

MODULE 1 THE BASICS OF COMMUNICATION

Unit 1	Language and Speech
Unit 2	Communication
Unit 3	Types and Purpose of Communication
Unit 4	Types of Speech
Unit 5	Audience Analysis

UNIT 1 LANGUAGE AND SPEECH

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Introduction to Speech
3.2	Functions of Language
3.3	Speech
3.3.1	Features of a Good Speech
3.3.2	Qualities of a Good Speech Writer
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/ Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This module focuses on some basic principles of communication. Speech is subsumed under communication. Therefore, we need to be familiar with the peculiarities of these concepts in order to rightly situate this course. In view of this, we begin our discussion by examining language and speech.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

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

- define language;
- highlight the functions of language;
- define speech;
- identify the features of a good speech; and
- identify the qualities of a good speechwriter.

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 to Self-Assessment exercises, go to the relevant sections of the unit to derive the answers.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Introduction to Speech

One major characteristic that distinguishes humans from other creatures is language; it is unique to humans. Language, an arbitrary and conventional system of communication using vocal symbols (Babajide, 1996:1), plays important roles in the existence of humans. It exists primarily in the spoken form; all languages of the world exist in this form. It also exists in a secondary form – written. Not all languages exist in this form. However, the languages that are yet to be reduced to writing are in no way inferior to those that are in written form. As long as a language satisfies the communicative needs of its users, it is an authentic language and deserves to be treated as such.

The spoken language and the written one are essentially the same. The major difference is that, while the oral/spoken form is transient, the written form is permanent. Thus, reference can be made to the written language later without any significant twist or misconstruction. It is only if the spoken form is tape-recorded that it can have such a quality. An important and interesting relationship between the two forms is that the two can be easily and readily converted to each other. The spoken form can be transcribed, while the written form can also be read. This interconnectivity relates to the four major language skills: **speaking, writing, listening, and reading**. It is what is written that can be read; it is what is spoken or read that can be listened to. This changeability is important for all language users. This is why anyone who aspires to be a good speaker needs to be a good writer, and vice-versa. There are occasions when you have to present written speeches. If you are not good at writing but you are good at speaking, it will be difficult for people to accept that you are good at speaking, since such occasions do not allow you to express yourself extempore. In addition, if you are a good writer but a poor orator, on occasions that require you to speak

without making recourse to a written speech, you might not find it convenient to prove your stuff.

3.2 Functions of Language

In Smith's (1969:11-10) view, language learning and behaviour perform three major functions, namely: **self-discovery**, **meaning giving** and **communication**. The first one is difficult to conceptualise. In essence, we get to know whom we are through people's evaluation of our statements, what they expect from us, and their responses to our assertions. The second function relates to making meaning out of our environment through words. The third one has to do with how we manage relationship with others. This relates to how we use language for sociability, sharing information, advocacy or persuasion, inquiry, and for sharing information. The sociability aspect is what the anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski calls "phatic communion." This is noticeable in inquiries about people's health, comments on weather and climate, and affirmations of certain supremely obvious state of things (Malinowski, 1945). The information sharing aspect reveals how sharing information relates people to one another. Once the way information is shared is held in common by two or more people, what Hymes (1962) call a speech community is established. The third aspect – advocacy – involves asking others to share information, certain attitudes or beliefs or making others act in a particular recommended way. This is quite noticeable in political campaigns, legislative debates, court proceedings, sermons in churches and mosques, and counselling, among others. The fourth mode–inquiry–in its simplest form, involves question and response. In its more complex form, it involves debate, discussion or dialogue. The last mode–sharing information–typically involves storytellers, creative artists – poets, novelists, and playwrights. This kind of speech serves a consumatory but not an instrumental end, as the speaker does not expect anything from the listener after what has been said as "the way life is" (Smith, 1969:16).

Halliday sums all the aforementioned functions in three metafunctions of language: **ideational**, **interpersonal**, and **textual**. The ideational function deals with the expression of content. It focuses on an individual's view of his/her own world and the world around him/her. The interpersonal/transactional function relates to how language is used to interact with others in society. The textual function ensures that the language used is relevant. It is the use of language to construct texts (spoken or written). This function represents the text forming potential of the language user (Fowler 2002:104; Malmkjaer 2002:531). The ideational function bifurcates into **experiential** function, that is the representation of 'goings-on' in the world (or elsewhere); and **logical**

function, that is the semantic relations between experiential elements (Bloor & Bloor, 1995).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

- i. What is language?
- ii. Discuss the major functions of speech.
- iii. What is a speech community?

3.3 Speech

Now that we have examined language and the functions, which it performs, we now turn to speech. **Talking** and **speaking**, though closely related, are not exactly the same. Both are art involving using the vocal tract to produce sounds. While every normal human being talks, not every normal human being makes speech always. Anything that proceeds out of the mouth could be regarded as talking. Speech goes beyond this, as it involves conveying a particular message to a particular audience at a given time in such a way that the said audience gets the message clearly. This is difficult to determine, since we do not have access to one another's minds. However, the kind of feedback given during and after a speech could be a gauge of this.

Speech could, therefore, be seen as a projected conversation (Welsh, 1968:12; Alimole, 2002:10). This presupposes a speaker giving out information to an audience that has gathered specifically to listen to him/her. Notice that a speech could be both written and spoken. The spoken speech may be **written-to-be-read** or **extempore**. Whichever the type, all speeches share some inalienable features, which we shall consider shortly.

A good speech requires a good speechwriter. Speech writing has gone beyond the era when it was restricted to only few important people in the classical times. Now, there are many 'unseen' speechwriters, that is, professionals who are contracted to write speech for a politician or public figure, who are making a living from the art of writing speech. Although not everybody is born a good writer however, speech writing is a skill that can be learnt. Before examining the qualities of a good speechwriter, let us first discuss what makes a good speech.

3.3.1 Features of a Good Speech

Alimole (2002:7-8) has rightly warned, "Standing ovation can sometimes be misleading." This implies that one should not judge a speech solely by the amount of ovation that attends it. In other words, not all speeches treated with little or no ovation are bad. Then, there

must be some other parameters to be considered in determining the effectiveness of a speech. The major ones are examined below.

Audience-centredness

A good speech gives premium to the audience. Any writer that does not first ask the question, ‘Who am I writing for?’ is not likely to produce a good speech. A speech that is higher than the linguistic level of the average audience is ineffective, just as a speech that is below the linguistic level of the average audience is. You may ask: “Why considering the audience first?” This is because the speech is meant for the audience. A speechwriter is like a producer of a commodity. Any producer that satisfies only his/her own wants, but not those of the consumer, will not sell well. This is a reason why some speakers are the delight of the audience, while some are unsought for.

Informativeness

Time is precious and there are so many things competing for one’s time. People often spend their time for what they consider beneficial. A good speech must add value to the listener; the listener should gain something new. If all that a listener gets from a speech are stale and easy-to-find ideas, such listener may not read the remaining part of the speech. This is why a good speech should contain current and factual information on the topic it addresses.

Relevance

Relevance is an important feature of a good speech. Each occasion has its uniqueness. The members of the audience are obviously from different backgrounds. Therefore, the speech ought to address issues that are germane to the majority of the audience. No matter how informative a speech is, if it does not have a direct bearing on the audience at that moment, it is sure ineffective. A speechwriter should not just desire to show his/her versatility in a given speech. If the audience finds the versatility irrelevant to their immediate needs, they will not see any value in listening to or reading the speech.

Arrest and Sustenance of the Audience’s Attention

An effective speech is one that arrests easily and sustains the attention of the audience. Good and reputable speakers do not underrate this feature. There are many things/ideas travelling through the mind of a typical listener no matter how serene the environment is. A speech writer/speech maker is in the business of making the audience see the need to first listen to him/her. If the speechwriter/speechmaker is unable to achieve this in the first two minutes of the speech, he/she might be unable to achieve it all while the speech lasts.

