, and popular music such as Top 40, country, and hip-hop. The ghostwriter is, sometimes, acknowledged by the author or publisher for their assistance.

The division of work between the ghostwriter and the credited author varies a great deal. In some cases, the ghostwriter is hired to polish and edit a rough draft or a mostly-completed manuscript. In this case, the outline, ideas and much of the language in the finished book or article are those of the credited author. In other cases, a ghostwriter does most of the writing, using concepts and stories provided by the credited author. In this case, a ghostwriter will do extensive research on the credited author or their subject area of expertise. It is rare for a ghostwriter to prepare a book or article with no input from the credited author; at a minimum, the credited author usually jots down a basic framework of ideas at the outset or provides comments on the ghostwriter's final draft.

For an autobiography, a ghostwriter will interview the credited author, their colleagues, and family members, and find interviews, articles, and video footage about the credited author or their work. For other types of non-fiction books or articles, a ghostwriter will interview the credited

author and review previous speeches, articles, and interviews with the credited author, to assimilate his or her arguments and points of view. Ghostwriters are hired for numerous reasons. In many cases, celebrities or public figures do not have the time, discipline, or writing skills to write and research a several-hundred page autobiography. Even if a celebrity or public figure has the writing skills to pen a short article, they may not know how to structure and edit a several-hundred page book so that it is captivating and well-paced. In other cases, publishers use ghostwriters to increase the number of books that can be published each year under the name of well-known, highly marketable authors.

Ghostwriters will often spend from several months to a full year researching, writing, and editing non-fiction works for a client, and they are paid either per page, with a flat fee, or a percentage of the royalties of the sales, or some combination thereof. In 2001, the New York Times stated that the fee that the ghostwriter for Hillary Clinton's memoirs will receive is probably about $500,000 of her book's $8 million advance. Credit for the ghostwriter may also be provided as a "thanks" in a foreword or introduction. For non-fiction books, the ghostwriter may be credited as a "contributor" or a "research assistant". In other cases, the ghostwriter receives no official credit for writing a book or article; in cases where the credited author or the publisher or both wish to conceal the ghostwriter's role, the ghostwriter may be asked to sign a nondisclosure contract that forbids him or her from revealing his or her ghostwriting role.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Discuss the relationship between a ghostwriter and a biographer.

3.4   Types of Writing

The following types of writing are common in contemporary English writing:

A: Non-fiction Writing

Ghostwriters are widely used by celebrities and public figures who wish to publish their autobiographies or memoirs. The degree of involvement of the ghostwriter in non-fiction writing projects ranges from minor to substantial. In some cases, a ghostwriter may be called just to clean up, edit, and polish a rough draft of an autobiography or a "how-to" book. In other cases, the ghostwriter will write an entire book or article based on information, stories, notes, and an outline, provided by the celebrity or public figure. The credited author also indicates to the ghostwriter what type of style, tone, or "voice" they want in the book.

In some cases, such as with some "how-to" books, diet guides, or cookbooks, a book will be entirely written by a ghostwriter, and the celebrity (e.g., a well-known musician or sports star) will be credited as author. Publishing companies use this strategy to increase the marketability of a book by associating it with a celebrity or well-known figure. In several countries before elections, candidates commission ghostwriters to produce autobiographies for them so as to gain visibility and exposure. Most recently, American Presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and John McCain used the aid of ghost writers to produce both of their best-selling books. The candidate Barack Obama is a rarity in this arena in that he penned both of his books by himself without the aid of ghost writers.

A consultant or career-switcher may pay to have a book ghostwritten on a topic in their professional area, to establish or enhance their credibility as an 'expert' in their field. For example, a successful salesperson hoping to become a motivational speaker on selling may pay a ghostwriter to write a book on sales techniques. Often this type of book is published in the vanity press, which means that the author is paying to have the book published. This type of book is typically given away to prospective clients as a promotional tool, rather than being sold in bookstores.

B: Fiction Writing

Ghostwriters are employed by fiction publishers for several reasons. In some cases, publishers use ghostwriters to increase the number of books that can be published each year by a well-known, highly marketable author. Ghostwriters are mostly used to pen fiction works for well-known, "name" authors in genres such as detective fiction, mysteries, and teen fiction.

Additionally, publishers use ghostwriters to write new books for established series where the 'author' is a pseudonym. For example, the purported author of the Nancy Drew mystery series, "Carolyn Keene", is actually a pseudonym for a series of ghostwriters who write books in the same style using a template of basic information about the book's characters and their fictional universe (names, dates, speech patterns), and about the tone and style that are expected in the book (For more information, see the articles on pseudonyms or pen names). As well, ghostwriters are often given copies of several of the previous books in the series, to help them match the style.

C: Political Writing

Public officials and politicians employ 'correspondence officers' to respond to the large volume of correspondence that they receive. The degree of involvement of the public official in the drafting of response

letters varies, depending on the nature of the letter, its contents, and the importance of the official and the sender. At the highest level, public officials such as the head of state or a regional governor typically have their officials approve the content of routine correspondence and autopen their signature with a signature machine. However, if the response is being sent to a high-ranking official or member of society, a draft of the letter may be given to the head of state or their top advisers for approval—particularly if the letter deals with a politically sensitive issue. Public officials at lower levels, such as middle managers and department heads will often review, request changes in, and hand sign all outgoing correspondence, even though the initial drafts are composed by a correspondence officer or policy analyst.

Since members of the public are widely aware that politicians are not themselves writing routine response letters, it can be argued that these correspondence officers are not ghostwriters in the strictest sense of the term. Public officials may also have a speechwriter, who writes public remarks and speeches, or both jobs may be done by a single person.

D: Medical Writing

With medical ghostwriting, pharmaceutical companies pay physicians or scientists to produce papers in medical or scientific journals on the outcomes of new medications. Medical ghostwriting has been criticized by a variety of professional organizations representing the drug industry, publishers, and medical societies, and it may violate American laws prohibiting off-label promotion by drug manufacturers as well as anti-kickback provisions within the statutes governing Medicare. Recently, it has attracted scrutiny from the lay press and from lawmakers, as well.

Professional medical writers can write papers without being listed as authors of the paper and without being considered ghostwriters, provided their role is acknowledged. The European Medical Writers Association has published guidelines which aim to ensure professional medical writers carry out this role in an ethical and responsible manner. The use of properly acknowledged medical writers is accepted as legitimate by organisations such as the World Association of Medical Editors and the British Medical Journal. Moreover, professional medical writers' expertise in presenting scientific data may be of benefit in producing better quality papers.

Most pharmaceutical companies have in-house publication managers who may either manage the writing of publications on the company's drugs by a team of in-house medical writers or contract them out to medical communication companies or freelance medical writers. Reprints of the articles can be distributed to doctors in their offices or at

medical meetings by drug company representatives in lieu of product brochures, which might be illegal, if they were to otherwise advocate use of the drug for non-approved indications or dosages. Payments to medical ghostwriters may be augmented with consulting contracts, paid trips to teach continuing medical education courses, and sometimes "research" or "educational" grants that afford additional avenues for pocketing kickbacks. The colluding academics or doctors are known as "KOLs" ("Key Opinion Leaders") or "TLs" "Thought Leaders").

E: Blog Writing

One of the newer types of ghostwriters is the web log, or 'blog' ghostwriter. Blogs are websites where a person keeps a journal of thoughts and holds online discussions with other web users, typically on political, social, or cultural issues, and current events. As well, many blogs cater to special interests ranging from handgun collecting to knitting. Blogs are rated according to how many web 'hits' they get from users viewing the page, and this rating is used by advertisers considering paying for advert space on a blog website. New blog operators hoping to generate interest in their blog site sometimes hire ghostwriters to post comments to their blog, while posing as different people and using pseudonyms. With more posts and more comments, it is more likely that a blog will have more key words which will bring up the blog during a search engine's search. Once a blog gets more traffic, eventually the number of 'real' posts may increase, and the blog ghostwriters may no longer be needed.

F: Academic Writing

Some university and college students hire ghostwriters from essay mills to write entrance essays, term papers, and theses and dissertations. In the 2000s, many essay mills began offering online services. The most basic 'essay mill' service is the sale of a previously-written essay. However, since submitting a previously-written essay is risky, a 'customized' essay-writing service is available for a higher price. Essay mill services do not violate the law by providing ghostwritten papers; the act of academic fraud and misrepresentation only occurs when the student submits the ghostwritten paper as their own work. Universities have developed several strategies to combat this type of academic fraud. Some professors require students to submit electronic versions of their term papers, so that the text of the essay can be compared against databases of essays that are known to be plagiarized, 'essay mill' term papers. Other universities allow professors to give students oral examinations on papers which a professor believes to be 'ghostwritten'; if the student is unfamiliar with the content of an essay that they have submitted, and then the student can be charged with academic fraud.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Assess the importance of each type of writing studied in this unit.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Writing requires special attention. Every piece of writing has a message to communicate to a specific audience. We have the writer's voice in a piece of writing. *Writer's voice* is a literary term used to describe the individual writing style of an author. Voice is a combination of a writer's use of syntax, diction, punctuation, character development, dialogue, etc., within a given body of text (or across several works). Voice can also be referred to as the specific fingerprint of an author, as every author has a different writing style. In creative writing, students are often encouraged to experiment with different literary styles and techniques in order to help them better develop their "voice." Voice varies with the individual author, having a strong voice is considered positive and beneficial to both the writer and his or her audience. When we write, there is the tendency to consider the audience otherwise our works will lack focus and without the audience a piece of writing is meaningless.

