

NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

COURSE CODE :BED 214

**COURSE TITLE: INTERPERSONAL
COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

**COURSE
GUIDE****BED 214****INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

Course Writer	Clara U. B. Agbara University of Abuja Abuja
Course Developer	Inegbedion, Juliet O. National Open University of Nigeria
Course Editor	Prof. Mike Okenimkpe University of Lagos Lagos
Course Coordinator	Inegbedion, Juliet O. National Open University of Nigeria

**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

National Open University of Nigeria
Headquarters
14/16 Ahmadu Bello Way
Victoria Island
Lagos

Abuja Office
No. 5 Dar es Salaam Street
Off Aminu Kano Crescent
Wuse II, Abuja
Nigeria

e-mail: centralinfo@nou.edu.ng

URL: www.nou.edu.ng

Published by
National Open University of Nigeria

Printed 2009

ISBN: 978-058-379-3

All Rights Reserved

CONTENTS	PAGE
Introduction	1
Course Aims	1
Course Objectives	1
Working through this Course.....	2
Course Materials	2
Study Units	2
Textbooks and References	3
Assessment	3
Tutor-Marked Assignment	3
Final Examination and Grading	4
Course Marking Scheme	4
Course Overview/Presentation Schedule	4
Getting the Most from this Course	5
Facilitators/Tutors and Tutorials	5
Summary	5

Introduction

BED 214: INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS is a two credit course. It is available for students of Business Education programme.

The course consists of sixteen units divided into three modules, and involves oral, written and non-verbal communication. In addition to these, there are units on grammar and vocabulary and on principles and forms of written documents. The material has been prepared to suit first year undergraduates who generally need intensive exposure to forms and principles of effective and efficient communication. The intention is to make the art of communication easy and efficient, and to lay a good foundation for interpersonal and group communication.

A proper understanding of forms of communication skills and the acquisition of techniques of using them is a good starting point in laying the foundation for a career in business education

This course guide tells you in brief what the course is about, the material presented in it and how to make the best use of the material. It guides you as to the time you need to devote to each unit of the course so as to complete it.

Course Aims

The course aims is to acquaint you with the basic concepts and forms of communication as well as exposing you to the rudiments of interaction, which should be characterized by clarity and free from incoherence and ambiguity. This will be achieved by:

- i. introducing you to the basic principles of interpersonal communication;
- ii. showing you the procedure for writing effective documents;
- iii. showing you how faulty sentences can hinder effective communication;
- iv. exposing you to the techniques of effective participation at meetings and interviews, and
- v. introducing you to some possible barriers to effective communication and the solutions.

Course Objectives

To achieve the aims set out above, overall objectives are set for the course. Each unit also has specific objectives. The unit objectives are stated at the beginning of a unit. You stand to gain from reading them before working through the unit and after doing so.

The over all objectives of the course will require that on successful completion of the course, you should be able to:

- i. identify ways to achieve clarity in communication;
- ii. recognize the elements of effective communication;
- iii. explain types of sentences, clauses and phrases;
- iv. describe some features of efficient and effective communication;
- v. identify forms of communication;
- vi. construct English sentences free from grammatical errors;
- vii. choose appropriate channels for your information;
- viii. discuss the principles of producing effective written documents;
- ix. use the telephone as a tool of communication effectively;
- x. use appropriate communication styles which will suit the message, audience and purpose.

Working through this Course

To complete this course, you are required to study the units, study all the recommended books and do the personal assignments. Each unit has exercises for self assessment. You will be required to do some assignments at certain points in the course for the purpose of assessment. The course should take you about 16 weeks to complete.

The components of the course are listed below, together with all that you have to do and how you should allocate your time.

Course Materials

The major components of the course are:

1. The course guide.
2. The study units.
3. Textbooks
4. Assignment file.
5. Presentation schedule.

Study Units

The study units in this course are as follows:

Module 1

Unit 1	Vocabulary
Unit 2	Words Grouping
Unit 3	The English Sentence
Unit 4	Tense, Aspect and Agreement
Unit 5	Constructing English Sentences free from Grammatical Errors

Module 2

Unit 1	The Basics of Good Interpersonal Communication
Unit 2	Oral Reports
Unit 3	Meetings and Interviews
Unit 4	Using the Telephone Effectively
Unit 5	Nonverbal Communication

Module 3

Unit 1	The Writing Process I
Unit 2	The Writing Process II
Unit 3	The Paragraph -An Overview
Unit 4	Correspondence
Unit 5	Report Writing
Unit 6	Writing Minutes, Summaries and Paraphrases

The first five units concentrate on the study of grammar and lexis. The next five focus attention on the study of oral and non-verbal communication. The last six emphasize the process of writing documents.

Textbooks and References

At the end of each unit, some published books are listed as references from which information in the unit may have been derived, or as sources from which you can look for more information on the topic of the unit. You can also consult any good textbook which discusses the topic you are studying.

Assessment

There are two parts of the assessment on the course. There are tutor marked assignments and the written examination.

You will sit for an examination at the end of the course.

Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)

At the end of each unit, there is a TMA which you should attempt to do. In attempting the TMA, you are expected to apply all the information, knowledge and techniques you have acquired in this course. Your tutor will tell you the number of TMAs to be submitted.

Final Examination and Grading

The final examination will be a test of three hours. All areas of the course will be examined. Find time to read the unit allover before your examination. All aspects of the course will be assessed.

Course Marking Scheme

The overall score for the course is 100%. This is divided into 30% for TMAs and 70% for the examination. You are expected to pass both the TMA and the examination.

Course Overview and Presentation Schedule

Unit	Title of Work	Weeks of Activity	Assessment (End of Unit)
	Course Guide	1	
Module 1			
1	Vocabulary	1	Assignment 1
2	Words Grouping	1	Assignment 2
3	The English Sentence	1	Assignment 3
4	Tense, Aspect and Agreement	1	Assignment 4
5	Constructing English Sentences free from Grammatical Errors	1	Assignment 5
Module 2			
1	The Basics of Good Interpersonal Communication	1	Assignment 1
2	Oral Reports	1	Assignment 2
3	Meetings and Interviews	1	Assignment 3
4	Using the Telephone Effectively	1	Assignment 4
5	Nonverbal Communication	1	Assignment 5
Module 3			
1	The Writing Process I	1	Assignment 1
2	The Writing Process II	1	Assignment 2
3	The Paragraph -An Overview	1	Assignment 3
4	Correspondence	1	Assignment 4
5	Report Writing	1	Assignment 5
6	Writing Minutes, Summaries and Paraphrases	1	Assignment 3
	Revision	1	
	Examination	1	
	Total	18	

Getting the Most from this Course

The units play the role of the lecturer. You therefore need to take them seriously. The exercises therein are designed to help you assess yourself while studying. Do not neglect them.

All the units adopt the same format. The first item is the introduction, while the next tells you what is in the unit. The objective comes next. The objectives help you to know what you are to derive from each unit. Your chance of passing this course will be enhanced if you diligently read each unit and do the assignments.

This is a course in English communication. You are expected to interact with the texts in the reading list and practise writing and the other techniques discussed in the text.

The following strategies will help you in this course:

1. Commit yourself to writing your self-assessment exercises;
2. Reviewing the objectives for each unit after completing it to assess yourself on the basis of the objectives;
3. Not waiting until you receive back the assignment you have submitted to your tutor before you move on to the next unit;
4. Preparing yourself for the final examination after completing the last unit.

Facilitators/Tutor and Tutorials

There are eight (8) tutorials sessions provided in support of this course. These tutorials will enable you to clarify some difficulties you may encounter in the course of your study. Find out the time, date and venue from your study centre.