The work does not stop at arresting the audience's attention. A more important task is sustaining that "arrest." The metaphor "arrest" is important here. It presupposes that the attention of the listener is a "wanderer"; it is unstable and fluid. Therefore, much effort is needed to arrest it in the first place. Sustaining the interest of the listening/reader involves many things, some of which will be discussed later.

Language and Style

Show me a good speech and I will show you a speech that has apt language and style. Language is the dress of thought. Good ideas can be massacred by ineffective and inappropriate language. Many people have good ideas but lack the language with which to pass them across, and this is the major essence of speechifying. If every other factor has been catered for but there is no effective language to do it, all amounts to nothing.

Effective language is not synonymous with bombastic, flowery and impenetrable language. The simplicity or complexity of the language of a given speech is measured in relation to the topic, the audience and the aim, among others. Even if the language is apt, the manner of presentation is also important; this is what is referred to as style. Some writers are unnecessarily ambiguous, wordy and unappealing. The speeches of such writers will definitely be ineffective. More is said about language and style as they relate to speech writing in Module three.

Logicity

A good speech is logical in its presentation of ideas. If the audience finds it difficult to connect the ideas being passed across in the speech, they will be uninterested in such speech. Even if the language is simple and the topic is relevant to them, they will find it difficult to make sense out of the speech.

Presentation

This quality affects mainly a speech that is to be presented. Actually, this is the major purpose of a speech, but there are speeches that are accessed after they have been presented. A well-written speech may be muddled up by the manner of presentation. This problem arises at times when the writer is not the presenter. It could also arise if there is no proper rehearsal even if the writer is the presenter.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

What are the things to look out for in a good speech?

3.3.2 Qualities of a Good Speechwriter

As mentioned in the preceding section, a good speech requires a good writer. The qualities, which a good writer should possess, will be examined in this section.

Each discipline has its requisite qualities. Anyone who aspires to be a specialist in a field needs to be well acquainted with the basic requirements of such a field. As hinted earlier, speech writing is also a profession. This has serious implications for the would-be speechwriters. Among all other things, it implies that there is competition in the market. Thus, an intending speechwriting needs to be equipped with some qualities, to stand out among others. The major qualities are examined below.

Masking

The speechwriter has to wear the garb of another person, that of the actual deliverer of the speech. A good speechwriter should try as much as possible to, in the speech, assume the linguistic and expressive features of the speaker. This is an important way of making the audience think that the deliverer of the speech is also the writer. If this is not ensured, people will begin to separate the two personalities in the speech: that of the **actual writer** and that of the **expected writer**. This is not good for the image of the expected writer. This is why, as much as possible, the actual writer should be able to mask himself/herself with the essential linguistic and expressive features of the expected writer. He/she should master the linguistic mannerism of the expected speechwriter and inject them into the speech appropriately. He/she should have carried out a stylistic analysis of the formal and informal speeches of the person he/she is writing for, and reflect such in the speech. This is obviously a difficult task, since he/she may have to master the linguistic and expressive manners of as many people as he is writing for. This requires diligence, as no single individual has a constantly predictable manner of speech for all occasions. Many factors influence one's style of speech, principal among which are the type of occasion, one's mood, the mood of the audience, one's familiarity with the topic, one's linguistic prowess, and cultural and socio-political considerations. In other words, a good speechwriter must be a good masquerader.

Versatility

Closely related to masking is versatility. A good speechwriter must be well versed in the area he/she is writing on. He/she must crosscheck his/her facts and figures. Any error of fact and figure will smear the image of the expected writer. A speechwriter should always remember that the audience is heterogeneous. Some members of the audience are

specialists in the field he/she is writing on. Therefore, he/she must do his/her homework very well and use the most current information in the field. A good way to begin is to try to know something about everything. This will not make any topic entirely new.

Regular practice

It is not easy to begin writing. You just need to start somewhere and somehow. Choose a topic to write on and do that regularly. Practice makes perfect. The more you write, the better you become in writing, every other thing being equal. Make it a duty to write at least a topic a week. This will make the task of writing on a major topic relatively convenient.

Reading

A good reader is likely to be a good writer. A major advantage of reading is that it widens one's level of knowledge. Some of the ideas garnered while reading will filter in when you are writing. First read quality materials about writing, then read the speeches of great orators and writers, such as, J.F Kennedy, Bill Clinton, Nelson Mandela, Obafemi Awolowo and Nnamdi Azikwe. Doing this equips you with the tactics employed by these great people, which make their speeches and names evergreen.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Critically examine the qualities of a good speechwriter.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Speech writing is a task that requires many efforts. It is not meant for lazy people. To achieve success in it, you need to consider how vital communication is among humans. Humans are different from other creatures. We constantly have to communicate with one another, and speech is one of the means of doing this. It is undeniable that speech is an art and, at one time or the other, we all have to make or write speech, formally or informally, for different purposes.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have examined the relationship between language and communication. We have also discussed the forms a speech could take. We have not failed to examine the connection between the written and spoken forms of language. Our attention have also been drawn to what makes a good speech, laying particular emphasis on the need for the writer to always consider the audience in the speech writing process. Our discussion has not also failed to consider who a good writer is.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Differentiate among the following functions of language: ideational function, interpersonal function and textual function.
- ii. What are the similarities and differences between written and spoken languages?
- iii. How central is the audience to a speech?
- iv. What are the features to look for in a speech?
- v. Discuss the qualities a good speechwriter should possess.
- vi. Discuss how speechwriter can make the writer feel that the speech deliverer is the speechwriter.
- vii. How is a speechwriter a ‘masquerader’?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 COMMUNICATION

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The Communication Process
 - 3.2 Noise
 - 3.3 Communication Barriers
 - 3.3.1 Intrapersonal Barriers
 - 3.3.2 Interpersonal
 - 3.3.3 Organisational
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In Unit one, we briefly discussed communication. Speech writing is an aspect of communication. It is expedient for us to look at this important concept in detail. This is because communication is a complex process, which involves so many other processes and activities. Therefore, in this unit, we shall examine communication with a view to bringing to the fore some salient issues that will enrich our understanding of speech writing.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

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

- define communication;
- explain the communication process;
- identify different types of noise; and
- explain barriers to communication.

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 to Self-Assessment exercises, go to the relevant sections of the unit to derive the answers.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Communication Process

Communication is simply the process of giving, getting, or sharing information with others (Roman & Sharma, 2004:1). It is a dynamic and an interpersonal process, particularly when it is oral (Barret, 1987:4). It is a process with many parts. The root of the word communication is in the Latin word *communicare*, which means to *share*. Therefore, communication is “the exchange of information, ideas, and knowledge between sender and receiver through an accepted code of symbols.” (Roman & Sharma, 2004:2). “Communication is all about giving and receiving of signs which have meanings attached to them (Dimbleby and Burton, 1998:26).

It is a process with many parts and participants. The communication process is schematically presented below.