5.0   SUMMARY

It is clear that writing is the only mark of literacy. Most people could speak but not all could write half of what they speak. More so, the majority of those who write are often not in the mastery of the writing mode or pattern they are practising. Writing is a serious business which requires the users of any language to be properly armed with the necessary language tools that will enhance their writing abilities. A creative writer and an academic writer are writing for different audience hence their diction, tone, and choice of words vary. In contemporary English writing, the writer must be mindful of the basic requirements of language that are appropriate for each writing pattern and for each audience.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions with adequate examples:

i.   Explain the different types of writing and their audience.
ii.   What are the basic duties of a ghostwriter?
iii.   Distinguish between fiction and non-fiction writing.
iv.   Elaborate on the essence of style in writing.
v.   Discuss the importance of language use to contemporary speech and writing.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2   CONTEMPORARY SPEECH FORMS IN ENGLISH

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the forms of speech, the art of rhetoric/ public speaking and figures of speech. Speech is the practical demonstration of our written discourse. A good writer may not be a good speaker due to the effects of natural inhibitions, accidents or other factors like sociolinguistic factors. Speech writing and speech making are related; although in the use of written speech there are other appendages that are used in buttressing the points in the written speech. Thus, speech is primordial to writing. It is not surprising; therefore, that most people write the way they speak.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- understand the concept of correct speech in Contemporary English;
- discuss rhetoric and public speaking as forms of contemporary speech;
- apply acceptable forms of speech in their use of Contemporary English;
- identify the various figures of speech as acceptable forms in contemporary English; and
- differentiate written speech from speech in Contemporary English.

HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT
a.   Read this unit as diligently as possible.
b.   Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
c.   As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
d.   Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
e.   Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

Writing effective speeches requires a constant awareness of the distinction between the written and the spoken word: the speechwriter must learn to "write aloud." While the best speeches read as well as they sound, the novice speechwriter should give priority to the ear and not the eye. His or her speech must be written to be heard, not read. This means that easy intelligibility should be a paramount concern, so that the listening span is not strained. One of the first rules of the speechwriting profession is that a sentence written to be heard should be simple, direct, and short. When the speechwriter "writes aloud," George Orwell's advice to cut out any word that can possibly be cut is helpful, so long as the resulting effect is clarity, and not verbal shorthand. The speechwriter thus faces the challenge of crafting words that convey the speaker's meaning clearly, but that also draw on the rich nuance and texture of spoken English. The average spoken sentence runs from 8 to 16 words; anything longer is considered more difficult for listeners to follow by ear, and according to one expert, may be too long for the average listener to absorb and analyze quickly. By comparison, written sentences of up to 30 words are easily understood by average readers.

Given these generally accepted limitations, what devices are available to the writer to make more complex sentences and speech wording accessible to the listener? Complex sentences can be clarified by repeating key words and using simple connections. By numerous rhetorical techniques, the speaker states, restates, and states again in different ways, the central themes of the speech.

Above all, in the spoken word there must be an element of identity and rapport with the listener, whether the speaker uses a "natural" conversational tone or a more oratorical style. Effective speechwriting has rules. Its "rules" are meant to foster clarity of expression, whatever the occasion and purpose of any given speech. Mere clarity is not enough for persuasive rhetoric, however. Indeed, there are times when

clarity, brevity, and the like are not appropriate. The issues, because of their import and complexity, may preclude such treatment; similarly, the gravity or the occasion may call for some measure of deliberate ambiguity. The best speechwriter will take into account the context of the speech and the speaker's personality, the image that is projected — that is, the speaker whom the audience sees and hears.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Comment on the importance of good sentence forms in contemporary speech writing.

3.2   Speech Forms

Speech is a learned system of communication requiring the coordinated use of voice, articulation, and language skills. Only humans are able to produce true speech. In a broad sense, speech is synonymous with language. Language is an arbitrary system of abstract symbols agreed upon by any group of people to communicate their thoughts and feelings. Symbols may be verbal or nonverbal, that is, either spoken or written; additionally, nonverbal symbols may be gestures and body movements. In spoken language the skills of articulation are used; in written language, spelling is substituted for articulation. Both auditory and visual skills are essential to the comprehension and expression of language. Rate and rhythm also should be considered in the evaluation of speech. Connected speech should not be so rapid or so slow that it interferes with comprehension. Rhythm is judged mostly in terms of fluency. Good or so-called normal speech cannot be exactly measured or described, however; it can be judged essentially only as it seems to be suitable to the sex, size, age, personality, and needs of the speaker. Because speech is a learned function, any interference with learning ability may be expected to cause speech impairment.

a.   Speech Preparation

When selecting material, the responsible speechwriter will take great care to quote accurately and give full credit for whatever is borrowed outright. Plagiarism is often illegal and always unethical. On the other hand, it is entirely proper to adapt existing materials to one's own purpose in preparing a new speech for any occasion. As Thomas Jefferson wrote in response to accusations that he had plagiarized parts of the 'Declaration of Independence' from other works, his logical response was "I did not consider it as any part of my charge to invent new ideas altogether and to offer no sentiment which had ever been expressed before." Straining after originality, which has been defined by

an anonymous wit as "imitation not yet detected," can ruin the best of speeches. Thus, the following should be considered in writing a speech:

a.   Quotations and humorous anecdotes or remarks are like spices, and should be used with discrimination, mindful of good taste and effectiveness. Speeches overloaded with quotations and anecdotes can sink from their own weight.

b.   Pseudo-quotations should be avoided. Never use a quotation that cannot be verified in an authoritative source.

c.   Unless a writer is gifted with lightness of touch, self-deprecating or gentle humor is usually more effective than satire or ridicule.

d.   Jokes aimed at people's personal lives or at religious and ethnic groups are invariably offensive, regardless of the speaker's motives. Avoid them.

e.   Statistics should be used with care and moderation. Like the points in an outline, they are better alluded to in context than cited in tedious detail. A speech filled with statistics becomes a statistical abstract, not a speech.

b.   The Speech Outline/Structure

The task of actually writing the speech, once the preliminaries are completed, will be greatly facilitated in most cases by the use of an outline. The novice speechwriter may be tempted to dispense with this device, on the grounds that it adds a time consuming extra step to a process that is often constrained by tight deadlines. On the other hand, it forces the writer to plan and organize his thoughts, to determine in advance what he intends to say, and to begin at the beginning.

A speech outline generally is not nearly as detailed as an outline for an academic work, such as a journal article, or even a research paper. The outline serves as a skeleton, a framework to carry the flesh and blood of the fully developed speech. At the same time, this skeleton should eventually be invisible, clothed in delivery with ideas and emotions, and as simple as possible; beware of explicitly enumerating too many points or topics. Outlines may be written in topics, or key sentences, or in complete thoughts, so long as there is an orderly sequence. The frugal writer will retain speech outlines, since they can easily be reworked for future efforts.

Nearly every speech will have a basic three-part structure of introduction, body, and conclusion. An arresting introduction should

lead into an emphatic statement of the main theme or themes. The argument that follows seeks to elaborate and develop the theme convincingly and effectively—that is, without too much detail. The central theme is restated in the closing. One helpful approach for overcoming the feeling of word fright is to write the speech in reverse: begin with the conclusion, which should summarize the central message, while abridging and restating whatever goes before. If the introduction sets the tone and establishes initial appeal or rapport, the closing communicates the final effect and is more likely to be remembered. Working backward is one way of imparting unity, coherence, and emphasis to the speech as a whole.

c.   Language in Speech

i.   Punctuation

Punctuation is crucial to an effective speech; it helps to clarify the delivery of the spoken word. Good punctuation in English, apart from a few basic elements, is less a matter of inflexible rules than of purpose and style, particularly where speeches are concerned. Historically there have been two broad traditions of punctuation:

Syntactical — that is, guided by syntax or grammatical construction; and elocutionary— deriving from the rhythm and pace of actual speech. One writer has further distinguished three methods of punctuating: by structure or logic to indicate the sense of what is being said; by the rhythm of word order and intended meaning — a subtle use best avoided by novice speech writers; and by respiration — that is, by the physical ease of natural speech, which assumes that what is read is really spoken.

This last method, essentially the same as the elocutionary style, is the most widely used and certainly the most appropriate for speeches. In short, punctuate according to the ear and not the eye. This also means punctuating for the lungs: give the Member time to breathe! A long and convoluted sentence (something to be avoided in general) can leave the Member literally gasping for breath as he or she concludes it. A useful practice for speechwriters, is to declaim aloud (speaks aloud, not in a conversational tone, but as if one were speaking to an audience).

Commas and dashes are useful to the speaker and listeners alike as guideposts to what lies ahead in a speech. They also provide pauses where the speaker can let the import of the previous sentence sink in, or simply catch his or her breath. Opinion is divided on colons and semicolons; some consider them as serving the same functions as commas and dashes, while others suggest that they are more emphatic, demanding a full stop in the flow of remarks, rather than a short pause.

They are also sometimes criticized as leading to long compound sentences that are difficult for audiences to process, and that are better replaced by shorter declarative ones. In the final analysis, the Member's personal preferences and style should be the congressional speechwriter's guide.

ii.   Grammar and Syntax

Correct grammar and syntax in the context of speechwriting and delivery mean using a level of English usage that is appropriate to the occasion. While it is highly desirable, the formal grammar of the written language is not an end in itself; it exists to further the clarity of expression. Far more important than the grammarian's rules is the communication of personality by which a speech, as opposed to a lecture, is clothed with emotion and enthusiasm, so that the speaker is perceived to be sincere and trustworthy, neither "talking over people's heads" nor "talking down" to them. While this may belong more to the presentation or delivery, the writer should strive for it in speech preparation as well.

d.   Speech Delivery

Effective delivery can transform a weak speech and make it sound very good. Poor delivery can ruin the best-prepared speeches, and sometimes does. Although delivery is not the concern of the speechwriter as such, it must be always in mind as a speech is actually written. The speaker's pace, his or her style, mannerisms, tendencies (such as departing from a text), peculiarities, or special difficulties (words to avoid) — these are elements with which the writer should be well acquainted before preparing any speech.

Ideally, a speech draft ought to be reviewed three times — by the writer, by the prospective speaker, and by a disinterested third party. Of these three, priority should ordinarily be given to the speaker. The revised product is likely to be more effective. With speeches, as with food, however, too many cooks are undesirable. Moreover, time seldom permits this much critical evaluation and rewriting. It may even be easier to provide for some appraisal of the speech's impact and audience reaction after delivery. The speaker, then, is always concerned to measure that response and to elicit "positive feedback."