Your tutor will assess and comment on your TMAs. Your tutor is there to assist and guide you in your study. Ask your tutor for any academic assistance needed in this course.

Summary

BED 214: (Interpersonal Communication Skills) is an English course. You require a lot of practice in order to achieve the aims and objectives of the course. The course introduces you to the fundamentals of communication. Once you have completed this course you will be fully equipped with the basic knowledge, principles techniques and skills for effective and efficient communication.

I wish you success in the course.

BED214: INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

MODULE 1**UNIT 1: VOCABULARY****1.0 INTRODUCTION**

To be a good communicator, you need to possess a wide range of English vocabulary which will enable you to be a master and competent user of the English language. In the unit, you will be exposed to the importance of vocabulary in effective communication. Definition, type, and nature of vocabulary will be examined in this unit.

1.1 Objectives

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

- (i) define the term vocabulary;
- (ii) identify types of vocabulary. and
- (iii) explain the nature of vocabulary.

1.2 MAIN CONTENT.**1.2.1 Definition of Vocabulary**

According to *The Webster's Dictionary*, “vocabulary” refers to the totality of words at a person’s command, or the stock of words used in a particular work or branch of a subject.

“Vocabulary” also implies all the words or the totality of words of a language.

On the basis of these definitions, we have vocabulary of medicine, banking, politics, etc. We also have English, French, Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba, Bini, Afemaih, Isoko, Ijew, Tiv, etc vocabularies. We can similarly refer to an individual’s vocabulary. For instance, you can say that *Bola’s vocabulary is wide or limited* on the basis of her knowledge and use of words. Vocabulary simply implies complete sets of words in a particular language known and used by an individual.

1.2.2 The Importance of Vocabulary

Your ability to speak, write and listen effectively in the English Language or in any other language depends on your vocabulary level. If you have a large vocabulary of English you will be a competent user of the language. Choosing the right word to express yourself and giving minute

details where and when necessary, in addition to creating a clear image, can only be achieved when you develop and expand your vocabulary.

Therefore, it is important that you develop a wide vocabulary. To achieve this, you need to do the following things:

- Read widely.
- Consult the dictionary when necessary.
- Keep a record of new words you encounter and endeavour to use them correctly.
- Ensure that you find out if the new word has synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, homophones and homographs. This will assist you in the usage of the word.

SELF – ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (SAE)

(1) What do you understand by the term ‘vocabulary?’

(2) Get any newspaper or magazine of your choice, read the editorial or any article of

interest to you. Pick out all the new words and write them down. Then check for the meanings from a dictionary. Ensure that you make use of most, if not all of the new

words during your interaction with other people.

1.2.3 Types of Vocabulary

The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary identifies two types of vocabulary-

active and passive vocabulary. Active vocabulary are words which you

know the spellings, meanings of and can use correctly, orally or in writing.

In other words, you are very familiar with such words and they do not create any problem for you.

Passive vocabulary: refers to words which you are partially familiar with

but do not make constant use of. You may guess the meanings and uses

of such words. Passive vocabulary usually creates confusions for you and may

render your communication ineffective. You are advised to ensure that

your passive vocabulary becomes active by checking the dictionary

for the meaning and usage of the words; then, and make use of the words whenever opportunities arise.

1.2.4. The Nature of the English Word

“Vocabulary” refers to the totality of words in a language. Therefore, it is essential that we examine how certain English words behave. Every English word conjures a conception or an image in the mind of both the encoder(sender or writer) and the decoder (hearer or reader). However, there are some words, which have more than one concept or image. Similarly, every English word has its own graphic representation (spelling). On the basis of these facts, English words can be grouped into: *antonyms*, *homonyms*, *synonyms*, *homographs*, and *homophone*.

- Antonyms: Antonyms are pairs of words that are contrary in meaning to each other. They are the opposites of other, for example:

Big	-	small
Good	-	bad
Eject	-	retain
Clever	-	dull
Beautiful	-	ugly
Cold	-	hot
Young	-	old
Admit	-	refuse

Antonyms can also be formed through the use of *prefixes* (addition to the beginnings of words) for example:

Kind	-	<u>un</u> kind
Intelligent	-	<u>un</u> intelligent
Sane	-	<u>in</u> sane
Discipline	-	<u>in</u> discipline
Possible	-	<u>im</u> possible
Legal	-	<u>il</u> legal
Responsible	-	<u>ir</u> responsible
Relevant	-	<u>ir</u> relevant

The underlined are prefixes

SAE: write down more antonyms.

- ii. Synonyms: These are pairs of words spelt and pronounced differently but have similar meanings, for example:

Absurd	-	foolish, irrational
Abundant	-	bountiful, plentiful
Adjacent	-	beside, adjoining
Beautiful	-	attractive, charming
Border	-	edge, margin
Block	-	barricade, obstruct
Centre	-	core, focus
Change	-	alteration, innovation
Easy	-	effortless, simple
Error	-	blunder, fault.
Fall	-	collapse, drop
Goods	-	belongings
Fulfill	-	accomplish, complete.

The list is endless. Knowing the synonyms of a word will enlarge your vocabulary. However, care must be taken to use words and their synonyms correctly.

SAE:

Read the following sentences and re-write any of them, which sound clumsy.

1. The building collapsed last week and the child dropped from the sixth floor.
2. The public welcomed the innovation but the rich were not pleased with the change.
3. She is an easy going person and her husband is generous.

- iii. Homonyms: Homonyms refer to a set of two words with the same spelling and

pronunciation but are different in meaning; in other word it is

a single word which conjures different meanings. For example:

Spring: (i) One of the four seasons of the year in Europe

(ii) A place where water comes naturally to the surface

(iii) Twisted metal which can be pushed or pressed but tends to returns
to its original position when released.

Case: (i) A container for storing things, e.g., a jewelry case

(ii) A particular situation, as in:

In most cases, rich people want to be recognized.

(iii) An issue which is being officially investigated by the police
or is in the court, as in:

Judgments has been passed on the robbery case of last week

Firm: (i) A business or organization, as in an engineering firm.

(ii) To be strong or steady and not likely to change.

Mind: (i) Human memory or thought.

(ii) To take care of, to be in charge of or to attend to, as in:

Mind your work.

Blow: (i) To send a stream of air from the mouth into an instrument or a flame.

(ii) A hard and sudden hit with the hand or weapon.

Bear: (i) A wild mammal with long air.

(ii) To accept and deal with an unpleasant issue, as in:

She bears the sickness cheerfully.

Date: (i) Time shown by day, month and year.

- (ii) A small brown sweet fruit.

Iv Homographs: Homographs are pairs of words with the same spelling but different meanings and pronunciation. For example:

Minutes: (i) Time interval – the sixth part of an hour.

(ii) Very little or tiny

Bow: (i) Instrument used for shooting arrows.

(ii) To bend the upper part of the body forward.

Read: (i) The past tense of read.

(ii) To read a book – the present tense.

Live: (i) To have one's apartment or abode in a particular area, as in:

They live in Lagos.

(ii) Not recorded – a live broadcast of a performance.

V Homophones: These are pairs of words that have different spellings and meanings but are pronounced in the same way. For example:

Some and Sum

Meat and meet

Week and Weak

Son and Sun

Piece and Peace

Soul and Sole

Quay and Key

Two and To

1.3 Conclusion.

Having been exposed to the importance of vocabulary as a means of being an effective communicator, you should start now to widen the scope of your vocabulary. You are a good communicator if you are able to vary your vocabulary to suit any situation.

1.4 Summary.

In this unit, you have studied the meaning, types and nature of vocabulary.

Vocabulary simply means all the words of a language, as well as the sets of words of a language known and used by you. Words are grouped into synonyms, antonyms homonyms, homophones and homographs.