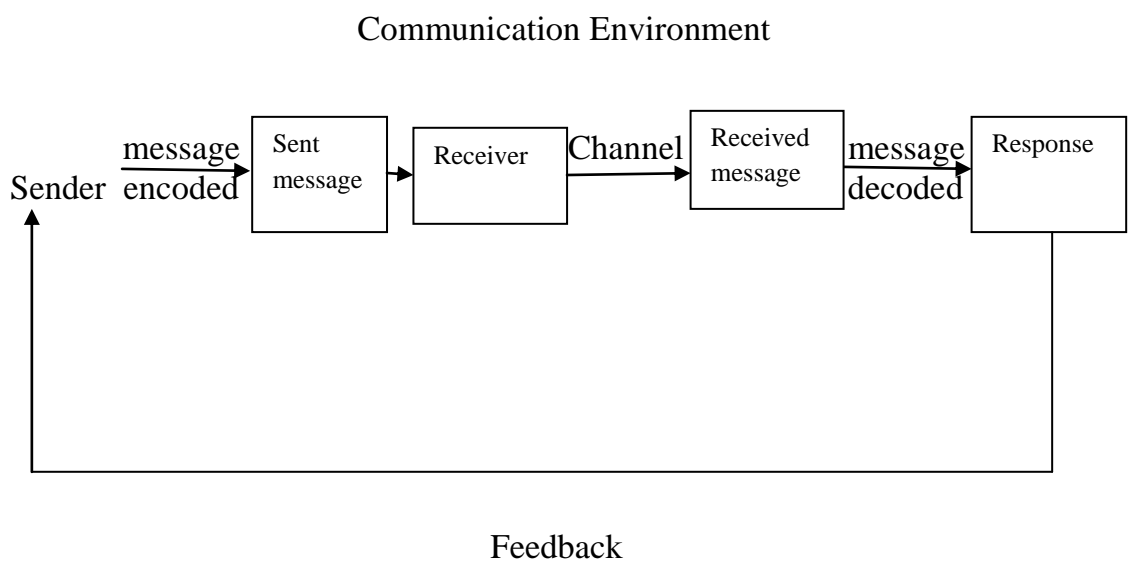


Fig. 1: The process of communication (Raman & Sharma, 2004:2)

This cycle shows that there is the **sender**, who encodes (converts information) **message** to the receiver via a **channel**, that is, language. The **receiver** receives the message, decodes it, and sends a **response** to the sender, provided there is no breakdown of communication. This is called **feedback**. The entire process takes place in a well-defined set up called **communication environment**. Let us now examine more carefully the components of the communication process.

Sender: This refers to the speaker or writer. The success of the sender depends on the following factors:

- his/her personal credibility
- his/her knowledge of the subject
- his/her preparation of the subject
- his/her manner of speaking/writing
- his/her sensitivity to the audience and the occasion.
- his/her enthusiasm about what is said or written.

(cf. Lucas 2001:16)

Message: This refers to what is communicated to another person(s). If the intended message is the actual message received, then the communication process is successful.

Channel: This is the means by which the message is communicated. Examples are microphones and loudspeakers.

Receiver: This is the person that receives the message. The message of the sender is filtered through the sender's *frame of reference*, that is "the total of his or her knowledge, experience, goals, values, and attitudes" (Lucas, 2001:17).

Feedback: This is the message sent back to the sender by the receiver. It could be verbal or non-verbal or both.

Interference: Interference refers to anything, which impedes successful communication.

Situation: The time and place in which speech communication occurs is the situation. Examples are funerals, wedding ceremonies, launchings, political rallies, and so on.

Communication is fully effective only when the desired response is got from the receiver. However, communication is complete whether the response is positive or negative. It is only if there is no feedback that communication is incomplete. This underscores the significance of feedback in communication. It also implies that communication goes

beyond talking or speaking/writing. It is an interactive and interpersonal process, which is never one-sided. Once there is no feedback, positive or negative, it is no longer communication. For instance, suppose you give an order that everybody should stand up. If all of them stand up, your communication is effective. If only few of them stand up, you have both positive and negative response, but the communication process is complete. However, if none of them responds and they are not dumb, the process is incomplete. Furthermore, it may be argued that this is a negative response. If seen in this way, the communication process is complete.

In sum, the essentials of communication, according to Roman and Sharma (2004:3) are:

1. A common communication environment;
2. Cooperation between the sender and the receiver;
3. Selection of an appropriate channel;
4. Correct encoding and decoding of the message;
5. Receipt of the desired response and feedback, feedback could be verbal (with words), local with utterances (such as “hmm”) or visual (involving gestures etc.) (cf. Barret, 1987:5).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

1. Summarise the communication process.
2. When is communication complete?
3. What is the relationship between the encoder and the decoder?

3.2 Noise

The transmission of information from the sender to the receiver can be hindered by **noise**. Noise can be defined as “any unplanned interference in the communication environment, which causes hindrance in the transmission of the message” (Raman & Sharma (2004:4).

Broadly, there can be **channel noise** and **semantic noise**. The former concerns any interference in the mechanics of the medium employed in sending a message. In oral communication, it comes in the form of faulty background, high volume/pitch from loudspeaker, unclear telephone lines, and so on. In written communication, illegible handwriting and unclear font could constitute noise. Semantic noise arises from error in the message itself. It could be due to misspellings, incorrect grammar, ambiguity and incorrect punctuation, among others. Thus, while channel noise is generated externally, semantic noise is generated internally (Lucas, 2001).

To emphasise the complex and dynamic nature of communication (particularly oral communication), Barret (1987:6) gives a much wider view of noise:

Insufficient knowledge can constitute noise. Irreconcilable differences in values, feelings, and experiences may enter in as noise. Of course, noise may be actual physical noise, as a passing train, or it may be less obvious, such as listener's dislike of a topic, the threat of a controversial proposal, a speaker's lack of interest or withholding of vital information. Noise refers to any physical or psychological condition that interferes with communication. The interference may be caused by the size of room, by the airwaves that carry the message or by personal interferences of the participants. It may be a cultural, social, religious, political, educational, or other reason.

It is not only noise that hinders communication. Noise and all other factors that hinder communication are referred to as *communication barriers*.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

- i. What is noise?
- ii. Differentiate between channel noise and semantic noise.

3.3 Communication Barriers

Anything that inhibits or distorts the message sent is called a **communication barrier**. There are three major levels of communication barriers) according to Raman and Sharma (2004:23-37).

- Intrapersonal
- Interpersonal
- Organisational

3.3.1 Intrapersonal Barriers

Different people often interpret the same message in different ways. This is often a major cause of misunderstanding among people. Individual differences are the main reason for this. Intrapersonal barriers (as identified by Raman & Sharma (2004:24) are often linked to the following causes,

- Wrong assumptions
- Varied perceptions
- Differing background
- Wrong inferences
- Impervious categories
- Categorical thinking

Wrong Assumptions

At times, the sender assumes that the receiver already knows the content of the message. This may not be so. In such a case, the message may be distorted, as a wrong meaning is attached to such a message. It is not advisable to overrate or underrate the knowledge of the audience.

Varied Perceptions

We perceive things differently. The same object may be perceived differently from different angles. If the angle from which the sender has perceived an idea is different from the way the receiver receives it, a barrier may arise.

Differing Backgrounds

Background plays important roles in communication. The background of the sender is necessarily different from that of the receiver, since no two human beings have the same background. Someone with the knowledge of a particular message finds it easier to decode the message than somebody without such knowledge.

Wrong Inferences

Conclusions that are not based on what actually exists could make a speaker/writer send a wrong message; just as such conclusions can make the receiver decode the message wrongly. “Inferences are more dramatic than facts, and for this reason they give more scope for gossip and rumour to burgeon. Inferences supported by facts are essential for professionals when they analyse material, solve problems and plan procedure.” (Raman & Sharma, 2004:260). If a fact has not been established, expressions, like “in my opinion,” “evidence suggests” could be used.

Impervious Categories

Some people are too rigid and closed their minds to new developments. They react negatively to unfavourable information in any or all of these ways: **rejection**, **distortion**, and **avoidance**. Such people are called *misoneists* (Raman & Sharma, 2004:27). They find it difficult to accept anything that contradicts their points of view.

Categorical Thinking

This refers to 'know-it-all attitude. People with such attitude are called *pansophists*. The speech of such people is dominated by words like *all*, *always*, *everybody*, and their opposites *none/never*, and *nobody*. This attitude makes such people to refuse information (Raman & Sharma 2004:27).

3.3.2 Interpersonal Barriers

These are barriers, which occur as a result of inappropriate transaction of words between two or more individuals. Raman and Sharma (2004:28) identify the following basic interpersonal barriers.