Good writing is nurtured by wide reading, which in turn fosters a sense of style, enriched vocabulary, accuracy in grammar, and a feeling for English syntax. The best speechwriters will, through regular daily reading, bring an ever more abundant background to their work. Everything is grist for the speechwriter's mill. Moreover, nothing is

surer in speech writing than that "practice makes perfect". The more one writes, the easier the task becomes, and the smoother and more conversational the flow of the remarks. As with so many aspects of speechwriting and delivery, the physical form of a speech is a matter of personal preference. Some speakers prefer to work from a completely polished text, one that may include carefully tailored "spontaneous" anecdotes and jokes at appropriate places, and may even incorporate hints on speech delivery or effective body language in the text. Others prefer to speak from notes derived from such a text, proceed from a series of "talking points", or simply extemporize. Whichever method is used, preparatory notes or an outline are recommended, with the cautionary warning that dependence on a manuscript can deaden the delivery, just as the excessive use of notes or cards can stimulate verbosity.

e.   Style

For most speakers it is also better not to memorize a speech (unless one has a gift for it), since memory is fallible and elusive at best. The speechwriter should not shrink from commonly accepted contemporary usage. The development of public address systems, radio, and, finally, the "cool" medium of television, and the perhaps even more intimate medium of the *webcast* have combined with other social changes to turn down the volume, both in decibels and emotions, of public speaking in the world, for better or worse eliminating its more histrionic qualities. The accepted style of contemporary oratory is generally low key, casual without being offensively familiar, and delivered directly to the audience in a conversational tone and volume. It puts the audience at ease and helps promote psychological bonding between listeners and speaker. The speaker is perceived as a neighbor or friend, as well as an official.

i.   Use natural words and phrases in a speech; let the sentences flow conversationally. It is helpful for some writers, time permitting, to prepare a first draft in longhand, shaping the sentences slowly, speaking aloud the phrases they intend to use.

ii.   The first person is perfectly acceptable in modern public discourse, and when combined with other personal pronouns — remember to avoid "I" strain — it can help connect listener to speaker and create a sense of community within the audience. While the first person singular is sometimes deprecated, it is its excessive use that should be avoided. Conversely, speakers should avoid referring to themselves in the first person plural (we) or the third person singular (he or she). The former has been reserved to monarchs, and is considered archaic in modern

speech. The latter too often conveys a sense of excessive self-importance to listeners.

iii.   Writers should generally use simple, declarative sentences, preferably in active voice, when making important statements of fact, assertion, or opinion. Use of the passive voice should not be dismissed out of hand, however; it is sometimes the more desirable form, and can lend grace and variety to the speaker's flow of words that stimulates the listener. It is excessive use that should be avoided. Similarly, exclusive use of the active voice can impart a choppy, juvenile cadence to even a content-rich speech.

iv.   Justas there are points to emphasize in every speech, serving as clear transitions or aural signposts for paragraphs ("secondly," "nevertheless," "finally," "accordingly," "as a result," "in spite of," "as I have said," etc.), so there are things to avoid, and they are more numerous. While they are discussed in full in many reference works, they include:

    a.   jargon and trendy neologisms: "impact" used as a verb, "stakeholders," "incentivize," "outside the box"et al.;
    b.   redundancy resulting from excess verbiage, not deliberate restatement;
    c.   mannerisms that may distract the listener, and trite phrases or clichés, monotony of style or pace and, in general, language inappropriate to the audience and occasion.

3.3   Rhetoric/ Public Speaking

Rhetoric is the art of harnessing reason, emotions and authority, through language, with a view to persuade an audience and, by persuading, to convince this audience to act, to pass judgement or to identify with given values. The word derives from Greek (rhetorike), "oratorical, skilled in speaking" and that from ρήτωρ (rhetōr), "orator". Rhetoric, in its broadest sense, is the theory and practice of eloquence, whether spoken or written. Spoken rhetoric is oratory. Rhetoric defines the rules that should govern all prose composition or speech designed to influence the judgment or the feelings of people. It therefore treats of all matters relating to beauty or forcefulness of style (see Figure of Speech). In a narrower sense, rhetoric is concerned with a consideration of the fundamental principles according to which oratorical discourses are composed: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery.

The Greek philosopher Plato satirized the more technical approach to rhetoric, with its emphasis on persuasion rather than truth, in his work *Gorgias,* and in the *Phaedrus* he discussed the principles constituting the essence of the rhetorical art. The Greek philosopher Aristotle, in his work *Rhetoric,* defined the function of rhetoric as being, not that of persuasion, but rather that of "discovering all the available means of persuasion", thereby emphasizing the winning of an argument by persuasive marshaling of truth, rather than the swaying of an audience by an appeal to their emotions. He regarded rhetoric as the counterpart, or sister art, of logic. Rhetoric constituted one of the subjects of the *trivium,* or three preliminary subjects of the seven liberal arts taught at the universities, the other two being *grammar* and *logic*. Then, rhetoric found practical application in three "arts": letter writing, preaching, and the composition of poetry.

"Rhetoric," wrote Aristotle "is the power of determining in a particular case what the available means of persuasion are". A speech should nevertheless reflect the intention and even the style of the speaker. The best ghostwriters are properly invisible; they subordinate themselves to the speaker in such a way that the final product is effectively personalized in the process of actual communication. The only ways to achieve or even approach this ideal are practice and experience.

Tools of Rhetoric

Repetition and Variation

Repetition with variation is a basic speechwriting tool used by many of the greatest speakers to emphasize key elements while avoiding monotony. Some examples follow. Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech was a striking example of this technique, using that phrase to introduce a series of his visions for a better future.

Cadence and Balance

Another venerable rhetorical device is the use of cadence and balance in the spoken word. This is a part of speechwriting where the speaker and the writer need cooperation to ensure success. The tradition of public speaking in the English language owes much to the poetic tradition, which was originally an oral tradition. As difficult to define as to achieve, cadence and balance impart movement and harmonious effect to any speech. Essentially a matter of ordering groups of words (and ideas) into rhythmic patterns, cadence and balance can be attained by such classical rhetorical devices as the ones described below.

Rhythmic Triads

The grouping of words into patterns of three can lead to a memorable effect, provided the device is not overused. Some notable examples from classic oratory include "Veni, vidi, vici"; "Never ... was so much owed by so many to so few"; "The kingdom, the power, and the glory ..."; "I have not sought, I do not seek, I repudiate the support of ..."; "one third of a nation ill-clad, ill-nourished, ill-housed...."

Parallelism

The linkage of similar words or ideas in a balanced construction that repeatedly uses the same grammatical form to convey parallel or coordinated ideas: "Bigotry has no head and cannot think; no heart and cannot feel"; "Charity beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

Inverted Order

This classic rhetorical practice, once more widely used, seeks to embellish the general flow of words, much like an ornament or a musical flourish. It also helps give a particular sentence special emphasis by causing it to stand out from others by its unusual form. For instance, "With what dignity and courage they perished in that day."

Suspension for Climax

With this device, the speaker comes to a complete stop in his remarks, using the ensuing moment of silence to concentrate the listeners' attention on his next phrase. "My obligation as President is historic; it is clear; yes, it is inescapable." Even periodic sentences, if used with care, repeating the "suspended" subject or verb before modifying phrases or clauses can contribute to the effect: "Thus did he prove to be a leader who — victorious in battle, magnanimous in victory, skilled in the arts of peace — was able, in the face of his most determined foes ..."

Imagery

No speech will sound fresh and vivid if it is not animated by imaginative imagery, by metaphor in its many forms: "the hatred of entrenched greed"; "Nigeria will always stand for liberty"; "Democracy is the healthful lifeblood which circulates through the veins and arteries of society..."; "Whether in chains or in laurels, liberty knows nothing but victories". Extended metaphors or analogies, comparing similarities in different things, should be used with care so that the principal subject will not be lost in the image. Two or more metaphors in a single

sentence or thought can be safely ventured only by the most experienced writers. In the next subheading, we will examine different types of figures of speech used in speech writing and/or public speaking.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Rhetoric is public speaking but speech making absorbs all forms. Discuss this proposition properly.

3.4   Figures of Speech

Figure of Speech is a word or a group of words used to give particular emphasis to an idea or sentiment. The special emphasis is typically accomplished by the user's conscious deviation from the strict literal sense of a word, or from the more commonly used form of word order or sentence construction. From ancient times to the present, such figurative locutions have been extensively employed by orators and writers to strengthen and embellish their styles of speech and composition. A number of the more widely used figures of speech, some of which are also called *tropes,* are as follows:

Alliteration

This is the repetition of initial consonant sounds in a series of words to give emphasis. For instance, "We need to return to that old-fashioned notion of competition — where substance, not subsidies, determines the winner" or, "...the nattering nabobs of negativism....

Anaphora

This is the repetition of the same word or words at the beginning of successive clauses or sentences. Churchill's famous defiance of Hitler, "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds ...," is one of the most famous examples.

Anticlimax

This is a sequence of ideas that abruptly diminish in dignity or importance at the end of a sentence or passage used generally for satirical effect. The following sentence contains an illustration of anticlimax: "Among the great achievements of Benito Mussolini's regime were the revival of a strong national consciousness, the expansion of the Italian Empire, and the running of the trains on time."

Antithesis

This is the juxtaposition of two words, phrases, clauses, or sentences contrasted or opposed in meaning in such a way as to give emphasis to contrasting ideas. An example of antithesis is the following line by the English poet Alexander Pope: "To err is human, to forgive divine", "... give me liberty, or give me death."; "Ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country"; "To some generations much is given; from others, much is demanded ..."; "A great empire and little minds go ill together"; "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. It was the age of wisdom, it was the age of folly."; "If Puritanism was not the godfather to Capitalism, then it was godson."

Apostrophe

This is a device by which an actor turns from the audience, or a writer from readers, to address a person who usually is either absent or deceased, an inanimate object, or an abstract idea. The English poet John Milton, in his poem *Il Penseroso,* invokes the spirit of melancholy in the following words: "Hail divinest Melancholy, whose saintly visage is too bright to hit the sense of human sight."

Climax

This is the arrangement of words, clauses, or sentences in the order of their importance, the least forcible coming first and the others rising in power until the last, as in the following sentence: "It is an outrage to bind a Roman citizen; it is a crime to scourge him; it is almost parricide to kill him; but to crucify him—what shall I say of this?"