1.5 Tutor-marked-Assignment

(1) Define the term 'vocabulary'. Illustrate your answer with examples.

(2) Differentiate between antonyms and synonyms

(3) Write out the synonyms and antonyms of the following:

Fact, Smart, Illusion, Persuade, Advance.

(4) Use the following words in sentences to show that they are homonyms.

Bank, Ear, Close, Fit, Grand

1.6 Reference.

Ezenwanebe, Osita, McAbraham-Inejoh, Nath and Modigie, Clara B. (2000):

Communicative English for Tertiary Institutions. Lagos:

Concept Publications

Modigie, Clara U.B. (2000): *Developing writing Skills*. Lagos:

Concept Publications.

Quirk, Randolph et al. (1972): *A Grammar of Contemporary English*.

London: Longman.

Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary. 6th ed.

The New Webster's Dictionary of the English Language: International Ed.

MODULE 1 Unit 2: Words Groupings.**2.0 Introduction**

In unit 1, you learnt what vocabulary is and types and nature of vocabulary. By now you should have acquired more vocabulary.

In this unit we shall examine how words are classified into groups. This classification is based on the manner in which words function within group of words (sentence construction). Words, as you know, are tools for encoding or decoding ideas, feelings, opinions, etc

2.1 Objectives.

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

- (i) list the different parts of speech;
- (ii) distinguish between content and structural words, and
- (iii) identify and fix different words into their set.

2.2 Main Content

2.2.1 Parts of Speech.

English words are grouped according to the manner they are used in sentences. This grouping is referred to as parts of speech. There are eight parts of speech. These have been assigned the following names:

Name	Word examples.
Nouns:	Bose, house, boy, wind, iron, dog.
Verbs:	Come, go, run, drive, is, can, seem.
Adverbs:	Here, quietly, usually, now, daily, often.
Adjectives:	Bold, rich, long, old, beautiful, naughty.
Prepositions:	Oh, in, under, before, above, to.
Pronouns:	I, he, she, somebody, they, you, it.
Conjunctions:	And, or, but, because, neither, both.
Interjections:	Ah! oh! ouch! what!

These eight groups can be classified into two main sets: *Content* and *Structural Word*.

Content Words:

A good percentage of English words belong to this group. These words form the substance of the information you communicate to your listeners. The dictionary gives the meaning of each of these words and explains its usage. New content words can be created

whenever the need arises by using rules governing formation of English words.

Content words have four members: nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives.

Structural Words:

Structural words are limited in number and new ones are not created easily. They are words with little or no independent meaning. They provide the framework for content words. The dictionary explains their uses without giving them any specific meanings because they perform grammatical functions, not semantic (meaning related functions).

Structural words are made up of pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions and the interjection.

SELF- ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (SAE)

Write out thirty content words and twenty structural words. Check your dictionary for the meanings and functions of these words.

2.2.2 Nouns

A noun is a naming word. It is a very essential word. Almost every sentence you make has at least one noun or a substitute (pronoun). Nouns are used to name persons, animals, places, objects, substances, qualities, actions and measures.

Classifications

Nouns can be grouped into two major classes – *countable and uncountable* nouns.

Countable Nouns

Nouns that have singular and plural forms are referred to as countable nouns, example;

book	books
pen	pens
box	boxes
leaf	leaves

This group of nouns can be subdivided into *class (individual)* and *collective* nouns.

The class or individual countable nouns refer to those nouns whose singular forms refer to only *one item*, e.g.

girl	girls
brush	brushes
photograph	photographs
fly	flies
wolf	wolves
roof	roofs
tooth	teeth
criterion	criteria

Collective countable nouns are those nouns whose singular forms refer to *more than one item*, e.g.

committee

team

army

family

congregation, etc.

Collective countable nouns are subdivided into :

Specific: this group of nouns has singular and plural forms. The singular forms refer to a group made up of individuals but the group functions as one entity, e.g. *army; flock (of birds); hive (of bees); swarm (of fish); couple; audience; team*, etc. sometimes, the individual that makes up the group acts separately.

Generic: this set of nouns do not have singulars, they exist only in plural forms, e.g. *the rich; the youth; the laity; the clergy; the nobility; the aristocracy; the mass; the religious*, etc.

Unique: this group of nouns, although singular, plural verbs may be used when necessary, e.g. *the Senate; the Congress; the Vatican; the African Union*, etc.

Uncountable Nouns

These are nouns that can not be counted. They have only the singular forms and are subdivided into: proper, mass, and abstract nouns.

Proper Nouns: These are *names of persons; places; rivers; institutions; firms*, e.g.

Persons: Bola; Phillip; Stephen; Ojo; Ada, etc

Rivers: River Niger; River Benue; Imo River, etc

Institutions: National Open University of Nigeria; Abia State Polytechnic, etc

Firms \ Organizations: Suntec Ventures; the Sun Newspaper, etc.

Mass Nouns: Mass nouns are *mostly substances*, e.g. iron; water; air; sand; wood; food; mud, etc

Abstract nouns: Abstract nouns are non- material *objects; ideas; qualities; thoughts*, e.g. happiness; love; honesty; anger; shadow; sleep; pleasures; logic, etc.

SAE:

Write out 10 more examples for the different class of nouns.

Bravo! Now cross – check your answers in the dictionary.

Functions of Nouns

Nouns occupy certain positions or slots in a sentence. These are:

(i) *Subject position:* This is whom or what you are talking about. Examples:

The manger has travelled to Auchi.

His decision was rather hash.

The underlined are the subjects in the sentences.

(ii) *Object position:* The object is that word which is affected by the action of the verb.

It can be persons, ideas, emotions, things, etc. Examples:

The secretary signed the letter.

The management sacked the officer.

The underlined are the objects of the sentences.

(iii) *Complement Position*: A noun is a complement. It acts as a direct reference to another noun in a sentence. Examples:

Mr. Abayo was the chairman of the group for many years.

The panel considered the foreigner to be the traitor.

The board considered his excuse a lie.

Ben and Adama are students.

(iv) *Modifier Position*: A noun is a modifier if it describes or qualifies another word.

Examples: The section head came late.

The office key is missing.

(v) *Apposition Position*: A noun is in apposition if it is used to describe another noun in order to make its meaning clearer. Examples:

Bisi, the secretary, has resigned.

The manager, a graduate of Ife, is a no-nonsense person.

2.2.3 Pronouns.

Pronouns are a small group of words in English. They are words used as substitutes for nouns to avoid monotony, unnecessary repetition and clumsy constructions.

Types of pronouns

There are seven categories of pronouns:

(i) *Personal pronouns*: These are used for persons and are divided into:

First person: the person speaking – *I, we, me, us*.

Second person: the person spoken to – *you*

Third person: the person being spoken about – *he, she, him,*

(ii) *Possessive pronouns*: These are used to denote ownership. They are *mine, ours, his, hers, its, theirs*.

(iii) *Demonstrative pronouns*: These are used to point out specific persons or things
Being talked about – *this, that, these, those*. Examples:

That is the new secretary.

This is our house.

Those are the girls

These are the oranges.

(iv) *Reflexive pronouns*: These are those pronouns ending in *-self* or *-selves*. They are often used for emphasis. Examples:

The chairman himself signed the letter.

The boss herself chaired the meeting.

His parents dressed him themselves.

You can do it yourself.

(v) *Indefinite pronouns* are used to refer to no specific person or thing. They are also called universal pronouns. Most of them end in *-body*,

-one, -thing. Examples:

Somebody has opened this box.

Anyone can apply for it.

Something is missing.

(vi) *Interrogative pronouns* are used to introduce questions. They are *who, whose, which, what, how*. Examples:

Who broke the glass?

When did you arrive?