- Limited vocabulary
- Incongruity of verbal and non-verbal message
- Emotional outburst
- Communication selectivity
- Cultural variations
- Poor listening skills
- Noise in the channel

Limited Vocabulary

The amount of one's vocabulary determines one's choice of words. Somebody with limited vocabulary has limited choices to make. This also limits the range of meanings such a one could express. However, it is not just enough to have good and rich vocabulary; it is equally important to know how to string the vocabulary items together to suit the occasion, the topic and the audience. This is only when such vocabulary becomes effective.

Incongruity of Verbal and Non-verbal Messages

For communication to be effective, there must not be mismatch of verbal and non-verbal messages, particularly in a speech to be read; both should complement each other. If the facial expression, gesture, and other non-verbal cues of the sender are incongruous with the verbal message, communication could be hindered. "Non-verbal cues provide a deeper insight into the sender's message. Ignoring non-verbal cues or misinterpreting them can result in the message being completely misunderstood" (Raman & Sharma, 2004:30).

Besides, the physical appearance of the sender can have significant impact on conversation. Each occasion demands a particular form of appearance. In order to improve your appearance, note the following guidelines given by Raman and Sharma (2004:30):

- Dress according to the occasion.
- Wear neat and clean clothes.
- Choose an appropriate hairstyle.
- Wear clean and polished shoes.

Emotional Outburst

Emotion cannot be divorced from human living. The ability to keep one's emotion under check is a great virtue. Emotion could be positive or negative. The positive ones include joy, happiness, and excitement, while the negative ones include anger and sorrow. Emotion could both intensify and inhibit communication. A speech made in anger is doubtlessly going to be ineffective. Similarly, too much display of happiness in communication could be conceived as pride. Therefore, moderation should be exercised in the display of emotion in communication.

Communication Selectivity

This refers to choosing which part of communication to pay attention to. This could break the flow of communication, as some other useful information is made to filter away. This can affect the kind of feedback the receiver will give. In written form of communication, this manifests in choosing which part of the material to read.

Cultural Variations

This applies to interactants from different cultural backgrounds. Some behaviour permitted in some cultures may be disallowed in other cultures. If the sender does not take into cognizance the cultural peculiarities of the receiver(s), communication could be hindered. Just as the sender needs to understand the cultural perspective of the receiver, so also does the receiver need to understand the cultural perspective of the sender.

Poor Listening Skills

Listening is different from hearing. The former connotes attention, while the latter does not. If people do not listen, they may not adequately decode the message. Some of the factors that hinder listening are wandering attention, indifference, aggressiveness, and emotional disturbances (Lucas, 2001).

Noise in the Channel

Noise constitutes a major barrier to communication. This has been discussed earlier.

3.3.4 Organisational Barriers

Organisational barriers are barriers to communication in an organisation. The major ones, according to Raman and Sharma (2004:34-36) are:

- too many transfer stations
- fear of superiors
- negative tendencies
- use of inappropriate media
- information overload

Too many Transfer Stations

If there are too many intervening senders between the main sender and the receiver, there could be distortion or loss of vital information. Transfer stations are useful but when they are too many, they may be counterproductive (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008).

Fear of Supervisors

Some subordinates are so afraid of their superiors that they find it difficult to communicate effectively. Some of these subordinates find it difficult to speak frankly to their bosses. Some of them avoid communication with their superiors while some present all the information at their disposal. This often leads to verbosity, and bulky reports (Raman & Sharma, 2004:35).

Negative Tendencies

When there are groups or committees in an organisation, there could be conflict of ideas and interest between members and non-members. This could inhibit communication in such an organisation.

Use of Inappropriate Media

The medium through which the message is sent is important in communication. If the right information is sent via the wrong medium, communication may be hindered. A message that should be sent through e-mail, for instance, should not be sent through telephone.

Similarly, when an officer is designated to send a message, the status of such an officer in relation to the receivers is important. For example, if the head of department (HOD) in a higher institution wants to summon the teaching staff for a meeting and he/she sends it through the secretary, some of the teaching staff may feel insulted that a secretary is summoning them to a meeting. A way out is for such a secretary to end the message with the name of the HOD.

Information Overload

Information overload refers to the availability of huge amounts of data, which are too much for the receiver to handle effectively (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008). The outcomes of this include fatigue, boredom, and lack of interest. This negatively affects information flow as vital information can be kept from the reach of the receiver.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

- i. Define communication barriers.
- ii. List five intrapersonal barriers.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The central concern of this unit focuses on communication process. The unit has discussed the various barriers to communication. This was discussed from intrapersonal, interpersonal and organisational perspectives. These barriers have revealed that speech is influenced by many factors. Some of these factors relate to the writer; some to the audience; and some to the organisation, in situations involving organisations.

5.0 SUMMARY

Speech is a form of communication; its various components should be annexed to the benefit of all. The barriers to communication must be well addressed in any speech situation. If this is done, most of the conflicts that arise from misconstruction of message will be reduced. A good speechwriter will consciously address these communication barriers in other for his/her intention not to be defeated.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Discuss the connection among the components of the communication process.
- ii. Explain four interpersonal barriers.
- iii. How does noise affect communication?
- iv. Discuss some of the communication barriers that relate to a speechwriter.
- v. How does the audience constitute a barrier in communication?
- vi. What is the role of culture in communication?
- vii. Explain how the channel could be a noise in communication.

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UNIT 3 TYPES AND PURPOSE OF COMMUNICATION

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Types of Communication
 - 3.2 Purposes of Communication
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the last unit, we examined the communication process and the barriers that could be encountered in communication. In order to maximise the opportunities that communication provides, it is expedient to consider the types and purposes of communication. This is the focus of this unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

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

- identify types of communication;
- identify purposes of communication; and
- relate types of communication to purposes of communication.

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 to Self-Assessment exercises, go to the relevant sections of the unit to derive the answers.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Types of Communication

The classification of communication has been approached from different perspectives. The approach we shall examine here relates to the kind of the persons involved in communication. There are six main types of communication under this criterion, namely:

- Intrapersonal
- Interpersonal
- Extrapersonal
- Group
- Organisational
- Mass
- Teleconferencing

Intrapersonal Communication

This is communication within and to the self. This could be in form of reflecting on or thinking on how to do something. In this case, one is both the sender and receiver. It could also be in form of writing diaries for oneself or talking to oneself (Dimbleby & Burton, 1998:7). Self-motivation, self-determination and related activities also exemplify intrapersonal communication (Raman & Sharma, 2004:10).

There is also a negative dimension to this type of communication. Because of life challenges, many people get involved in this type of communication than other types of communication. They are engulfed in thinking about their problems, leading to anxiety. This result in most cases is high blood pressure, which could precipitate stroke, with its many attendant problems.

It is good to get involved in intrapersonal communication. However, if it is being extended to thinking about problems without proffering any meaningful solutions, one should change to interpersonal communication or other types of communication. A problem shared is a problem almost half-solved, as the saying goes.

Interpersonal Communication

This kind of communication takes place between people. In interpersonal communication, feedback is immediate. Because of the proximity of people in this type of communication, non-verbal cues play important roles. Examples of interpersonal communication are conversation between people in a café, salesperson-client interaction, interview, and even telephone conversation. (Dimbleby & Burton, 1998:7).

Extrapersonal Communication

Extrapersonal communication refers to communication between humans and non-humans. This typically involves humans communicating with pet animals. “More than any other form, this form of communication requires coordination and understanding between the sender and the receiver as at least one of them transmits information or responds in sign language only” (Raman & Sharma, 2004:10). In most cases, the feedback is based on the level of closeness and frequency of interaction with such animals. Some people prefer this type of communication to interpersonal communication. It appears that, in this age, some people are exploring the possibility of making some animals move to the status of humans, doing some uncommon things with these animals, including sex, which involves some communication too.

Group Communication

This is “communication within groups of people and by groups of people to others” (Dimbleby & Burton, 1998:7). There are two major types: small groups and large groups. Examples of small groups are family, group of friends and committee. Large groups are higher and come together for purposes different from those of small groups. Examples of large groups are audience at a concert and spectators at a sport event (Dimbleby & Burton, 1998:7-8).