Conceit

This is an elaborate, often extravagant metaphor or simile (see below) making an analogy between totally dissimilar things. The term originally meant "concept" or "idea." The use of conceits is especially characteristic of 17th-century English metaphysical poetry. An example occurs in the poem "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning," by the English poet John Donne, in which two lovers' souls are compared to the legs of drawing compasses.

Euphemism

This is the substitution of a delicate or inoffensive term or phrase for one that has coarse, sordid, or otherwise unpleasant associations, as in the use of "lavatory" or "rest room" for "toilet" and "pass away" for "die"

Hyperbole

This is a form of inordinate exaggeration according to which a person or thing is depicted as being better or worse, or larger or smaller, than is actually the case, as in the sentence from an essay by the English writer Thomas Babington Macaulay: "Dr. Johnson drank his tea in oceans."

Irony

This is a dryly humorous or lightly sarcastic mode of speech, in which words are used to convey a meaning contrary to their literal sense. An instance of irony is the suggestion, put forward with apparent seriousness by the English satirist Jonathan Swift in his "A Modest Proposal", that the poor people of Ireland should rid themselves of poverty by selling their children to the rich to eat.

Litotes

This is an understatement employed for the purpose of enhancing the effect of the ideas expressed, as in the sentence "The English poet Thomas Gray showed no inconsiderable powers as a prose writer," meaning that Gray was in fact a very good prose writer.

Metaphor

This is the use of a word or phrase denoting one kind of idea or object in place of another word or phrase for the purpose of suggesting a likeness between the two. Thus, in the biblical Book of Psalms, the writer speaks of God's law as "a light to his feet and a lamp to his path." Other instances of metaphor are contained in the sentences "He uttered a volley of oaths" and "The man tore through the building."

Metonymy

This is the use of a word or phrase for another to which it bears an important relation, as the effect for the cause, the abstract for the concrete and similar constructions. Examples of metonymy are "He was an avid reader of Chaucer," when the poems of the English writer Geoffrey Chaucer are meant, and "The hostess kept a good table," when good food is implied.

Onomatopoeia

This is imitation of natural sounds by words. Examples in English are the italicized words in the phrases "the *humming* bee", "the *cackling* hen", "the *whizzing* arrow" and "the *buzzing* saw".

Oxymoron

This is a combination of two seemingly contradictory or incongruous words, as in the line by the English poet Sir Philip Sidney in which lovers are said to speak "of living deaths, dear wounds, fair storms, and freezing fires".

Paradox

This is a statement or sentiment that appears contradictory to common sense yet is true in fact. Examples of paradox are "mobilization for peace" and "a well-known secret agent."

Personification

This is a representation of inanimate objects or abstract ideas as living beings, as in the sentences "Necessity is the mother of invention," "Lean famine stalked the land" and "Night enfolded the town in its ebon wings".

Rhetorical question

This is asking of questions not to gain information but to assert more emphatically the obvious answer to what is asked. No answer, in fact, is expected by the speaker. The device is illustrated in the following series of sentences: "Did you help me when I needed help? Did you once offer to intercede in my behalf? Did you do anything to lessen my load?" "Is peace a rash system?" "Is life so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?" The speaker leads the audience to the conclusion he hopes they will draw by asking a question that makes his point, and that he intends to answer himself, either immediately, with a flourish, or at greater length during his remarks, through patient exposition.

Simile

This is specific comparison by means of the words "like" or "as" between two kinds of ideas or objects. Examples of the simile are contained in the sentence "Christianity shone like a beacon in the black night of paganism" and in the line by the English poet William Wordsworth: "But, like a thirsty wind, to roam about."

Synecdoche

This is a figurative locution whereby the part is made to stand for the whole, the whole for a part, the species for the genus, and vice versa. Thus, in the phrase "50 head of cattle", "head" is used to mean whole

animals, and in the sentence "The president's administration contained the best brains in the country," "brains" is used for intellectually brilliant persons.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Identify and explain any other figure of speech not mentioned here.

4.0   CONCLUSION

It is one thing to use language and it is another thing to use it correctly. Every language is a system from which the speakers perform their communicative art. The issue of convention, rules and principles of use apply in every usage. In most cases, the emphasis on the standard forms serves as the parameter for measuring correctness in language use generally. Even though every language allows room for creativity, there are limitations to this license. The "laws" of English usage are based on how people actually use the language; people do not actually use the language based on mythical laws. Grammar is supposed to provide a description and an explanation of why the language is spoken and written the way it is and not as a code of how the language must be spoken and written. Rather than making some wrongheaded judgments about the lack of grammaticality of what are apparently supposed to be examples of outstanding constructions in English, it would be much better to explain and arrive at what is acceptable in English speech. Since speech can be oral or written, most errors are often in the spoken than in the written since the written might go through a second reader. Grammatical errors in speech are often overshadowed with speech ornaments because every speech aims at making a given audience have a problem understanding of a given situation. In history, most great men are known for their great speeches. Some speeches are known to have changed the world. It's on record now that Martin Luther King Jnr's famous speech "I have a Dream" has become actualized with the election of Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States of America.

5.0   SUMMARY

Speeches are better cast in simple, direct, and often short sentences that can be easily understood by listeners. Rhetorical devices such as repetition, variation, cadence, and balance are available to, and should be used by, the speechwriter. It is important for speechwriters to analyze audiences according to factors such as age; gender; culture; profession; size of audience; political affiliation, if any; and the occasion for, and purpose of, the speech. Most effective speeches do not exceed 20 minutes in length. After researching a topic, speechwriters should

prepare an outline from which the speech will be developed. They should strive to maintain a clear theme throughout the speech. Most speeches will have a three-part structure consisting of an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The accepted style of contemporary public address is natural, direct, low key, casual, and conversational. This puts listeners at ease and promotes a sense of community between audience and speaker. Punctuation should reflect the sound structure of the speech, reinforcing the rhythm and pace of actual speech. Clarity of expression is as important a consideration in speech grammar as rigid adherence to rules for written language. Effective delivery can greatly improve a speech.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

i.   Explain the main purpose of speech making.
ii.   Discuss the essential features of a good speech.
iii.   Assess the importance of language use in speech writing.
iv.   "Rhetoric is an art but speech writing is a science". How true is this statement?
v.   Outline and explain some rhetorical devices not explained in this unit.

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UNIT 3   FORMAL   AND   INFORMAL   LANGUAGE STYLE

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit we will study formal and informal language style in contemporary English. Interestingly, many students find it difficult differentiating the two uses. The reason for this difficulty at time stems from the varieties of English language forms and their inability to separate spoken expressions from the written ones. Each style is important but they are used in different situations. The adoption of a consistent type of style for a given discourse situation is good but the student should be acquainted with the rules of each style to enable them identify each style and use them appropriately.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- understand the rules guiding the spelling of English words;
- identify the correct spelling forms of Standard English;
- distinguish Standard English spellings from the other varieties;
- adopt the spelling rules in arriving at correct English words; and
- avoid spelling errors in their writings.

HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT
  a.   Read this unit as diligently as possible.
  b.   Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
  c.   As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
  d.   Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
  e.   Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

To be informal means:

1.   *Free of ceremony*: relaxed and casual rather than ceremonious and stiff
2.   *Unofficial*: not officially prepared, organized, or sanctioned
       The two sides in the conflict held informal talks.
3.   *Casual and everyday*: suitable for casual or everyday situations. *informal dress*
4.   *Colloquial Language*: more appropriate in spoken than written form

Words and phrases are considered informal if they are used often in speech but are less common in written documents. Informal words are more well-established than slang, but they have yet to stand the test of time. One may eventually prove so useful that it becomes an accepted part of the language. But, just as likely, an informal word may fall out of use in only a few years. Because their usefulness may be short-lived, informal words are inappropriate in documents likely to be read for years to come. They are equally out of place in writing that requires a formal tone, no matter how disposable it may be. Even if you expect that a business letter you write is destined to be read, filed, and forgotten, you should still avoid informal language if you want your words to be taken seriously. If you are in doubt about whether a word is informal, some dictionaries label words that have been judged informal by editors and experts.

A word or phrase is classified as nonstandard if it is recognized as incorrect by nearly all educated readers. Nonstandard English should not be used in writing, no matter how informal. The list below includes some of the most frequently used nonstandard words and phrases and accepted alternatives to them:

ain't: I *ain't* listening to you.
use instead: *am not, are not,* or *is not*

already (as an intensive): I'm coming *already.*
use instead: an exclamation point or a word or phrase that suggests intense emotion or exasperation (e.g., I'm coming *right now*.)

alright: Are you feeling *alright?*
use instead: *all right*

anyways: I don't want your money *anyways.*
use instead: *in any case*

broke (as a past participle): Kevin has finally *broke* the record.
use instead: *broken*

could of, should of, and *would of:* If he *could of,* he *would of* done it.
use instead: *could have, should have,* or *would have*

don't (with the third person singular)

However, to be formal may mean any of the following:

1.   *Official*: done or carried out in accordance with established or prescribed rules
     We made a formal protest.
2.   *Conventionally correct*: characterized by or organized in accordance with conventions governing ceremony, behavior, or dress
     He's terribly formal and always calls me Mr. Day.
3.   *Methodical*: done in an organized and precise manner
     formal research in artificial intelligence
4.   *Not familiar in style*: used in serious, official, or public communication but not appropriate in everyday contexts
     a formal word
5.   *Ordered*: arranged or laid out in a regular, ordered, or symmetrical way *a formal garden*
6.   *of form or structure*: relating to the form or structure of something
7.   *Officially constituted*: officially constituted or organized as opposed to spontaneously developed
     a formal organization

Thus, being formal means to be organized or to be properly arranged according to stated formats which exhibit restricted, acceptable and official patterns of structure. A formal situation exhibits less familiarity. It is a situation of serious interaction for the purposes of achieving organizational goals. This means that official language use is devoid of familiar discourse. It is not language use among peers, family members, school mates, church clergy, union members or social interaction. It is a stream of language selected to achieve official goals among the professionals.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Categorically explain the core defining concepts in the identification of formal and informal parameters.

3.2   Differences between Formal and Informal Style

When it comes to writing in English, there are two main styles of writing – formal and informal. Consider these two examples:

Example 1

This is to inform you that your book has been rejected by our publishing company as it was not up to the required standard. In case you would like us to reconsider it, we would suggest that you go over it and make some necessary changes.