Whose bag is that?

(Vii) *Relative pronouns*: These are used to introduce adjective or noun clauses. They

function both as conjunctions and as pronouns. They are: *who*, *whom*, *whose*, *which*, *that*, *what*, etc. Examples:

The secretary who went on leave has resumed work.

The girl who won the prize has travelled.

The car which was stolen has been found.

2.2.4 Verb.

English verbs are words used to express actions, *state or condition and occurrence*.

(i) *Action*: The lion killed a snake.

Frances washes the car always.

(ii) *State or condition*: Victor is intelligent.

His child looks sad.

(iii) *Occurrence*: The incident happened along Aba Road.

It rains heavily in June.

Classification.

Verbs can be classified in various ways:

- Lexical and Auxiliary verbs
- Finite and non-Finite verbs
- Transitive and Intransitive verbs

(ia) *Lexical Verbs*:

Lexical verbs refer to those verbs which function alone in a sentence.

Examples: Chioma teaches English.

Children like Cartoons.

They are also called *main verbs*.

(ib) *Auxiliary Verbs*:

Auxiliary verbs are verbs which usually do not function alone in sentences. They assist lexical verbs to indicate *voice, mood* and *tense*.

C They are also called *helping verbs*. Sometimes, they are technically called *copula* or *linking* verbs. In such instances, they function alone to indicate the condition of the subject or the person, place or thing in the sentence. Examples:

The children are playing outside.

The boy has gone to school.

-Classes of Auxiliary Verbs

There are two classes of auxiliary verbs: *primary auxiliary* and *modal auxiliary*.

Primary auxiliary are auxiliary verbs which sometimes function *alone* in sentence construction. Therefore, they behave like lexical verbs and have three members only – do, have, be.

Be - is a special verb because it has eight forms; namely

be, is, am, was, are, were, been, being.

Do - has five forms: do, does, did, doing, done,

Have - forms are Have, has, having, had.

Let us contrast the verbs in the in the following pairs of sentences:

1. Alaba is playing tennis.

Bola is early today.

2. The boys are going to the church.

The children are happy.

3. The Ijaws do build their houses with wood.

The Ajambans do their work conscientiously.

4. The children have slept.

The girls have nice taste.

Note that the verbs in the first sentences in each pair function as auxiliary – helping verbs, but in the second sentences, the verbs are used as main verbs.

Modal auxiliary verbs are verbs used to indicate conditions, such as

permission, possibility, ability, request, necessity, probability, etc. Examples:

Can, could, will, would, shall, should, may, might, must, ought to, used to, done.

Examples: You ought to be here by now.

I can dance better than you.

It may rain in the evening.

You should show interest in the family business.

(ii) Finite and non-finite verbs.

(a) Finite verbs are verbs that show tense distinctions (present and past tense).

They agree with their subjects in terms of number (singular and plural)

and persons (1st, 2nd, and 3rd.). Thus they are restricted to specific

subjects. Examples:

Subject	Verb	Object	Adverb	Description
Nkem	likes	isi-ewu.		Present tense and singular subject.
The children He	forget	their bags	in the car.	Past tense and ^t plural subject
	comes		early.	Present tense and 1 st person subject

They	arrived		late	Past tense and 3 rd person plural subject
------	---------	--	------	--

- (b) Non-finite verbs are verbs that do not show tense distinctions and they are not limited to specific subjects. That is, any form of subject can be used with them. Examples:

I wanted to stay back.

The children dislike sleeping in the afternoon.

I/ladies enjoy cooking food.

Having passed his SSCE, he wrote his Jamb examination.

Unimpressed with his actions, she broke up the friendship.

Based on the evidence, the verdict was appropriate.

- (iii) Transitive and intransitive verbs.

This class of verbs is based on whether or not the verbs will attract an object or a complement, and on the nature of other elements which the verb in a sentence requires.

- (a) Transitive verbs: require obligatory objects to complete the sense of the verb in the sentence, without the subject, the verb will be hanging. Examples:

Ade killed ___ ?

Bibi loves ___ ?

These two examples are incomplete sentences. We do not know what Ade killed, nor whom or what Bibi loves.

Therefore, they require objects.

verb object

Thus: Ade killed an elephant .

Bibi loves children.

Sometimes, transitive verbs may require two objects or *object* and *object complement*. Examples:

Subject	Verb	Object	Object	complement
Mary	built	a duplex	for her family.	
The children	gave	their mother	a gift.	
Philip	promised	Faith		a big treat.
He	declared	the ceremony		closed.

(b) Intransitive verb:

Unlike the transitive verb, the intransitive verb does not require an obligation object. This type of verb sometimes attracts an adverbial. Examples:

Subject	Verb	Adverb	Optional adverb
The girls	sing		beautifully.
John	smokes.		
He	smokes		a lot
Dogs	bark.		
Dogs	bark	whenever they sense danger.	
Uwa	has travelled	to Aba.	

Write out ten sentences and identify those of them that contain transitive and intransitive verbs. When you have completed the exercise, use your dictionary to check the accuracy of your use of the verbs.

Morphological forms of lexical verbs

Morphological forms of verbs indicate the various forms which English verbs assume to reflect *tense* and *aspect*. (Tense and aspect will be examined in later unit.) Most English verbs have five forms; namely:

- (i) Base form: dance, feel, come, go, cut, see
- (ii) -s form: dances, feels, comes, goes, cuts, sees
- (iii) -ed1 form: danced, felt, came, went, cut, saw
- (iv) -ing form: dancing, feeling, coming, going, cutting, seeing
- (v) -ed2 form: danced, felt, come, gone, cut, seen.

On the basis of these morphological forms, we have *regular* and *irregular* verbs.

The regular verbs form their *-ed1* and *-ed2* by a regular method – through

the addition of *-d*, *-t*, or *-ed* to the base form. The irregular verbs use various ways to form their *-ed1* and *ed2* forms.

Examples of regular verbs.

Base	-s form	-ed1	-ing	-ed2
Achieve achieved	achieves	achieved	achieving	
Arrive	arrives	arrived	arriving	arrived
Depart	departs	departed	departing	departed

Ask	BED 214 asks	asked	asking	COURSE GUIDE asked
Confirm	confirms	confirmed	confirming	
	confirmed			
Paint	paints	painted	painting	painted
Deal	deals	dealt	dealing	dealt
Weep	weeps	wept	weeping	
	wept			

Examples of Irregular verbs.

<i>Base</i>	<i>-S</i>	<i>-Ed1</i>	<i>-Ing</i>	<i>-Ed2</i>	
Knit	knits	knitted	knitting	knitted	
Put	puts	put	putting	put	
Burst	bursts	burst	bursting		
	burst				
Seek	seeks	sought	seeking	sought	
Find	finds	found	finding	found	
Hear	hears	heard	hearing	heard	
Grind	grinds	ground	grinding	ground	
Take	takes	took	taking		
	taken				
Drink	drinks	drank	drinking		
	drunk				

Functions of morphological forms*(i) Base form:*

The base form is used to indicate present time action. It is used with the first (1st) and second (2nd) person singular pronouns and with the first and third person plural pronouns, all functioning as subject.

Examples:

Subject	Verb	Object	Adverb	Description
I	like	rice.		1 st person singular
You	come		early always.	2 nd person
We	walk		to school on Fridays.	1 st person plural
They	laugh		always.	3 rd person plural

(ii) -s form:

The –s form is used to indicate present time action with the third person singular subject.

Examples:

Subject	Verb	Object	Adverb	Description
She	drives	the car	always.	3 rd person singular
He	takes	the children	to Mr. Biggs often.	3 rd person singular
Jennifer	cooks		whenever she is at home.	Singular subject
The dog	barks		every evening.	Singular subject

(iii) -ed1 form:

This form (written as -ed1) means simple past tense. It is used to indicate past action

with any type of subject – singular or plural, and with the 1st, 2nd, 3rd person pronouns(singular and plural).