Organisation Communication

This is similar to group communication. The major difference is that it involves some hierarchical levels. There may not be direct contact between the sender and the receiver. Raman and Sharma (2004:11-12) identify three subdivisions of organisational communication: **internal operational**, related to conducting work within an organisation; **external operational**, involving work-related communication between an organisation and people outside; and **personal**, involving communication done in an organisation without business purposes.

Mass Communication

This is communication received by or used by large numbers of people (Dimbleby & Burton, 1998:8). It requires a mediator for transmission of information. The approach is usually impersonal because of the heterogeneity and anonymity of the audience. Product advertisement, press interviews; news broadcast are examples of mass communication. Other examples are audio/video cassette, industry, telephone and postal systems, among others. Mass communication is essentially characterised by **large reach**, **impersonality**, and presence of a **gatekeeper/mediator**, like the editor (Dimbleby & Burton 1998:8).

Teleconferencing

Communication has gone beyond the face-to-face type. There is now teleconferencing. This allows participants in two or more locations to see and speak with each other (Adler & Elhorst, 2008:25). This type of communication is common in developed nations of the world. Some developing nations are taking advantage of this too. Multi-nationals are constantly trying to improve on this type of communication to make their operation more effective.

3.2 Purposes of Communication

Communication is used to achieve different purposes. The basic ones identified by Dimpleby and Burton (1998:11-15) are examined below.

- i. **Survival:** This refers to the use of communication for physical needs, such as renting an apartment and calling for help when in danger.
- ii. **Cooperation:** we use communication to work with and get along with others. This is crucial for peace in the society. Breakdown of communication in this regard could lead to war and even extermination of a whole race.
- iii. **Personal need:** Acts of communication like dressing in the right way for an occasion and giving people presents illustrate communication needs.
- iv. **Relationship:** We communicate to be involved with others, to form, maintain and repair relationships.
- v. **Persuasion:** We communicate to persuade others to think or act in our own way.
- vi. **Power:** We communicate to exert power over others. This may be in the form of control over what they know or how they know it. Propaganda is a good example. Access to and control of the channel of communication play important role in this regard particularly in organisational communication.
- vii. **Social needs:** We communicate to keep our society, group and organisations together.
- viii. **Information:** This involves giving and receiving information.
- ix. **Making sense of the world:** We communicate to make sense of the world and our experience of it. According to Dimpleby and

Burton (1998:14), making sense of the world involves four important things.

- What we believe in
 - What we think of ourselves
 - What we think our relationships are with people
 - What we think is real
- x. **Self-expression:** We communicate to express our imagination and ourselves to others through words, pictures and sounds, among others.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Why do people communicate?

4.0 CONCLUSION

There is connection between the types of communication and the use to which communication is put. The end of communication determines the type of communication one is involved in. People adapt communication to suit their needs and purposes. This is why communication has achieved some transformation.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has discussed the types of communication that exist. It has equally revealed the purposes of communication. It is clear from this unit that communication is multifarious and the purpose cannot be left out when discussing communication types.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. How does communication affect society?
- ii. Discuss the relationship between communication types and why people communicate.
- iii. Explain four types of communication.
- iv. Assess the negative roles communication can be made to perform.
- v. Discuss the link between communication and our view of the world.

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UNIT 4 TYPES OF SPEECH AND ETHICS OF SPEECH WRITING/MAKING

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Types of Speech
 - 3.2 Ethics of Speech Writing/ Making
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The last unit concludes our survey of communication. We now turn to speech, a subset of communication. Speech is also diversified, like communication. It has peculiar features, which are worth elucidating. This will be done by examining the types of speech that exist. The unique features of each will also be explained so that it will be easy to identify each speech type. The unit will also discuss the ethics that guide speech writing/making.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

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

- highlight the various types of speech;
- identify the features of each type of speech;
- explain the connection among the speech types identified; and
- list the ethics of speech writing.

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 to Self-Assessment exercises, go to the relevant sections of the unit to derive the answers.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Types of Speech

There are different types of speech. The major ones include:

1. Expository speech
2. Analytical speech
3. Speech of introduction
4. Speech of presentation
5. Speech of acceptance
6. Commemorative speech/Speech of tribute
7. After-dinner speech
8. Persuasive speech
9. Inspirational speech

Expository Speech

An expository speech aims at revealing some facts on a concept or personality. It explains and describes its subject. It is a speech targeted at shedding light on a subject matter that is hidden. It uses plain terms to make whatever is to be explained clear. Illustrations and examples are used in this type of speech to achieve effect. This type of speech may deploy visual aids so that whatever words that could not be clearly conveyed will be made explicit through non-verbal means. It is not strange to find features of expository speech in the other types of speech. This is because a speech is essentially intended to make some points, which have to be well explained.

Analytical Speech

In an analytical speech, attempt is made to break down a concept or phenomenon to its component parts and then explain how these parts constitute the whole. It may involve giving reasons why a particular policy is right or wrong. It involves ability to reason and present ideas convincingly. This type of speech easily exposes the weakness of a writer who could not present ideas logically, as it involves breaking down and rebuilding an idea, a position or a claim.

Speech of Introduction

This is a speech, which introduces the main speaker to the audience. Citation before somebody gives a speech is also an example of this type of speech. In this kind of speech, you do not need to play to the gallery. Introductory speech forms an important aspect of an occasion. It could make or mar the remaining aspects of any occasion. It could make or mar the remaining aspects of an occasion. If presented well, it could stimulate the interest of the audience in the topic and the speaker. Take

special note of the protocol of the occasion. The following suggestions given by Lucas (2001:436-439) and Gregory (2002:430) are helpful.

1. Be brief: Do not turn the speech into a major speech.
2. Make sure your remarks are completely accurate: Get the speaker's name correctly. If it is an unfamiliar name, practice its pronunciation in advance.
3. Adapt your remarks to the occasion.
4. Adapt your remarks to the main speaker: Avoid revealing embarrassing details about the personal life of the speaker.
5. Adapt your remark to the audience.
6. Try to create a sense of anticipation and drama.
7. Avoid exaggeration.
8. Ask the speaker ahead of time the kind of introduction he or she would like.
9. Set the proper tone.
10. Find out whether the speaker wants you to discuss the topic.
11. Never steal the speaker's material.

Speech of Presentation

This is a speech used when presenting someone a gift, an award, or some other form of public recognition (Lucas, 2001:440). In this kind of speech, the focus is on the personality to be honoured. Therefore, it emphasises the achievements and qualities of the person, to show that he/she actually deserves the honour. A speech of presentation should incorporate the following features.

1. Background information that would help the audience to understand the purpose of the award.
2. Background information on the parameters used to select the awardee.
3. The achievements of the awardee
(Gregory 2002:432)

Speech of Acceptance

This speech shows appreciation for an honour or award or any form of recognition. It is usually short and shows that the recipient values what has been done for him/her.

Commemorative Speech/speech of Tribute

It is a speech written to eulogise a person, a group of people, an institution or an idea. It informs and inspires, the audience to appreciate the entity being praised. It should go beyond biography, if it concerns a person; it should generate a deep sense of respect in the audience. (Gregory, 2002:433).

After-Dinner Speech

This is a speech meant to entertain, making a thoughtful point about its subject in a lighthearted way. It is not expected to be technical or argumentative. At the same time, it should not be treated with frivolity (Lucas, 2001:446). Adequate attention should be given to the audience. The speech should complement whatever has transpired earlier. It should not make the audience that has come for such a dinner dejected or unhappy. It should create a lasting impression of the occasion and the speaker/writer on the audience.

Persuasive Speech

This is a speech that attempts to convince others to accept the writer /speaker's view of the way things are. It involves articulating your views, packaging it in such a way that can be understood.

Inspirational Speech

This is a speech, which tries to stimulate listeners to a high level of feeling or activity (Gregory 2002:432). This speech targets particularly the psyche of the audience. It studies their present situation and tries to push them to do what they feel they could not do. It is essentially optimistic in approach. Some Christian daily devotionals often take this form.