Example 2

You know that book I wrote? Well, the publishing company rejected it. They thought it was awful. But hey, I did the best I could, and I think it was great. I'm not gonna redo it the way they said I should.

The difference between the two is obvious. The first one is formal, and the second is informal. But what is it that makes them formal and informal? It is the style of writing, or the way we use words to say what we want to say. Different situations call for different ways of putting words together. The way we write in academic and scientific settings differs greatly from the way we write to a friend or close one. The tone, vocabulary, and syntax, all change as the occasion changes. This difference in the styles of writing is the difference between formality and informality, or the difference between formal and informal writing. Here is a list of some of the main differences between informal and formal style:

Informal: May use colloquial words/expressions (*kids*, *guy*, *awesome*, *a lot*, etc.).

Formal: Avoid using colloquial words/expressions (substitute with *children*, *man/boy*, *wonderful*, *many*, etc.)

Informal: May use contractions (*can't*, *won't*, *shouldn't*, etc.).
Formal: Avoid contractions (write out full words – *cannot*, *will not*, *should not*, etc)

Informal: May use first, second, or third person.
Formal: Write in third person (except in business letters where first person may be used).

Informal: May use clichés (*loads of*, *conspicuous by absence*, etc.)
Formal: Avoid clichés (use *many*, *was absent*, etc.)

Informal: May address readers using second person pronouns (*you*, *your*, etc)
Formal: Avoid addressing readers using second person pronouns (use *one*, *one's*, *the reader*, *the reader's*, etc.)

Informal: May use abbreviated words (*photo*, *TV*, etc)
Formal: Avoid using abbreviated words (use full versions – like *photograph*, *television*, etc.)

Informal: May use imperative voice (e.g. *Remember….*)
Formal: Avoid imperative voice (use *Please refer to.….*)

Informal: May use active voice (e.g. *We have noticed that…..*)
Formal: Use passive voice (e.g. *It has been noticed that….*)

Informal: May use short and simple sentences.
Formal: Longer and more complex sentences are preferred (short simple sentences reflects poorly on the writer)

Informal: Difficulty of subject may be acknowledged and empathy shown to the reader.

Formal: State your points confidently and offer your argument in firm support.

These are just some of the differences between formal and informal writing. The main thing to remember is that both are correct, it is just a matter of tone and setting. Formal English is used mainly in academic writing and business communications, whereas Informal English is casual and is appropriate when communicating with friends and other close ones. Choose the style of writing keeping in mind what you are writing and to whom. But whichever style you write in – formal or informal – be sure to keep it consistent, do not mix the two. While informal writing, such as instant messaging, creates new venues for communicating in real time, writers have to be careful about how they write what they mean so that they avoid miscommunication. A pitfall of not paying attention to the tone of a message is that a writer could send something that is interpreted very differently from his or her intent.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Explain why formal style is more difficult than informal style in speech and writing.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Every language has formal and informal applications. Each of these applications are necessary in filling the basic interactional modes in the various linguistic requirements of the people. It is a bad style, using formal style in informal situations. Both forms are restricted to given audience. You would naturally use a different vocabulary in a note to your best friend than in a memo to your company's president. The reason has to do with levels of formality. Your friend would expect you to use informal language and slang. The same words, however, might make the company president question whether you take your job seriously enough. Determining the proper level of formality is sometimes difficult. If in doubt, err on the side of formality: Standard words and proper grammar and punctuation are unlikely to offend any reader.

5.0   SUMMARY

Throughout life, people write all the time and in many forms, from business letters to text messages. For any piece of writing, purpose and audience determine the tone, or attitude, that a writer takes. In formal writing, a writer carefully adheres to the conventions of Standard English for spelling and grammar and avoids the use of contractions, abbreviations and casual or colloquial language. Business writing, from cover letters and resumes to memos and minutes, tends to follow traditional forms and conventions. By contrast, in informal writing, a writer takes on a conversational tone, with a more relaxed approach to writing conventions. Technology has revolutionized the way people use the written word, and electronic writing, such as emails, instant messages and online discussion groups, provides dynamic, creative places to explore writing. Sometimes electronic writing, while informal in tone, mirrors formal writing in structure; for example, both informal emails and formal letters include addresses, greetings and signature lines.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions correctly:

- Identify the purpose of formal and informal style.
- At what time is informal writing appropriate?
- For what purposes and audiences is formal writing necessary?
- Discuss the pros and cons of electronic writing versus traditional writing.
- Explain the basic function of informal and informal style.

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UNIT 4   GRAMMATICALITY AND UNGRAMMATICALITY

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
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      3.2   Grammaticality and Meaning
      3.3   Grammaticality and Structure
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will begin with the explanation of what is grammatical and ungrammatical. Since grammar operates in rules, there are conscious violations by the second learners of the language because of proficiency problems. In contemporary English usage, there are incidences of violations which have become acceptable because of the consistent usage in discourse.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- appreciate the need for obeying grammar rules;
- understand that English grammar is rule governed;
- apply proper grammar in their speech and writing;
- distinguish grammatical from ungrammatical expressions; and
- use English grammar rules in generating expressions.

HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT
  a.   Read this unit as diligently as possible.
  b.   Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
  c.   As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
  d.   Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
  e.   Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

At every level of language learning, there are abiding rules. Second language learners show considerable grammatical awareness in how they put words together into sentences. Sometimes this causes them to overextend the meanings of words beyond their appropriate use or to over-regularize grammatical rules by applying them to irregular forms. In Shakespeare's time English was a more flexible language than it is today. Grammar and spelling were not yet completely formalized, although scholars were beginning to urge rules to regulate them. English had begun to emerge as a significant literary language, having recently replaced Latin as the language of serious intellectual and artistic activity in England. Freed of many of the conventions and rules of modern English, Shakespeare could shape vocabulary and syntax to the demands of style. For example, he could interchange the various parts of speech, using nouns as adjectives or verbs, adjectives as adverbs, and pronouns as nouns. Such freedom gave his language an extraordinary plasticity, which enabled him to create the large number of unique and memorable characters he has left us. Shakespeare made each character singular by a distinctive and characteristic set of speech habits.

By the mid-20th century, Chomsky, who had studied structural linguistics, was seeking a way to analyze the syntax of English in a structural grammar. This effort led him to see grammar as a theory of language structure rather than a description of actual sentences. His idea of grammar is that it is a device for producing the structure, not of *langue* (that is, not of a particular language), but of competence—the ability to produce and understand sentences in any and all languages. His Universalist theories are related to the ideas of those 18th and early 19th century grammarians who urged that grammar be considered a part of logic—the key to analyzing thought. Universal grammarians such as the British philosopher John Stuart Mill, writing as late as 1867, believed rules of grammar to be language forms that correspond to universal thought forms. The works of J.R. Firth, Bloomfield, and C.C. Fries among other prominent linguists have revealed the rule procedures that are prevalent in English and other languages. They have also revealed the need for obeying the rules of grammar in order to create room for acceptability of forms.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain the limitations of linguistic rules in grammar.

3.2   Grammaticality and Meaning

English grammar is a body of rules specifying how meanings are created in English. So-called Standard English is often what is meant when the term "English grammar" is used, but it is actually much broader than that. Accounts of English grammar tend to fall into two groups: the descriptivist, which describe the patterns through which meanings are typically created in functional speech and writing; and the Prescriptivists, which set out pre-existing rules as to how meanings are created. However, beyond these simple examples, word order is a complicated matter in English. In particular, the speaker or writer's point of departure in each clause is a key factor in the organization of the message. Thus, the elements in a message can be ordered in a way that signals to the reader or listener what the message concerns.

Syntax is the study of how words combine to make sentences. The order of words in sentences varies from language to language. English-language syntax, for instance, generally follows a subject-verb-object order, as in the sentence *The dog* (subject) *bit* (verb) *the man* (object)." The sentence *The dog the man bit* is not a correct construction in English, and the sentence *The man bit the dog* has a very different meaning. A general characteristic of language is that words are not directly combined into sentences, but rather into intermediate units, called *phrases*, which then are combined into sentences. The sentence *The shepherd found the lost sheep* contains at least three phrases: "the shepherd", "found" and "the lost sheep." This hierarchical structure that groups words into phrases, and phrases into sentences, serves an important role in establishing relations within sentences. For instance, the phrases "the shepherd" and "the lost sheep" behave as units, so that when the sentence is rearranged to be in the passive voice, these units stay intact: *The lost sheep was found by the shepherd*.

Change can also affect syntax. In modern English, the basic word order is subject-verb-object, as in the sentence *I know John*. The only other possible word order is object-subject-verb, as in *John I know* (*but Mary I don't*). Old English, by contrast, allowed all possible word order permutations, including subject-object-verb, as in *If they wished to seek any field*, or literally *If they any field to seek wished*. The loss of word-order freedom is one of the main syntactic changes that separate the modern English language from Old English.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Discuss the reasons for inconsistent grammar structure in contemporary English.

3.3   Grammaticality and Structure

Although non-native speakers of English have knowledge of grammatical rules, the knowledge does not necessarily get realized in their production, spoken or written. To native speakers of the language, many grammatical errors made by non-native speakers may seem to be merely the result of grammatical rules randomly dropped or incorrectly applied. Recent studies show that this is not entirely true. Many researchers have reported that some varieties of errors occur often among non-native speakers. This finding implies that non-native speakers' language is not consistent, and yet it still shares some characteristics and tendencies in terms of the types of errors. There are common varieties of errors into which non-native speakers tend to fall. When a sentence consists of one subject and two (or more) verbs, even an advanced learner may omit 3rd person singular 's' with the adverb and after. For example, *He likes books and buy a lot of books each month.* The learner may omit 3rdperson singular 's' when two different syntactic structures fuse into one new sentence, such as: *The man who live next door married yesterday.* Thus the 3rdperson singular 's' tends to be dropped when an adverb or an inserted phrase is placed between the subject and the verb. For example:

Mark sometimes get sick.
My mother, as a professional writer, travel a lot.

Looking at the above examples, it seems to be the distance (that is, separation) between the subject and the verb that makes it harder to apply Subject-Verb (SV) agreement rule. Another type of the variety of errors is of the incorrect syntactic structure.