Examples:

Subject	Verb	Object	Adverb	Complement	Description.
The thief	took	The gold watch	Last year.		
I	went		home early.		1 st person singular subject
We	arrived		late.		1st person plural subject
You	cooked	the meal	yesterday.		2 nd person singular subject
You all	left		before the closing time.		2 nd person plural subject
She \ he	washed	the clothes	before the rain started.		3 rd person singular subject
They	left		home early.		3 rd person plural subject

(iv)-ing form:

This and –ed2 are used to indicate the *aspect* of the verb. The -ing is used with any subject to describe an on going action (progressive or continuous). This form of the verb

is always assisted by the “be” form.

Examples:

She is cooking the food. (Present, on-going action)

Uche was washing the dishes. (Past, on-going action)

We / they / you are enjoying the movie. (Present on-going action)

The girls / Peter and Paul were sitting at the back. (Past on-going action)

(v) –ed2 form:

This is used to indicate action, which started and finished in the past before another action started. This is referred to as *perfective aspect*. The form is helped by the *have* form in sentence construction.

Examples:

He / she / it had finished the work. (Past perfective).

We / they / you have drunk the wine already. (Present perfective).

Faith / the girl has done her part well. (`` ``)

The villagers have stoned him to death. (`` ``)

To change to past perfect, change *have* or *has* to *had*.

Examples:

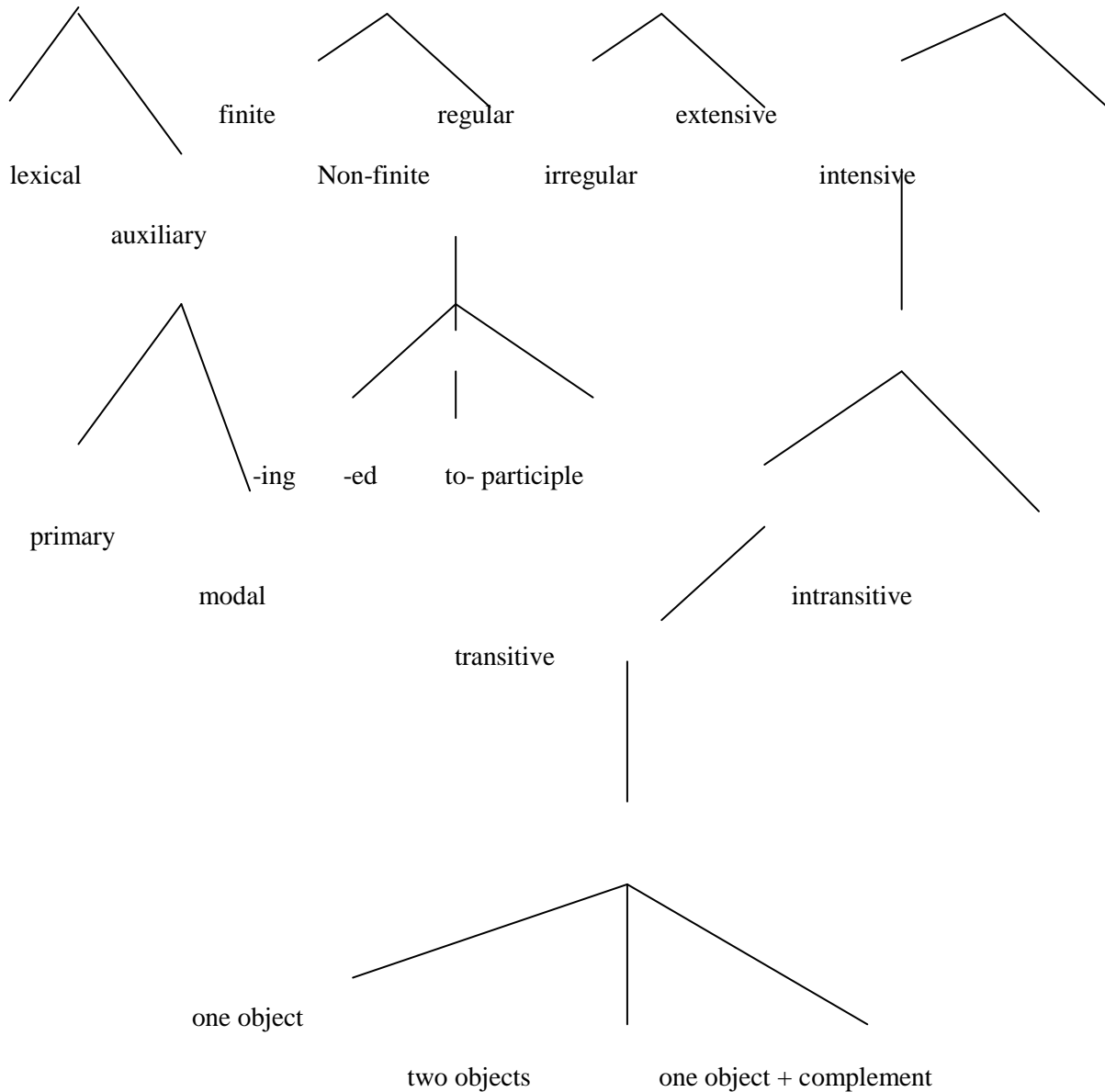
They had drunk the wine.

Faith had done her part very well.

The villagers had stoned him to death.

Below is a graphic representation of types of verbs:





2.2.5. Adjectives.

Adjectives are words used to qualify persons, place, things or ideas. They define,

describe, or tell us more about a Noun or Pronoun. In other words, they help to make the word they describe or define vivid and specific. They enlarge the meaning of the word. Adjectives play a vital role in communication because they aid the user to achieve specificity. Examples:

a <i>small</i> gift	a <i>tall</i> man
a <i>happy</i> person	a <i>clever</i> lady
an <i>honest</i> child	an <i>interesting</i> story

Classification of Adjectives

Adjectives are classified according to the different ways in which they add meanings to the Noun or Pronoun they qualify:

1. *Quality Adjectives*: These describe the attribute (quality) of the Noun or Pronoun they qualify:

a *green* house a *short* person
a *sweet* drink an intelligent boy
a *beautiful* child an *old* fashion

2. *Quantitative Adjectives*: These are use to specify the amount or number of the Noun or Pronoun they qualify. They are categorized into:

Cardinal numbers: *three* bottles, five girls, *ten* chairs, *sixty* students

Ordinal numbers: the *first* son, the *third* house, the *fifth* reason

Distributive: *every* man, *each* student, *few* people

3. *Interrogative Adjectives*: They are used to ask questions into to get specific information about the Noun or Pronoun:

Which book do you want?

How many students came late?

4. *Demonstrative Adjectives*: They are used to point out or identify the Noun or Pronoun they qualify. These group has only four members – this, that, these and those.

This book is mine. (singular)

That house is new. (singular)

These cars are new. (plural)

Those clothes are beautiful. (plural)

The proximity of the Noun or Pronoun to the speaker determines which of adjective to use. *This* and *these* are used when the Noun or Pronoun is close to the speaker, *that* and *those* are used for remote Noun or Pronoun.

5. *Possessive Adjectives*: These are used to denote ownership of the Noun or Pronoun

the qualify. *My books are in his bag.*

Our children are on holiday.

Their house is far.

Her name is poetic.