3.2 Ethics of Speechwriting/Speechmaking

Each profession is backed up by ethics. Speech writing/making is guided by the following ethics as identified by Powers (1993:72):

1. No one should knowingly promote something as true that they honestly believe to be fake.
2. No one should suggest a greater degree of certainty about their beliefs than their evidence will actually support.
3. No one should misuse the available facts to support their cause.
4. No one should withhold information that might be relevant to the issue under discussion.
5. No one should distort information to make it conform to his or her own position.

These are the ethics guiding each occasion for which the speech is meant. Each gathering has what it permits and what it forbids. Therefore, a speechwriter should take note of these too, as they could determine the reception of his/her speech.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

List the types of speech discussed so far.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The types of speech identified above are the basic ones. There could be some other minor ones, depending on the purpose of classification. Speech has been broken down in this way for us to see how diversified speech could be and to underscore the need for the speechwriter not to generalise but to consider the uniqueness of each occasion and prepare the most suitable speech for it. The ethics of speech writing show that it is an art guided by principles. Although there may not be any professional body to punish violators of these ethics, the audience is enough to do this. It can give the speechwriter the treatment he/she deserves immediately. The verdict of the audience could be worse than that of any professional body. Therefore, each speechwriter should be conscious of these ethics while writing.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has examined types of speech. It has also considered the ethics guiding speech writing/making. The discussion in this unit has been geared towards equipping the speechwriter with some seemingly minor issues that could determine the success or otherwise of his/her speech.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Discuss the relevance of the ethics of speech writing to a speechwriter.
- ii. Explain the features of four types of speech.
- iii. What are the steps a speechwriter needs to take to make a speech of introduction effective?
- iv. List the ethics of speech writing a writer must take note of.

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UNIT 5 AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The Audience
 - 3.2 Audience-Centredness
 - 3.3 Issues in Audience Analysis
 - 3.3.1 Types of Audience Analysis
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

There previous units have given background information on communication and speech. In this unit, we shall examine a concept that is central to successful speech writing. It is a concept which determines the kind of language to be used for the speech and the content of the speech. The concept is audience. Speech takes place in a **context**. Issues surrounding the context of speech could be best understood if we consider the audience. This unit focuses particularly on how to carry out audience analysis for any speech.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

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

- define audience;
- identify types of audience analysis;
- explain demographic audience analysis;
- explain psychological audience analysis; and
- explain situational audience analysis.

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 to Self-Assessment exercises, go to the relevant sections of the unit to derive the answers.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Audience

You may wonder why some seemingly fantastic speeches and some eloquent speakers fail to make impressive impact on their audience. Could it be that they have fallen out of favour with the audience? You may also wonder why a speaker is applauded after a speech and the same speech by the same speaker, presented in another place is treated with scorn. All these show that speech writing and speech delivery are not a mere display of vocabulary or any elegance. There is a fundamental component of communication that must first be catered for even before the task of writing a speech is embarked upon. This is the audience. Why is the audience more important than the topic? How does a writer cater for all necessary variables in relation to the audience? These and related issues form the focus of this unit.

The audience is the receiver or target of a particular speech. The audience varies in size, from one person to millions of people. The audience may be located in a single place or scattered all over the globe.

3.2 Audience-Centeredness

Any speaker/writer that has little or no regard for the audience is bound to fail in his/her speech endeavour. A good speechwriter must be audience-centred. This means that such a writer keeps the audience foremost in his/her mind at every stage of the speech preparation and presentation. Such a writer asks himself/herself the following basic questions.

- To whom am I writing/speaking?
 - What do I want them to know, believe, or do as a result of my speech?
 - What is the most effective way of writing and presenting my speech to accomplish this aim?
 - What is my audience's relevant demographic involvement?
 - What are my audience's social involvements?
 - What are my audience's relevant topical involvements?
- (Powers, 1993:61).

The above show that good writers will definitely want to make contact with their audience because of their desire to inform, persuade entertain, or inspire them, or make them go with warm feelings (Gregory, 2002:67). This involves many efforts. These efforts, if painstakingly executed, reflect in the speech and its reception by the audience is often overwhelming. The efforts have to be undertaken for each speech, as “every audience is different” (Gregory 2002:67).

3.3 Issues in Audience Analysis

Audience analysis is “the process of examining about the expected listeners of a speech.” (Beebee & Beebee, 1994:64). This implies that the writer needs to gauge the belief and knowledge of the audience and at the same time get familiar with the peculiarities of the audience. It involves the writer/speaker trying to assess the way the audience has previously constructed the portion of reality which is germane to the success of the speech (Powers 1993:58). In essence, audience analysis is:

The process of determining your audience’s prior knowledge, interests, and feelings relative to your topic. As such, audience analysis is the process of trying to construct a coherent picture of your audience—a picture that has implications for how you shape and present your speech. Although audience analysis for public speaking is a somewhat larger and more self-conscious task, the general principle of audience analysis and adaptation is the same...: *You select what you are going to say and how you are going to say it based on your best evaluation of your audience’s prior constructions concerning the topic* (Powers, 1993:59).

There are two basic manners of audience analysis: **spontaneous** and **self-conscious**. The former involves focusing on “what is unique about the other person as an individual.” The latter focuses on what is common to the audience members as a group (Powers, 1993:59).

3.3.1 Types of Audience Analysis

The different pieces of information needed about the audience could be grouped under the following types of audience analysis:

- Demographic analysis
- Psychological analysis
- Environmental/Situational analysis

Demographic Analysis

Demography refers to information relating to the biodata of an individual or a group of people. Demographic analysis of the audience, therefore, concerns seeking information about age, religion, gender, educational background ethnic background, and cultural background, among others, of the audience.

Age

Age and experience are inseparable. This informs the Yoruba saying “*B’omode ba laso bi agba, ko le lakisa bi agba*” (If a child has as many clothes as an elder, it cannot possess as many rags as an elder). This presupposes that there is direct relationship between age and experience. However, this is relative in some cases. For instance, today’s children have better technological exposure than some older ones. Thus, if a topic dealing with the Internet is to be discussed, for example, the writer needs not equate old age with Internet exposure. In other words, the writer needs to ascertain the knowledge of each age group.

Age also determines the linguistic choice a writer makes. In most cases, not many younger ones could easily interpret proverbs. Conversely, a good number of adults understand same proverbs with relative ease. Once the age of the audience is known, the writer can conveniently choose the most appropriate topic and the best approach to use in presenting it.

Gender

Gender is a social construct. It deals with how the society assigns roles to individuals based on their sexes. This varies from one culture to another. Besides, there is now a shift in professional demarcations. Some jobs once seen as exclusive preserves of men are now being undertaken by women. For instance, there are now women tanker drivers and women cab drivers in some places or cities in Nigeria. In doing audience gender analysis, it is important to ascertain the ratio of males to females. Generally, take note of the following points:

- Avoid making sweeping judgements based on gender stereotypes.
- Ensure that your speech relates to both genders.
- Avoid jokes and other tactics, which are derogatory to either gender.
- In your illustrations and stories, do not cast either gender in stereotypical roles.
- Take care of the similarities and differences between the two sexes.
- Avoid sexist language.
- Do not cast aspersion(an unkind remark) on some seemingly deviant groups, such as gays, lesbians, and shemales.

(cf. Beebee & Beebee, 1994:67-68; Lucas 2001:104).

Ethnic, Racial and Cultural Backgrounds

Each ethnic group, race and culture has its own unique features, although there are some features, which cut across all of them. A good writer should find out the ethnic, racial and cultural peculiarities of the segments of the audience. This will help him/her to know how not to say what will put off a particular ethnic group. For example, among the Tiv in Benue State, Nigeria, the wife of the host is used to show hospitality to the guest. This means, among others, that the guest is free to have sexual intercourse with such a woman. There may be cultural justification for this, although the tradition is becoming unpopular and unacceptable. This is unacceptable among some other cultures even in Nigeria, for example Yoruba and Igbo. An audience that is made up of many Tiv who do not frown at such a cultural practice will not be pleased with a writer who condemns it based on his/her cultural views.