Negation
Negative particle "no" may be used for "not". Negative particle "no/not" is located outside the verb phrase. If the auxiliary verb is present, it occurs before the auxiliary verb, and if no auxiliary verb is present, the form of "do" is not used. Example, *I not work(ing) today.*

Interrogation
In the beginners' production, a wh-interrogative is simply added to a demonstrative sentence. In this stage, the form of "do" appears, but the form of "do" is often seen followed by the main verb like in the second example below. The main verb still carries the tense marker or 3rdperson singular 's'. Embedded interrogative clauses have the structure as the independent interrogative sentence.

Where you went?
Who did steal his money?
Where did you went yesterday?
I don't know what did she mean.

The following are other types of errors that have been presented as often observed errors among non-native speakers in different linguistic or second language acquisition situations.

Articles
A definite or indefinite article is deleted, when it is necessary, without a conscious realization of the error. Examples:

I have daughter
Mike is in second grade
I want book

Noun-related errors
If a countable noun is modified by a word that indicates more than one item ("many", "some", "those" or "these") the noun has to take the plural form. The following examples show the violation on noun number agreement.

I have five sister.
Many child came to the concert.
One of my sister is tall

Auxiliary verbs
The form of *be* is used for the form of *have* in the present perfect tense

What was (is) happened?
He was arrived early.
She may found the dog.
She gone there before

In relation to the auxiliary verb for negation, it has been observed that some beginners occasionally produce a sentence like *She is not have money* meaning *She does not have money*. The speaker chooses an incorrect auxiliary verb for a negative sentence.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

List and explain some consistent grammatical errors among the second language learners of English.

4.0   CONCLUSION

The plain fact of the matter is that English has been saddled with a number of rules which does nothing more than reflects the prejudices or lack of knowledge of people not trained in the scientific study of language. What is most amazing, however, is that the public still consider these rules to be inviolate. Other grammarians soon began to follow the same schema, but they also began including examples of "false syntax." Thus, grammar as a subject of advanced study and research seems inconceivable; the facts, that is, the "rules" of the language, are well known. Any fool can learn these rules; failure to do so simply indicates faulty education if not inferior intelligence. All these are considered as ungrammaticality within the environment of its usage.

5.0   SUMMARY

In sharp contrast to this common notion of language and grammar is the "structural grammar" which developed in the early twentieth century. Believing that each language should be studied as an entity in and of itself without reference to any other language, the structural grammarians have tried to describe English as objectively as possible, making no judgments about what is "correct" or "incorrect." Rather, the structuralists note the forms of language that appear and try to characterize the environments in which they appear. It may indeed be a fact that a particular form, such as the subjunctive, occurs only among a particular social class, but that occurrence does not make the form "better" or "more nearly correct" than a different form used by a different social class. English, indeed, is vibrant and growing, the closest thing to a "world" or "universal" language now in existence. If its speakers can better understand the basic principles of English and remove from the language the burden placed by eighteenth century prescriptive grammarians, English will continue to grow and to serve the communicative needs of its society.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions with adequate examples:

i.   Explain why Shakespeare's use of English was without rules.
ii.   English is considered a language of rules. Discuss this fact.
iii.   Discuss the violations of grammar that affect meaning in English.
iv.   What are the effects of grammatical structure on English language learning?
v.   Account for the factors responsible for ungrammaticality in English.

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UNIT 5   LINGUISTIC MEANING AND SPEAKER MEANING

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main Content
       3.1   General Overview
       3.2   Linguistic Meaning
       3.3   Linguistic Creativity in Speaker Meaning
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the differences between speaker meaning and linguistic meaning. Just like the concepts of competence and performance, linguistic meaning carries the general ideology of language use but the speaker or user of the language is bound to apply his knowledge to suit his intent at every point in time. We will examine these differences and align these towards understanding English language use in contemporary situations.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- understand the importance linguistic meaning in contemporary English;
- recognize the differences between linguistic and speaker meaning in English;
- apply the acceptable structures of English in individual usage;
- use the correct linguistic forms in their speech and writing; and
- imbibe the correct linguistic forms in generating individual usage.

HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT
   a.   Read this unit as diligently as possible.
   b.   Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
   c.   As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
   d.   Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.

e.   Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

Semantics is the field of study that deals with the meaning of these elements. A prominent part of semantics deals with the meaning of individual morphemes. Semantics also involves studying the meaning of the constructions that link morphemes to form phrases and sentences. For instance, the sentences "The dog bit the man" and "The man bit the dog" contain exactly the same morphemes, but they have different meanings. This is because the morphemes enter into different constructions in each sentence, reflected in the different word orders of the two sentences. There are various ways by which people express themselves. From the general linguistic rules, people construct sentences for communication purposes and these expressions carry their intended meaning with regards to the fact being discussed. The ways people use language vary. Many people device certain linguistic idiosyncrasies that suit their pattern of discourse. They communicate meaningfully using the general linguistic structure of English but they may not be expressing the general ideals of everybody or using the same linguistic structure that others may have used but they are understood in their usage. Sometimes when this pattern of usage becomes habitual, it becomes a style that reveals the man. Therefore, meaning means differently to many people. Some expressions are interpreted as offensive even though they may not be intended to offend anybody by the speaker. However everybody is judged using the general parameter but this is not restricting the user of the language from general structures that convey his individual meaning and ideals. Thus, linguistic meaning is realizable in speaker meaning as language use differs among people.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Discuss the influence of linguistic meaning over speaker meaning

3.2   Linguistic Meaning

Linguistics is the scientific study of language. It encompasses the description of languages, the study of their origin, and the analysis of how children acquire language and how people learn languages other than their own. Linguistics is also concerned with relationships between languages and with the ways languages change over time. Linguists may study language as a thought process and seek a theory that accounts for the universal human capacity to produce and understand language. Some

linguists examine language within a cultural context. By observing talk, they try to determine what a person needs to know in order to speak appropriately in different settings, such as the workplace, among friends, or among family. Other linguists focus on what happens when speakers from different language and cultural backgrounds interact. Linguists may also concentrate on how to help people learn another language, using what they know about the learner's first language and about the language being acquired.

In the early 20th century, linguistics expanded to include the study of unwritten languages. Because many languages were unwritten, attention was also given to them. They developed the techniques of descriptive linguistics and theorized on the ways in which language shapes our perceptions of the world. An important outgrowth of descriptive linguistics is a theory known as structuralism, which assumes that language is a system with a highly organized structure. Structuralism began with publication of the work of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure in *Cours de linguistique générale* (1916; *Course in General Linguistics,* 1959). This work, compiled by Saussure's students after his death, is considered the foundation of the modern field of linguistics. Saussure made a distinction between actual speech, or spoken language, and the knowledge underlying speech that speakers share about what is grammatical. Speech, he said, represents instances of grammar, and the linguist's task is to find the underlying rules of a particular language from examples found in speech. To the structuralist, grammar is a set of relationships that account for speech, rather than a set of instances of speech, as it is to the descriptivist.

Once linguists began to study language as a set of abstract rules that somehow account for speech, other scholars began to take an interest in the field. They drew analogies between language and other forms of human behavior, based on the belief that a shared structure underlies many aspects of a culture. Anthropologists, for example, became interested in a structuralist approach to the interpretation of kinship systems and analysis of myth and religion. American linguist Leonard Bloomfield promoted structuralism in the United States.

Saussure's ideas also influenced European linguistics. In 1926 Czech linguist Vilem Mathesius founded the Linguistic Circle of Prague, a group that expanded the focus of the field to include the context of language use. The Prague Circle developed the field of phonology, or the study of sounds, and demonstrated that universal features of sounds in the languages of the world interrelate in a systematic way. Linguistic analysis, they said, should focus on the distinctiveness of sounds rather than on the ways they combine. Where descriptivists tried to locate and describe individual phonemes, such as /b/ and /p/, the Prague linguists

stressed the features of these phonemes and their interrelationships in different languages. In English, for example, the voice distinguishes between the similar sounds of /b/ and /p/, but these are not distinct phonemes in a number of other languages. An Arabic speaker might pronounce the cities *Pompei* and *Bombay* the same way.

As linguistics developed in the 20th century, the notion became prevalent that language is more than speech—specifically, that it is an abstract system of interrelationships shared by members of a speech community. Structural linguistics led linguists to look at the rules and the patterns of behavior shared by such communities. Whereas structural linguists saw the basis of language in the social structure, other linguists looked at language as a mental process. The 1957 publication of *Syntactic Structures* by American linguist Noam Chomsky initiated what many view as a scientific revolution in linguistics. Chomsky sought a theory that would account for both linguistic structure and for the creativity of language- the fact that we can create entirely original sentences and understand sentences never before uttered. He proposed that all people have an innate ability to acquire language. The task of the linguist, he claimed, is to describe this universal human ability, known as language competence, with a grammar from which the grammars of all languages could be derived. The linguist would develop this grammar by looking at the rules children use in hearing and speaking their first language. He termed the resulting model, or grammar, a transformational-generative grammar, referring to the transformations (or rules) that generate (or account for) language. Certain rules, Chomsky asserted, are shared by all languages and form part of a universal grammar, while others are language specific and associated with particular speech communities. Since the 1960s much of the development in the field of linguistics has been a reaction to or against Chomsky's theories.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Distinguish linguistic meaning from *competence* and *performance.*

3.3 Linguistic Creativity in Speaker Meaning

Linguists used the term *grammar* primarily to refer to a subconscious linguistic system that enables people to produce and comprehend an unlimited number of utterances. Grammar thus accounts for our linguistic competence. Observations about the actual language we use, or language performance, are used to theorize about this invisible mechanism known as grammar. The orientation toward the scientific study of language led by Chomsky has had an impact on non-generative linguists as well. Comparative and historically oriented linguists are

looking for the various ways linguistic universals show up in individual languages. Psycholinguists, interested in language acquisition, are investigating the notion that an ideal speaker-hearer is the origin of the acquisition process. Sociolinguists are examining the rules that underlie the choice of language variants, or codes, and allow for switching from one code to another. Some linguists are studying language performance—the way people use language—to see how it reveals a cognitive ability shared by all human beings.