Comparison of Adjectives

Adjectives can be inflected to indicate the *degree* of the quality of the Noun or Pronoun they describe. Adjective comparison is done in three forms using three different methods;

1. Inflectional method: this is the addition of *-er*, *-est*, to the base or positive form.

Examples:

BASE	COMPARATIVE	SUPELATIVE
Deep	deeper	deepest
Fine	finer	finest
Bright	brighter	brightest
Angry	angrier	angriest

2. Non-inflectional method: this is the use of *more* or *most* instead of *-er* and *-est*.

Examples:

Difficult	more difficult	most difficult
Intelligent	more intelligent	most intelligent
Generous	more generous	most generous
Interesting	more interesting	most interesting

3. Irregular method: this is the use of new words for the comparative and superlative forms. Examples:

Good	better	best
Bad	worse	worst
Many/much	more	most
Little	less	least

From the examples above, you notice that there are three unique ways to realize adjectival comparisons. The *comparative* degree is used to compare two persons, ideas or things; *the superlative* is used between more than two persons, ideas or things.

It is important to know that each of the methods of comparison are used separately.

2.2.6 Adverbs

Adverbs are words that modify verbs, adjectives and adverbs. They answer the questions “when? How much? Why? How often? Examples;

The boss travelled yesterday. (when? – adverb of time)

The guard went home. (where? – adverb of place)

He went home happily (how? – adverb of manner)

She left early because it was about to rain. (why? – adverb of reason)

Now, let us examine how adverbs modify other words in the following sentences:

Ada sings *beautifully*. --- Modifying the verb ‘sing’.

Philip is *extremely* nice to people. --- Modifying the adjective ‘nice’.

The boy walks *rather* fast. --- Modifying the adverb ‘fast’.

The child spread the paint *all* over the floor. --- Modifying the preposition ‘over’.

She came around *just* because she needed money. --- Modifying the conjunction
‘because’.

Apart from giving additional information to sentences (as in the above examples), they are also used to join ideas in sentences. Examples:

Anyway, instead, then, likewise, also, furthermore, next etc.

Sometimes, you can use adverbs to express your attitude to what you are saying.

Examples:

Frankly, I do not like it.

Fortunately, the manger is present.

Relationship between Adverbs and Adjectives

Adverbs and Adjectives share some things in common:

- Most Adverbs are formed by the addition of the suffix -ly to some Adjectives:

beautiful - beautifully honest - honestly

slow - slowly joyful - joyfully

wise - wisely happy - happily

- There are some words that function as both Adverbs and Adjectives”

	Adverbs	Adjectives
Cowardly	Ojo behaved cowardly.	Ojo is a cowardly man.
Kindly	They were treated us kindly.	The guest performed a kindly action.
Daily	He comes to the office daily.	He has a daily task to perform.
Hourly	The drug is taken hourly.	It is an hourly drug.
Fast	Bola works fast.	Bola is a fast worker.
Late	He was late to the office.	The late man's wife is sick.
Direct	Aminu came in through direct admission.	Did you speak to him direct?

- Most Adverbs are formed by the addition of the suffix –ly to Adjectives:

Honest ---- honestly smart ---- smartly

Slow ---- slowly happy --- happily

Frank ---- frankly quick ----quickly

Note that the position and usage of words determine their word grouping. Be careful when using some words

2.2.7 Prepositions

Prepositions express the relationship between nouns and other items in a sentence. Examples:

(i) The books *on* the table are mine.

(ii) The child put the oranges *in* the basket.

In sentence (i), the Preposition *on* functions like an adjective, in that it identifies the books being talked about, showing how they relate to the table; thus describing the books.

In sentence (ii), *in* functions like an adverb by modifying the verb *put* – identifying where the child put the oranges ‘in’ not beside or under the basket. The Preposition, *in*, shows the relationship between the Verb – *put* and the Noun – *basket*.

Other types of relationship include place, duration, direction, time, position, movement, etc. Examples:

The meeting started at 10:00pm. (Precise time)

The meeting started on time. (Not late but at the time assigned)

She was in the office. (An enclosure of place)

He knocked on the door. (Place)

Other common Prepositions are: of, up above, below, beyond, beside behind, around, against, among, into, until, within, over.

Relationship between Adverbs and Prepositions

Some words function both as Adverbs and Preposition. Care must be taken not to confuse adverbial and prepositional function when using such words. Examples:

	Adverbs	Prepositions
Behind	Some students stayed behind to have extra lesson.	The bag is behind the chair.
After	He was here after.	They are after defaulters
Along	The girl came along to congratulate you.	The trees along the road provide shade.
Across	The culprit looked across at his accusers.	His friends are scattered across the state.

Other words in this group include: before, above, about, around, underneath, under, out, off, since, besides, between.

2.2.8. Conjunctions.

These are words used for joining similar words, e.g. Nouns with Nouns and group of words of the same structure, e.g. phrases with phrases, clauses with clauses and sentences with sentences. Examples:

Boys *and* girls

A big fat hen *or* a small lean goat

She arrived early *because* her house is near by.

We saw it *and* liked it.

Kinds of Conjunctions

Basically, there are two kinds, namely, coordinating conjunctions (coordinators) and subordinating conjunctions (subordinators).

(i) Subordinator: are used to join clauses with clauses to produce complex

sentences. In a complex sentence, one clause is made to depend on the other clause or if there are more than two clauses, other clauses depend on one clause in the structure.

Examples:

(a) He left the house *when* I was sleeping.

Clauses joined: (i) He left the house

(ii) I was sleeping.

The clause - *when I was sleeping* depends on *He left the house*.

(b) She arrived early *because* her house is near by.

Clauses joined: (i) She arrived early.

(ii) Her house is near by.

The clause - *because her house is near by* depends on *She arrived early*.

Subordinating conjunctions are very many. Some of them are because, so that, as, if,

like, sure, that, while, until, as much as, although, in order that, unless, when,

what, as soon as, etc.

(ii) Coordinators: are used to join words, phrases, main clauses and sentences that are of

equal strength. They are not too many in English; they include but, or, and,

either...or, neither...nor, both...and, not only... but also. Let us see how they

function in sentences:

- (a) She dislikes rice *and* beans. (Joining Nouns)

I shall travel to London *or* Italy. `` ``

She swims *and* dances very well. (Joining Verbs)

- (b) The children enjoy playing on the field *or* watching cartoons in doors.

(Joining clauses)

The boys complained to their parents *but* they did not believe them.

(Joining sentences)

- (c) *Either* she bakes bread *or* makes dresses. (Joining two sentences)

Neither the children *nor* their teachers have arrived. (Joining phrases)

Both the children *and* their parents were not allowed in. (Joining phrases)

- (d) Her children are *not only* beautiful *but also* intelligent. (Joining Adjectives)

She did *not only* graduate early *but also* (she) married very young.

(Joining two sentences)

Note that coordinating conjunctions join single words, group of words, and sentences of the same structure while subordinating conjunctions join only clauses or sentences.

2.2.9. Interjections.

These are sounds used to express feelings of joy, excitement, anger, surprise, disgust as well as to express emotional states. Interjections have no grammatical importance and as such may not be required in your written communication. Words used as interjection include Oh! Alas! Ah! Ha! Hem! Pooh! Hi!

Examples in sentences:

- (i) Oh! You missed your flight.
- (ii) Ah! You came at last.
- (iii) No! She lost the pregnancy.
- (iv) Hurrah! She gave birth to a bouncing baby boy.

2.3. Conclusion.

You have been intimated with the eight parts of speech in English: nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections. These are building blocks of your communication. Endeavor to know the different parts, their members and functions, so that you can use them correctly.

2.4. Summary.

In this unit, you have studied the eight parts of speech. These eight parts can be divided into content and structural words. Content words embody the substance of the information you wish to convey in a sentence, while structural words provide the framework of the sentences.