In addition, there are some ethnic groups where people go about naked. A speech that outright condemns such groups is likely going to be badly received by members of the audience from such communities or people who differentiate between nudity and nudism. While nudity may be a cultural practice, nudism is anti-cultural and anti-social, because the related culture frowns against being nude.

No speech that discriminates, implicitly or explicitly, against a race will achieve the desired effect. A good speechwriter should eschew any form of racial, ethnic, or cultural prejudice. Neutrality and respect for all the cultures represented in the audience will endear a writer/speaker to every member of the audience. This can only be achieved if the writer has got information on the audience and made necessary research on each culture before writing the speech. This can be done by reading relevant materials on the cultures or making enquiries from sources familiar with them.

Religion

Currently, religion is one of the most divisive factors all over the world. It is so powerful that, on a slight provocation on religious issues, whether wittingly or unwittingly done, some religious bigots are ready to foment trouble. There is mutual suspicion among the various religious sects. Since a writer belongs to or is endeared to a particular religion, he/she needs to exercise caution so that he/she will not be seen as unduly religious in his/her speech. The audience is seldom homogeneous. Even among the same religion, there are different denominations or sects. For instance, among the Christians, there are divisions into Orthodox, Pentecostal and Evangelicals. Even among the Orthodox, there are different sub-groups. In the same denomination, there are also groups. For example, among the Nigerian Catholics, there

are those who are called Catholic Charismatic Group. This sect does not practise some of the beliefs of the other Catholic group. Therefore, a speechwriter should know the various religious interests present in the audience and plan his/her speech to meet the audience.

Group Membership

Members of the audience may belong to some groups that have certain values they cherish. Such groups may be social, professional or voluntary. The group affiliation of the audience may inform the writer on what to emphasise, what to de-emphasise, and what not to mention at all.

Other Demographic Variables

Apart from the demographic variables discussed above, there are some other ones that could shape the speech and its reception. They include **academic qualification, social status, economic position, marital status** and **intelligence**, among others. As much as possible, the writer should be familiar with all of these so as not make wrong assumptions.

How to Gather Demographic Information

There are both formal and informal ways of gathering demographic information about the audience. The informal way entails simply observing them and asking information about them. For instance, you can determine the female and male components of your audience by merely looking at them if it is a spoken speech situation. You can also get information about their ethnic groups by observing them, if some of them display ethnic loyalty through dressing; but not many people often do this. Therefore, observation may not be reliable here. You can also ask the person who has invited you to give the speech some information about the likely audience.

The formal method of gathering demographic information deploys mainly questionnaire. This questionnaire should be brief but it must address what you need. It should be administered before you begin to write the speech. Below is a sample:

Name: (optional) _____

Sex: Male Female

Age: _____

Educational qualification: _____

Occupation: _____

Marital status: _____

State of origin: _____

Language(s) spoken: _____

Nationality: _____

Religion: _____

The two methods should be used because where one is inadequate, the other will complement it. The information gathered should be taken as a means to an end. This is because “inferences based on generalised information may lead to faulty conclusions” (Beebee & Beebee, 1994:72). For instance, the fact that an audience is made up of only Moslems does not mean that such an audience will not be interested in a topic discussing homosexuality.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

- i. What is audience?
- ii. Define audience-centredness.
- iii. Mention some of the things to note in demographic audience analysis.

Psychological Audience Analysis

The psychology of the audience is very crucial to speech writing and delivery. The audiences have different frames of mind because they are made up of people from different worlds of experience. This manifests in their disposition to a topic and to a speaker/writer. What interests A may not interest B; one man’s food is another man’s poison. To understand the psychology of the audience, Gregory (2002:82) suggests assessing the audience’s level of **interest, needs and desires** and **attitudes**.

Interest Level

In order to avoid making your speech boring to the audience, the following steps should be taken.

(i) Assess the interest of the audience in your topic: An average human being pays attention to topics that are of interest to him/her. For instance, some younger Nigerians are likely to be more interested in discourses around Hip-Hop music than those around *Apala* or *Juju* music. You can carry out interviews or surveys on whether the audience will be interested in your topic (Gregory, 2002:83).

(ii) Maintain interest throughout the speech: It is one thing to get the interest of the audience and stimulate it; it is another thing to maintain it. You can maintain the interest of the audience by using examples, visual aids and other illustrations. As much as possible “avoid getting bogged down with technical material that will bore the audience” (Gregory, 2001:83)

(iii) Create interest: While it is essential to discuss topics that are of interest to the audience, you may have occasions to discuss topics that the audiences are not interested in. In such a situation, you can create interest in such topics. “One of the best ways to do this is to relate the topic to the needs and desires of the audience (Gregory, 2002:83).

Needs and Desires

The psychologist Abraham Maslow (1954) has attempted presenting human needs hierarchically, as presented below:

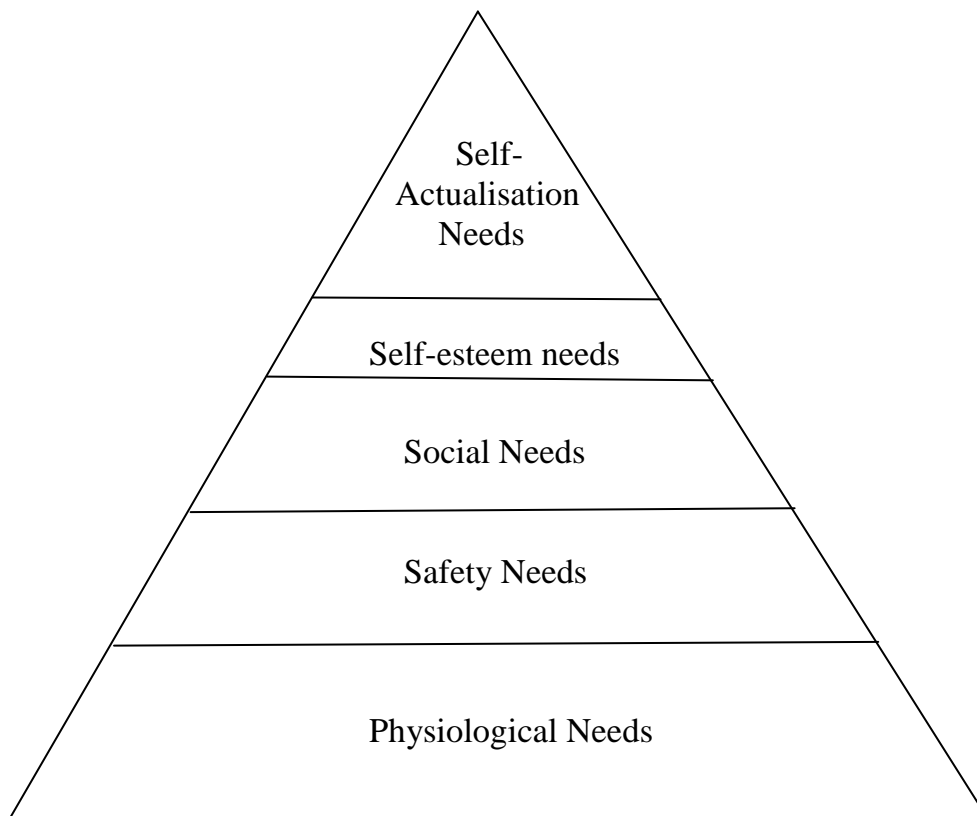


Fig 2: Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Human Needs (cf. Powers, 1993:67)

This pyramid indicates that the most basic need is at the base: physiological needs. The pyramid implies that most or many people are affected by this need. At the peak of the pyramid is self-actualisation; not many people get these needs met. A good speech should try to meet most of these needs. There are certain topics that deal with how to get food, clothing, and shelter. Such topics deal with physiological needs. Topics that treat safety precautions address safety needs. Topics that treat reaching peak of one’s career address self-actualisation needs. A single topic can also discuss ideas and points that relate to these needs. “The more needs and desires you can help listeners satisfy, the stronger your speech” (Gregory, 2002:85).