Creativity is not just putting words together to create new sentences such as *The unpurged images of day recede*. Every speaker has the talent of creating new sentences, even if less effectively. Creativity is a basic fact of human language, not an added extra. The secret of creativity seems to be the grammatical system through which new sentences can be produced. One of the most crucial things that children have to acquire is the creativity of language. There is prevarication in each speaker's use of language. Speakers can intentionally make utterances that are false or meaningless. Human language is creative and flexible and each speaker uses the language in his best creative way. Human language is interpersonal. The use of language involves social interaction. When we use language in conversation, we make assumptions about what our listeners know and believe, and we bring to the conversation attitudes toward our listeners. One's use of language varies depending on a variety of circumstances.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Discuss further the influence of Linguistic creativity in contemporary English.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Words are only minor elements in the total linguistic discourse. When someone uses a language, the style of the language may have more impact on the audience than the actual words. Indeed, style and tone are of great, almost fundamental, importance when we translate discuss a speaker's use of language. If the aim of the speaker is only to convey a piece of information or some instructions to the audience, the referential meaning of words becomes quite significant, and the effect of style and/or tone diminishes. At the other extreme, when we deal with a speaker whose not only aim at conveying a message, but aspires to produce a certain impact on his listeners through the use of a particular style, the translation of such a stylistic effect is then an essential part of the individual's linguistic style not just as an ornament that would bestow beauty on his usage, but as an indispensable aspect of his use of language, without which his language may not be identified as a consistent pattern. Linguistic meaning is guide towards speaker

meaning. The speaker creates out of the vast linguistic ocean his pattern of usage from the general use.

5.0   SUMMARY

Since Chomsky's work of the 1950s, one of the main distinctive features of human language is seen to be its creativity in being able to communicate new messages. For example someone wants to say *Twenty five sheep are gazing in the field*, the English language rises to the occasion by supplying a grammatical form and vocabulary, despite the fact that nobody has ever wanted to say this sentence before or ever will again. Most of the sentences people produce or hear in the course of a day are new in so far as they have never been said or heard in that precise form before. Each speaker of English is distinct in his application of the language depending on the audience, environment, time, place and circumstance. In Nigeria, there are marked linguistic behaviours of the people resulting from each individual's application of the language to suit his purpose. Thus, the English use by individual's in Warri is not same as that of individuals in Lagos.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions:

i.   Discuss the components of linguistic meaning.
ii.   Explain what linguistic creativity means.
iii.   What factors influence each speaker's use of language?
iv.   Assess the influence of linguistic meaning on speaker meaning.
v.   Comment on linguistic meaning and speaker meaning in Contemporary English.

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UNIT 6   CONTEMPORARY BUSINESS WRITING

CONTENTS

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         3.2   Language use in Business Writing
         3.3   Structure of Business correspondence
         3.4   Samples of Business Correspondence
         3.5   Curriculum Vitae/Resumé
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the use of English in contemporary business situations. Business English is the type of English language register and other forms of use that are used in business situations. In business English, we study the use of English in business transactions like job applications, curriculum vitae, writing business proposal and other forms of communication in business. In business writing, the use of English is strictly formal as the parties, the sender and the receiver are not in the mood for extraneous relationship beyond the business issue. The English language in use here has subtle but strict form that does not allow room for informality. We will examine some forms of business writing, the language use and the types.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand that business English is a unique register in English;
- distinguish business writing from the other types of writing;
- use the forms of language acceptable in business writings;
- write business correspondences using normal business register and structure;
- realize that curriculum vitae has an acceptable pattern; and
- apply business English in writing contemporary English mails.

HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT
  a.   Read this unit as diligently as possible.
  b.   Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
  c.   As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
  d.   Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
  e.   Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

Business essays are closely connected to discussing principles and methodologies that business activity is based on. Any human activity may become a subject for a business essay. The main thing required from the writer of a business essay is his/her profound understanding of the problem of the business under consideration. If necessary, take up adequate reading in order to understand better the subject. Then you should refer to the very topic of your Business essay and study what you are asked to do. If you are not given a special topic for business essays, then, decide on it by yourself. Do not choose some trite topic, be original and capturing the reader's attention. When the topic is settled, consider the structure of your essay. If your Business essay is expected to be short, write a five paragraph paper which undergoes the structure common for all essay types: essay introduction, Main Content and conclusion. While planning the structure of your business essay think beforehand about the headings your paper will have. The latter should be clear and concise, rendering the main idea of the section they refer to. When writing your business essays, mind the competence of the reader your paper is destined to. Do not neglect to give explanations of difficult terms and notions; it will contribute to the reader's understanding of your message.

The writing style is probably the most individual aspect of a business correspondence, but again there are useful guidelines which aid the readability, professionalism, objectiveness and impact. All business correspondence should be written in the third person. Note that the best written essay is not necessarily the same as the best verbal description. Decide, in advance of writing, who the likely reader of the document is. The document must be pitched at an appropriate level with sufficient background to allow understanding by the target reader.

Check your spellings. There are spelling checkers in virtually every word processor now, so use them! However, don't assume that a spelling checker will get all your mistakes, so long as the word is in its dictionary, it won't flag an error. These checkers are good, but they cannot read your mind (yet!). If the report language is not your first language, get a natural speaker to check your document. Again, many word processors now have grammar checkers, but the usefulness of these is debatable, so don't rely on them. If in doubt, keep your sentences short and don't be afraid to ask somebody how to use punctuation correctly.

Avoid excessive use of capital letters. One recommendation is to only use capitals for proper nouns (such as place names, company names, etc) and in places where acronyms are being defined, e.g., Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM). Acronyms should be defined at the first point of usage. Try to avoid the use of capitals for emphasis, use boldfacing or italics instead. Capitals can be used effectively to differentiate between different section heading levels.

Business Communication

Business Communication is communication used to promote a product, service, or organization; relay information within the business; or deal with legal and similar issues. Business Communication encompasses a variety of topics, including Marketing, Branding, Customer relations, Consumer behaviour, Advertising, Public relations, Corporate communication, Community engagement, Research & Measurement, Reputation management, Interpersonal communication, Employee engagement, Online communication, and Event Management. It is closely related to the fields of professional communication and technical communication.

Business is conducted through various channels of communication, including the Internet, Print (Publications), Radio, Television, Ambient, Outdoor, and Word of mouth. Business Communication can also refer to internal communication. A communications director will typically manage internal communication and craft messages sent to employees. It is vital that internal communications are managed properly because a poorly crafted or managed message could foster distrust or hostility from employees. There are several methods of business communication, including:

a)   Web-based communication - for better and improved communication, anytime anywhere
b)   e-mails, which provide an instantaneous medium of written communication worldwide;

c)   Reports - important in documenting the activities of any department;

d)   Presentations - very popular method of communication in all types of organizations, usually involving audiovisual material, like copies of reports, or material prepared;

e)   telephoned meetings, which allow for long distance speech;

f)   forum boards, which allow people to instantly post information at a centralized location; and face to face meetings, which are personal and should be succeeded by a written follow-up.

All these activities take place in English language. Business English is the strict language form for this type of communication. Business communication language is highly official with the jargon of the business being used in all the correspondence. Business communication involves serious linguistic adherence to the basic requirements that are necessary for easy business flow. It is therefore necessary not to make the English language in use in business communication less formal in diction.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain the major characteristics of business communication.

3.2   Language use in Business Essays

The language of business writing is Business English. It is English especially related to international trade. It is a specialism within English language learning and teaching. Many non-native English speakers study the subject with the goal of doing business with English-speaking countries, or with companies located outside the Anglosphere but which, nonetheless, use English as a shared language or lingua franca. Much of the English communication that takes place within business circles the world over occurs between non-native speakers. In cases such as these, the object of the exercise is efficient and effective communication. The strict rules of grammar are in such cases sometimes ignored, when, for example, a stressed negotiator's only goal is to reach an agreement as quickly as possible.

Business English means different things to different people. For some, it focuses on vocabulary and topics used in the worlds of business, trade, finance, and international relations. For others it refers to the communication skills used in the workplace, and focuses on the language and skills needed for typical business communication such as presentations, negotiations, meetings, small talk, socializing, correspondence, report writing, and so on. In both of these cases it can be taught to native speakers of English, for example, high school

students preparing to enter the job market. It can also be a form of international English.

One of the fundamental aspects of doing business is communicating to clients. The major medium of communication among business experts is English language. The details of business format differ depending on the context in which a particular business correspondence is going. The requirements of business writing may seem rigid. They are certainly different from rules you have used in non-business writing, and this may cause you difficulties. The objectives of the business style are to be clear, accurate, and unambiguous. Other qualities of writing, such as creative use of words, are not out of place in a business paper, but they are subordinate to achieving clarity. Your business correspondence should form a self-explanatory unit which can be understood independently of other sources.

In general, use the past tense when writing or telling your business tales but use the present tense to describe relationships and to discuss their implications. Avoid the use of tautologies like *when joblessness increases, unemployment results*. While it may initially sound as though one had explained something, it should be apparent that the conclusion was only a rewording of the premise. This is an example of reasoning by tautology. In more subtle cases, it can be hard to detect, but it pervades both political speeches and student papers.

Wordiness

Good business writing is usually straightforward in style. The best way to avoid ambiguity is to be concise. Some examples of wordy writing from past reports are given below with a concise alternative for each.

Wordy: "Explanations of the operation and structure of this business are found in greater detail in the business manual used for this proposal, as well as a detailed description of general procedure."
Concise: Details may be found in the business manual.

Wordy: "We will determine the decrease or increase of the stock rate"
Concise: We will determine the stock rate.

Wordy: "This indicates if the business is being helped, hindered, or totally destroyed"
Concise: This indicates whether the business is being affected.

Wordy:	"I wish to apply for the job of a Personnel Manager in your company, which was advertised in The Guardian Newspapers of April 14, 2008"
Concise:	I wish to apply for the post of Personnel Manager [if the position was not advertised, you won't know about the vacancy]

Wordy:	"This proposal will ensure that our business deal will operate without any hitch or obstruction"
Concise:	This proposal will ensure a smooth business deal

In all, the language of business correspondence is formal, concise, less artificial and creative. It must adhere to the business language format; otherwise the writer might be regarded as unserious. Because of the strict language forms in business correspondence, it does not allow room for linguistic creativity which makes room for extraneous details

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Discuss the negative effects of wrong tense and wordiness in writing correspondences. Use good examples.