2.5 Tutor-marked assignment

- (1) What do you understand by the expression *parts of speech*?
- (2) Write out ten content words and twenty structural words.
- (3) Write out five types of pronouns. Then list three examples of each type.
- (5) Write out twelve sentences containing transitive and intransitive verbs.

2.6. References.

Agbara, Clara U.B. (2005): *Elements of English Grammar*. Lagos: concept Publications.

Ezenwanebe, Osita et al (2000): *Communication English for Tertiary Institutions*.

Lagos: Concept Publications.

McAbraham-Inajoh, Nath and Mangrwant, Solomon Elisha (2000): *Effective Business*

Communication – An Introductory Text Lagos: Don-Vinton Limited.

Okenimkpe, Michael N. (2005): *Practical Communication for Business and Study*.

Volume 1. Lagos: Management Science Publications Ltd.

Quirk, Radolph et al (1972): *A Grammar of Contemporary English*. London:

MODULE 1, UNIT 3: THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

3.0 Introduction

In the previous unit, you learnt about parts of speech. Can you recall the parts, as well as their members? In the last unit, we noted that words are the building blocks of communication. Words are brought together to produce sentences. This unit is very crucial to you because the sentences you form must convey clear and straightforward ideas, and they should be free from grammatical errors. Therefore, this unit introduces you to the larger unit (sentences) in communication. You need to understand how sentences work in order for you to be able to create clear and fluent sentences.

3.1 Objectives.

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

- (i) define a sentence, clause and phrase;
- (ii) identify parts or elements of a sentence;
- (iii) describe different types of sentences, and
- (iv) differentiate between *phrase*, *clause* and *sentence*.

3.2 Content

3.2.1 Definition of the Sentence

A sentence is a statement which conveys a complete idea or piece of information. It is an independent entity which must not be part of another grammatical construction or be appended to such another construction. Sentences are made up of words that are grammatically related.

Examples:

- (i) The naughty staff member who felt she was untouchable, was demoted by the board members.
- (ii) The secretary arrived early.
- (iii) She is beautiful.
- (iv) He wept.

These examples show that it is not the number of words that determines whether a group of words is a sentence or not. The number of words in sentences varies. What is important is that it must convey a full piece of information. A pause marks the end of a sentence when spoken, while a full stop or a period is used when the sentence is written.

3.2.2 Parts of a sentence.

Generally, a sentence can be divided into two parts: *subject* and *predicate*. The subject of a sentence tells you the actor of the sentence. It is usually a noun, pronoun or a noun equivalent in the form of a phrase or clause.

Examples:

- (i) The manager works late everyday,
- (ii) New guards are often on shift duty.
- (iii) He was appointed the acting manager.
- (iv) The newly appointed manager has travelled out of town.
- (v) Our boss gave each of us a drink.
- (vi) The transport supervisor who was retired last year has built a duplex.

The predicate tells you something about the subject. The predicate is made up of the verb, which is usually the first element after the subject, and other words, which help to expatiate the verb.

Looking at our illustration, you notice that in example:

“the manager “ is the subject, while
the predicate is “ works late every day.”

Now, can you identify the subjects and predicates of examples (ii) – (vi). Bravo!

You notice that the predicate has more than one word. This shows that the predicate has its own members. Members of the predicate include the *verb*, which is *obligatory* and must always be present. The others, which are optional, are *object*, *adverb*, or *complement*. These do not have to be present together in a sentence.

Example:

SUBJECT	PREDICATE			
	Verb	Object	Adverb	Complement
The sales girl	stole	the money.		
The new manager	was impressed.			
The sales girl	is			intelligent.
The new manager	comes		to the office early .	

The object is that word which receives the action of the verb either negatively or positively. In sentence (1) above, the action of stealing is performed on money; hence money is the object. Subsequent sentences (ii-iv) do not have objects because the nature of the verb is such that it does not require an object. (Remember transitive and intransitive verbs discussed in unit 2. Please go back to unit 2 if you are not sure)

Depending on the nature of the verb in the sentence, it is possible to have two objects in a sentence; similarly, you can have an object plus a complement or an adverb.

Examples:

Subject	Verb	Object	Object	Complement	Adverb
i. The management	bought	every manager	a car.		
ii. The staff	gave	the director	a parting gift.		
iii. The panel	considered	his excuses		unrealistic.	
iv. The boss	painted	his official car		red.	
v The committee	appointed	Francis		the head.	
vi. The board of directors	ended	their meeting			last night.
vii The secretary	dusted	the table			quickly.

You find two objects in examples (i) and (ii) - direct and indirect object. The direct object is the element which receives or is affected by the action of the verb.

Thus:

The staff gave ----- what? A gift.

The management bought ----- what? A car.

Therefore, 'a gift' and "a car" are the direct objects in the sentences. Now, what happened to the direct object - the car and the gift? These went to another entity in the sentence - 'director and every manager' which are referred to as indirect objects. They

are indirect objects because they share in the action of the verbs indirectly.

Sentences (iii) – (v) contain one object and complement each.

The complements do not share in the actions of the verbs but tell us more about the objects. They refer back to the objects. Hence, parts of the sentences can be rewritten to:

iii) ----- his excuses are unrealistic

iv) ---- his official car is red.

v) ----- Francis is the head

A complement is usually a noun or an adjective or their substitutes

Sentences (vi) and (vii) contain object and adverb. Note that if these adverbs are removed from the construction, the information is still complete. However, when you wish to give a vivid picture of the situation, then, you will include the adverb. (Sometimes, however, without an adverb, the information may not be complete or direct). ‘...last night’ and

‘quickly’ in sentences (vi) and (vii) tell us about the time and manner of the verbs, respectively.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (SAE)

Construct four sets of sentences containing an object plus an object, a complement or an adverb.

The adverb in a sentence tells you about the place, time, reason, manner, frequency, degree, etc, of the verb. Do you remember that adverbs answer the questions why, where,

when and How?

Thus,

The new manager comes to the office early,

contains:

adverb of place - office, and

adverb of time - early.

The complement is different from the adverb in that the complement has a co-reference with the subject or object. It does not answer adverbial questions of course. The

complement and adverb can co-occur in a sentence, as in:

He painted his car red last year.

Object Complement Adverb

The secretary is always well dressed.

Adverb Complement

3.2.3 Grammatical Units

In English, words are brought together to form grammatical units or groups with which you can communicate your ideas, feelings, opinions, etc; to your audience. There are three major grammatical units, i.e., *phrase*, *clause* and *sentence*. You have been exposed to how sentences are constructed in 3.2.2. If, for any reason, you have not understood properly how sentences work, please go back to the section, study it again and endeavour to construct as many sentences as possible.

Phrase

A phrase is a group of grammatically related words lacking a subject, a predicate, or both. Phrases function as a single part of speech, such as noun, adverb, adjective, or verb.

Subject	Verb	Object	Complement	adverb
The secretary (NOUN PHRASE)	enjoys	coming late to the office. (GERUND PHRASE)		
The newly appointed chairman (NOUN PHRASE)	was			late to the meeting. (PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE)
The typist (NOUN PHRASE)	has been working (VERB PHRASE)			All day.
Inducting new staff (GERUND PHRASE)	is		a tedious assignment. (NOUN PHRASE)	
Hoping for retirement, he (PARTICIPIAL PHRASE)	tidies	his office (NOUN PHRASE)		very often. (ADVERB PHRASE)
Most secretary (NOUN PHRASE)	are		cautious and very friendly. (ADJECTIVE PHRASE)	
My former	is		to work with the new MD. (INFINITIVE	

secretary's hope (NOUN PHRASE)			PHRASE)	
-----------------------------------	--	--	---------	--

These examples above show types of phrases and their functions within sentence construction. These are:

(i) *Noun phrase* functions as

subject in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 6th and 7th sentences *complement* in the 4th sentence.