Generally, audiences are interested in the following, as stated by Powers (1993:68):

- What other people are doing and how they live their lives
- Things that improve their competence
- Things that give them a greater appreciation of commonplace things in their world, particular new insights into their everyday world
- The unusual and the extraordinary, such as adventure tales, you can include the mysterious, strange or unusual about your topic
- Something now.

Attitudes

Another important component of psychological audience analysis is attitudes. According to Beebee and Beebee (1994:72):

Attitudinal or psychographic audience analysis explores an audience's attitudes toward a topic, purpose, and speaker, while at the same time probing the underlying beliefs and values that might affect those attitudes.

Gregory (2002:83) avers that:

Attitudes are the emotional inclinations – the favorable or unfavorable predispositions that listeners bring to a speech. Each listener's attitudes are derived from a complex inner web of values, beliefs, experiences, and biases.

Beebee and Beebee (1994:72) distinguish among **attitudes**, **beliefs**, and **values**. They argue that an attitude focuses on an individual's like or dislikes; a belief is "the way an individual structures reality to determine what is true and false"; while value refers to "enduring concepts of good and bad, right and wrong".

Attitude towards the Writer/Speaker

The reader/writer may have either a positive or a negative attitude toward the writer/speaker. Each attitude is informed by different reasons, such as:

- **Previous knowledge of the writer/speaker:** The audience based on what they have heard or read about the writer/speaker forms some biases. If a speaker/writer is known for using difficult language, the audience may lose interest in his speech. Conversely, a writer or speaker that has been known to always

make his/her audience feel at home is likely going to have the attention of the audience.

- **The name of the writer/speaker:** Some people have some stereotypes on some names. Certain names are easily identified with some tribes, religions, and ideologies. Without having had any previous contact with the writer/speaker, some people would have already formed some attitudes on the writer/speaker based on this criterion.
- **Spontaneous and unwarranted views:** Some people just develop some attitudes, love or hate, toward people without any particular obvious reasons
- **Appearance:** This affects only speakers. The way the speaker appears during speech presentation may influence the attitude of the audience.

If the attitude of the audience to the speaker/writer is negative because they feel that he/she is unqualified to speak on a particular subject, the person introducing the speaker (in case of delivery) could present his/her credentials and expertise before the audience. The writer/speaker can establish his/her own credibility at the beginning of the speech, by mentioning the related books he/she has read or the people he/she has interviewed on the topic. "This is not bragging; it is simply a way to let the audience know that your information is based on solid research" (Gregory, 2002:84).

Attitude toward the Goal

There are three main attitudes toward the goal: **favourable**, **unfavourable** and **neutral**. There are ways a speaker/writer should react to each attitude. If the audience shows a favourable attitude, you need to reinforce their positive views and even motivate them to take necessary actions. If their attitude is unfavourable, you should attempt to buy them over to your side or bring them close to you. If they are neutral/apathetic, try to win them over to your side (Gregory, 2002:83-84).

There is some link between the attitude of the audience to the speaker/writer and their attitude towards the goals: one could affect the other. Beebee and Beebee (1994:73) capture it thus:

An audience's positive attitude toward you as a speaker can overcome negative or apathetic attitudes they may have toward your topic or purposes. If your analysis reveals that your audience does not recognize you as an authority on your subject, you will need to build your credibility into the speech.

Attitude toward the occasion

Each occasion has some expectations attached to it. If the audience expects to hear motivational speech but they are given a sermon, they will be disappointed. This affects their attitude toward the speaker. Subsequent speech occasions involving such a person may be shunned. A good speechwriter should try to meet the expectations of the audience concerning the occasion.

Information on the attitudes of the audience can be got by asking people who are familiar with the audience. This can also be got from the person who invited you to give a speech (Beebee & Beebee, 1994:74).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

- i. Mention the forms attitude could take in relation to speech.
- ii. Define attitude.
- iii. What are the three major points to consider while doing psychological audience analysis?

3.3 Environmental/Situational Analysis

Environmental/situational audience analysis refers to that analysis which "focuses on situational factors such as the size of the audience, the physical setting for the speech, and the disposition of the audience toward the topic, the speaker, and the occasion." This implies that this analysis also involves doing some attitudinal analysis. Since the aspect of attitudes has been discussed earlier, in this section, we shall concentrate mainly on the other aspects of situational analysis.

Size

You need to have some idea of the size of your audience. If the audience is expected to be 1000 people but you have 100 people in mind, in the case of delivery, you might be thrown off the balance initially because the kind of mind frame needed for each audience differs. Even in writing, the size of the audience could influence the choice of the linguistic items and visual aids to be used.

Time limit

It is not common to find speakers who keep to the time scheduled for a speech. Some speakers elongate their speeches unnecessarily. As much as possible, get information on the time allotted to your speech. Make attempt not to exceed the time limit. There is even greater reward in finishing your speech before the specified time. In some situations, you may have to adjust your speech to suit the prevalent situation. If you are not the only speaker, consider the other speakers and the audience. If you are the first to speak among the speakers do not take undue advantage of the privilege and eat into the time of the other speakers. If you are the last speaker, sample the attitude of the audience. If you notice that they are fagged out, try to summarise your speech. The fact that you do not have time to explain all your points does not mean that they will not enjoy you. Most people often value speakers who are time conscious and considerate.

There are some steps you need to take to keep to time when delivering your speech.

- Consider the time limit while writing your speech.
- Rehearse the speech after writing it.
- Cut out the excess.
- Leave out some time for unforeseen contingencies.

If you appear to be a garrulous speaker, Gregory (2002:86) suggests that you follow the wise speech making formula of President Franklin D. Roosevelt of the United States:

- Be sincere
- Be brief
- Be seated

Physical Setting

This also affects only the delivery aspect of the written speech. The seating arrangement may influence your delivery. If the venue is too small for the audience, it may result in rowdiness, and lack of concentration. You need to check the sitting arrangements and the position of the lectern for you to be sure that your audience can see you properly. (Lucas, 2001:107). Beebee and Beebee (1994:77) suggest that while preparing for a speaking assignment, you need to keep the following environmental questions in mind:

1. What are the physical arrangements for the speaking situation?
2. How will the audience seating be arranged?
3. How many people are expected to attend the speech?
4. Will I be expected to use a microphone?

5. Will I speak from a lectern?
6. Where will I appear on the program?
7. What is the room lighting like? Will the audience seating area be darkened beyond a lighted stage?
8. Will I be on a stage or a raised platform?
9. How close will I be to the audience?
10. Will I have adequate equipment for my visual aids?

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

- i. Define environmental audience analysis.
- ii. How best can environmental audience analysis be carried out?

4.0 CONCLUSION

You could now see that there is more to speech writing than what is seen as the output. Successful speeches are those that cater adequately for the audience. The writers of such speeches carried out thorough audience analysis, since the audience is at the centre of the speech. Any speech that does not cater for the context of the speech will definitely fail. To write any type of speech, audience analysis must be carried out before writing commences.

5.0 SUMMARY

The context of speech has been the focus of this unit. This has been examined subsumed under audience analysis. The three major ways of approaching audience analysis have been critically examined. These are demography, psychology, and environment/situation.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. How does Maslow's hierarchy of needs relate to speech writing?
- ii. Discuss how demographic audience analysis aid speech writing?
- iii. What are the aspects of attitude that should attract the attention of a speech-writer?
- iv. Explain the role of the environment in speech writing.
- v. How can gender consideration affect speech?
- vi. What are the contributions of need and desires to a speech?
- vii. To what extent does religion influence speech?

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