3.3   Structure/Sample of Business Essay

There are strict structures for business writing. Any violation of this format results in unofficial style which might result in bad handling or rejection of the correspondence. There are hard and fast rules about this type of letters. Below is the standard structure of all types of business correspondence and some samples:

Structure of Business Correspondence

i.   Applicant's Address: City, State, Date of Letter [Use complete title]

ii.   Employer's Name, Title and address: City, State, Zip (If possible), address

iii.   Salutation: it is to a particular person

iv.   Opening Paragraph: State why you are writing, name the position or type of work for which you are applying and mention how you heard of the opening or organization.

v.   Middle Paragraph(s): Explain why you are interested in working for this employer and specify your reasons for desiring this type

of work. Mention your experience or related education, be sure to point it out, be enthusiastic. But do not reiterate your entire resume. Emphasize skills, be brief but specific; mention the abilities you have that relate to the job for which you are applying. Be sure to do this in a confident manner. Remember that the reader will view your letter of application as an example of your writing skills.

vi.   Closing Paragraph: You may refer the reader to your enclosed resumé (Which gives a summary of your qualifications) or whatever media you are using to illustrate your training, interests and experience. Have an appropriate closing to pave the way for the interview.

vii.   Closing: Sincerely, always sign letters, your name

3.4   Curriculum Vitae/Resumé

A curriculum vitae (singular), meaning "course of one's life", is a document that gives much more detail than does a resume about your academic and professional accomplishments. Curricula vitae (plural) are most often used for academic or research positions, whereas resumés are the preferred documents in business and industry. Note about plural / singular forms: "Curricula vitae" (vee-tie) is the plural form; "curriculum vitae" is singular. The informal shortened form, "vita" standing alone, meaning a brief autobiographical sketch (Webster's), is singular, while "vitae," is plural. The abbreviation is often used: CV or CVs. Curricula vitae are commonly used in applying for the following: Jobs, Contracts, Admission to graduate school or as part of an application packet for a graduate assistantship or scholarship.

Curriculum vitae includes information about professional publications, presentations, committee work, grants received, and other details based on each person's experience. Although curricula vitae are often similar to resumes, the preferred style, format, and content varies from discipline to discipline. Before writing a CV, you should become familiar with the requirements of your academic field by asking faculty members in your department and consulting professional associations for additional guidelines and examples. Career Services advisors can review your curriculum vitae and make suggestions.

A resumé is a brief, concise document that presents, and effectively sells, your most relevant and positive credentials for employment, admission to graduate school, consideration for a scholarship or fellowship, or other professional purpose. A vita, or curriculum vita, is a more extensive document typically used by those with graduate

education who are pursuing positions in academia or research. An effective resume gets you an interview, not a job. An employer will usually spend 15 to 20 seconds reviewing your resume, so the content of your resume must be clear, concise, and targeted to the type of job for which you are applying. If your resumé has a grammatical error, it will probably jump off the page to an employer, and this is a way to weed you out of a candidate pool. Your resumé may be the only chance you get to make an impression, so make it a good one.

B: Sequence of Resumé Information

The order and content of everyone's resume does not have to be the same. However, formats are somewhat standardized so that employers can easily find the information they seek. After your heading, sequence the information on your resumé from the most important to the least important with regard to supporting your career objective.

1.   Heading

Head your resume with this information:

- Your full name. Use the form of your name as it appears on academic records and other documents an employer may require you to provide, so there will be no confusion that documents belong to the same person. If you go by a middle name or nickname, you can emphasize or insert this, as in Anthony (Onyema) Uche.

- Current/school address and phone number and your permanent address and phone number. Employers may wish to contact you during school breaks or even months after you submit your resume. Make it possible, and easy for them to find you. Email address(es).

- Do not place the word "resume" at the top of your resume. It is simply not done.

2.   Objective

Your objective tells a prospective employer the type of work you are currently pursuing. The rest of your resume should be designed to most effectively support your objective. If you are using your resume to support an application for a scholarship, admission to Graduate school, or the like, you can state this in your objective. Always state your objective simply and concisely; it is never necessary to have a long-

winded statement. For a job search, don't make an employer guess what you want to do. Therefore:

- Make sure the employer knows either the industry you want to work in, or the type of work you want to do, or the skills you want to apply, or some combination. Example: Marketing position in sports or sports promotion, interest in using writing and public speaking skills.

3. Education

Your education section should almost always immediately follow the objective statement. This is because your education is your most recent significant accomplishment and is usually related to your objective. Even if your major is not specifically tied to your objective, you want the employer to know that you are completing (or working on) a college degree. Include:

- Degree(s) - first list the most recent degree you are pursuing or have earned, then list previous college degrees, as in Master's degree first, followed by Bachelor's degree.

- On one line include the degree level, major and date of completion or anticipated completion by month and year.

- On another line include institution and location by city and state. You can use the university's full name, or the official nickname on an official document, or both. Think about the types of employers to whom you will be providing your resume and whether or not they will be familiar with the university names.

4. Experience

- If at all possible, use relevant experience to support your objective. This experience can be paid or unpaid, an internship or a substantial class project, volunteer positions, or positions held in clubs, etc.

- Your experience does not have to be paid to be relevant. This allows you to include any experience in which you learned or demonstrated skills, knowledge or abilities that are related to the type of job you are seeking.

- If your experience seems to break into two distinct categories of "related" and "other," you can use these two headings and divide your experience this way. Related experience might include a

mixture of paid employment, volunteer work, student organization work, etc. You can give more detail in your related experience section, and leave out details in the other experience section.

- If you have not had related experience, you should still list your employment background. For each entry, give the job title, name and location (city and state) of organization, dates of employment (month/year), and a concise description of your accomplishments.

5. Activities and Honors

- Your accomplishments and extra-curricular activities tell an employer about your interests, motivations, and skills (e.g. organizational, leadership, interpersonal, etc.).

- You may include scholarships, awards, recognition of academic achievement, etc.

- If you have one significant academic honor and/or a particularly outstanding academic honor, you may wish to list it in your education section. This can be helpful if your GPA is not truly reflective of your achievements.

6. When listing organizations

- Use a complete name instead of just the abbreviation. Example: Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN).

- Do indicate positions held and/or activities in which you have participated (and about which you can articulate your accomplishments in an interview).

- If you held offices or leadership positions, you may wish to briefly list or describe your accomplishments (as you do with work experience). Emphasize the activities or skills that support your career objective.

- You may indicate dates of membership and leadership roles held.

Example:
Comedy Club, President, 2007-present

7.   Skills

- Almost every resume should include a skills section. The heading might simply read "Skills," and include a list of various skills, including computer skills, laboratory skills, foreign language skills, etc.

- If you have skills in several categories, head the section "Skills," and include subheadings to organize your categories, such as "computer skills," "laboratory skills," "foreign language skills," "organizational skills," etc.

8.   Certifications / Licensure

- If you have a certification or licensure (i.e., teaching certification, Engineer in Training, etc.) which is relevant to your career objective, include a "Certifications" or "Licensure" heading and give this information.

- In ordering your resume, place this section higher on your resume than other less related information.

9.   References

On a resume:
- On a resume, it is completely unnecessary to state "references available upon request." Most employers assume this. Do, however, prepare a reference list, on a separate page from your resume.

On curriculum vitae:
- References are typically listed.

10.   Hobbies

- If you have interests, activities or hobbies that are very important to you and that make a statement about who you are, do list them. For example, if you are an avid rock climber, or you've rebuilt a car, list it as an activity, even if you don't belong to a formal organization and even if it is unrelated to your objective. (It certainly reflects discipline and hard work and skills, which are valuable characteristics.)

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

Prepare a detailed resume for the job of fresh English graduate (note that English graduates work in the media industry, communication outfits, banks, insurance, marketing agencies etc.)

4.0   CONCLUSION

Business English is concerned with the language of business: trading, freighting, insurance, banking, transportation etc. The language is strict, direct and formal. This is because language hardly allows room for aesthetic digressions and informality. Most business correspondence is based on the intent of the mail. The receiver and the sender know that the only reason for the mail is business. Opinions are formed and conclusions are drawn from the appearance and content of any correspondence you send. Oftentimes, the first impression an employer has of a prospective employee is in writing, in the form of a cover letter or letter of application and resumé. It is important to make the best possible impression so that an interview will follow. When sending a resume, never send it without a cover letter or application letter. Usually, when the reader gets your letter and resumé, he/she will immediately flip the letter over and glance at the resume first. This is so that a few facts about you are easily obtained (that is name, objective, education, extent of experience and skills). If the resume interests the reader, he/she will then flip back to the application letter and read it in detail. In fact, the letter may get more attention than the resumé because, although the resume is about you, it is assumed that you had help putting it together. But the cover letter or application letter is generally written by the individual and the reader can assess your writing style, communication style, and how well you put your thoughts and ideas together.

5.0   SUMMARY

The myth about business correspondence is that it must be formal, standardized and often terse. The writer seems to transform him/herself from the personal to the institutional. Letters appear to be written from one "institution" to another rather than from person to person. This does nothing more than creates ineffective communication. It is important to develop a good writing style that not only reflects good grammar and sentence structure, but also gives the reader some insight into the personality of the writer. It is just as important, however, to be able to express yourself in clear, concise language so the reader knows exactly why you are writing. An employer could receive hundreds of letters and resumes every day. It would be like receiving hundreds of pieces of junk mail. How much of it can you read and which ones do you even care to

read? An employer may compare your correspondence with that of other candidates and determine which appears better. To increase your chances of being selected, your letter must spark the interest of the reader, create a favorable impression and look inviting to read.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

i.   You saw an advertisement for the position of 'Editor' in a Magazine industry. Apply for the job.
ii.   You were just promoted to the rank of Senior Manager in your office. Write a letter of appreciation to the Managing Director, expressing your gratitude.
iii.   You just graduated with a Second Class Honours (Upper Division) in your discipline. Prepare a resume for the job of a management trainee in West African Milk Company Plc.
iv.   You were working as a banker for many years. Prepare curriculum vitae for employment into another bank with better remuneration.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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