(ii) *Gerund phrase* functions as *object* in the 1st sentence and *subject* in the 4th sentence.

(iii) *Preposition phrase* functions as *adverb* in the 2nd sentence.

(iv) *Verb phrase* function as *verb element* in the 3rd sentence.

(v) *Participial phrase* function as *adverb* in the 5th sentence.

(vi) *Adjective phrase* functions as *complement* in the 6th sentence.

Clauses

A clause is higher in rank than a phrase. A phrase appears within a clause. A clause is a group of words containing a subject and a predicate, and functions as a grammatical unit within complex and compound sentences. A clause may be independent (main) or dependent (minor or subordinate).

Examples:

(i) The secretary is good looking and works very hard.

(ii) That the secretary works hard makes the manager happy.

Sentence (i) contains two main clauses – The secretary is good looking, and

(The secretary) works very hard.

Sentence (ii) contains: one subordinate clause – That the secretary works hard...

One main clause – (It) makes the manager happy.

These show that an independent or main clause can stand alone as a sentence and express one idea; hence it is also referred to as a simple sentence, as in:

The boss has travelled Auchi.

My children are on vacation.

While a subordinate or dependent clause can-not stand alone in a sentence and express a complete idea. It requires other sentence parts to help it make complete sense. Within a sentence it functions as:

I. A noun:

(i) My boss thinks that he will be boss forever.

Object

(ii) That he will be boss forever is his belief.

Subject

II. As an adjective:

(i) The staff that I saw was on black suit.

Qualifier

(ii) Most workers like a boss who is humane.

Qualifier

III. As an adverb:

(i) The police arrived after the scene has been tidied.

Adverb of time

(ii) She felt so guilty that she could not greet me.

Adverb of reason

(iii) Before the police arrived, the scene has been cleared.

Adverb of time

You must be careful not to treat a dependent clause as a sentence or treat a long phrase as a clause.

3.2.3. Sentence type.

Phrases and clauses can be combined to produce different types of sentences.

I. *Simple sentence*: It contains *one main clause*.

Examples:

- (i) My boss looks intelligent.
- (ii) At any point in time, my boss looks intelligent.
- (iii) At whatever time of the day, my boss, an intelligent man will give you the right reply.

These sentences illustrate the various forms of the simple sentence. Though the wording varies in length, there is only one finite verb and one subject. The two elements are the indicators of simple sentence. A simple sentence expresses only one idea.

II. *Compound sentence*: This is made up of *two or more main clauses* joined together by a coordinating conjunction (and, or, but, etc.) or by a semi-colon or colon. Examples:

- (i) My boss comes to office early and leaves the office late.
- (ii) The presidency gave the junior staff motorcycles (and gave) the senior staff a 307 Peugeot cars.
- (iii) Chimdi likes rice but the younger brother prefers beans.
- (iv) They will give the car to their son or sell it at a low price.

III. *Complex sentence*: It consists of *two or more clauses* that are *not of equal* grammatical status. One clause is main or independent and the other is subordinated to the main one. Examples:

- (i) Because his secretary works hard, he took her to his new office.

*Subordinating clause**Main clause*

- (ii) The firm made her what she is today.

*Main clause**Subordinating clause*

- (iii) We do not know when the new chairman will resume duty.

*Main clause**Subordinating clause*

In each of these complex sentences, there are two ideas realized the main clause and the subordinating clause. The subordinating clauses can-not stand alone for expressing a complete idea. The main clauses are required to complete the expression of the information intended.

3.3. Conclusion.

Constructing grammatically correct sentences is very important and will give you confidence whenever and wherever you communicate.

34. Summary.

You have studied the major grammatical units – phrases, clauses and sentences. Both phrases and clauses are parts of sentences. The three units are made up of words; their difference lies in the absence or presence of the subject and the predicate.

The sentence, which is the longest unit, has different types on the basis of the number and types of clauses within it. A sentence must convey complete and meaningful information, and must contain at least a subject and a predicate. A predicate consists of a verb, an adverb, an object, and/or a complement, but only the verb is obligatory in it.

3.5. Tutor-Marked Assignment.

(1) Write three sentences, each containing:

- (a) Subject + verb;
- (b) Subject + verb + adverb;
- (c) Subject + verb + object + complements, and
- (d) Subject + verb + object + object.

(2) Write four sentences. Each group to illustrate:

- (a) the simple sentence;
- (b) the gerund phrase;
- (c) the participial phrase;
- (d) the complex sentence, and
- (e) the compound sentence.

(3) With an illustration, define a sentence.

3.6. Reference.

Agbara, Clara U.B. (2005): *Elements of English Grammar*. Lagos:

Concept Publication

Dumont, Raymond A. & John M. Lannon (1985): *Business Communications*.

Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

MODULE 1, UNIT 4: TENSE, ASPECT AND AGREEMENT

4.0. Introduction

Now that you have understood the way in which English sentences are constructed, it is necessary to introduce you to the notions of tense, aspect and agreement.

4.1. Objectives

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

- (i) explain the terms “tense, aspect and grammatical concord or agreement”, and
- (ii) use these functions correctly in sentences.

4.2. Content

4.2.1 Tense

Tense simply means grammatical timing. The time an action or some condition occurred has to be reflected in the sentence you make.

The time concept is made up of three dimensions: *now* (present), *before now* (past) and *later* (future). These are reflected in English sentences by means of tense. The verb is used to denote tense or time of an action or condition.

- (i) The guard opens the gate by 7.05 a.m. daily.
- (ii) The guard opened the gate by 8.00 a.m last week.

(iii) The guard will open the gate by 7.30 a.m next week.

(iv) His secretary writes the memo every week.

(v) She wrote the memo last month.

(vi) She will write the memo next month.

(vii) I open the gate every morning.

(viii) You write the letter yourself everyday.

Each of the verbs in the sentences above reflects the time or tense of the action. Remember the morphological forms of verbs discussed in 2.2.4. If you have forgotten, please go back to that section and study it again.

In 2.2.4, you were taught that each verb form is used for a specific time and subject.

Remember that the:

(i) *Base form:* (e.g., open, write) is used for the present tense, using the first person singular or the second person, as in sentences (vii) and (viii). It is also used to denote the future, assisted by an auxiliary verb as in sentences (iii) and (vi).

(ii) - *s form:* (e.g., opens, writes) is used for the present tense, using the third person singular and singular names. The present tense implies that the action or condition is happening or present now, as in sentences (i) and (iv).

(iii) - *ed(1)* (e.g., opened, wrote) is used for the past tense with all types of subjects.

It implies that the action or condition happened before now, as in sentences (ii) and (v).

The *-ed2* is used for the aspect and it will be treated later in this unit.

Uses of Tenses

The present tense is used to express the following notions:

- Generally accepted truths or universal statements, as in:

The customer is always right.

Variety is the spice of life.

The sun sets every evening.

Good remuneration encourages workers.

-Habitual action, as in:

The manager drives to the office always.

I drive the car to the market only.

The security guards lock all the offices everyday.

Mr. Ojo comes to the office early everyday.

-Instantaneous actions, as in:

The manager is on the phone.

The chairman is on his way; I hear his footsteps.

Mind the way you open the door.

The past tense is used to express the following notions:

- *Simple past*, that is an action or condition which occurred before now, as in:

The secretary travelled last week.

The meeting ended yesterday.

She left her bag in the office.

- *Reported speech*: in reporting another person's talk, the verb in the speech changes when you report or repeat it orally or in writing:

The chairman: "I am here now." (Present tense)

Reported speech: The chairman said that he was here / there then.

The manager: "I insist you leave the office"

Reported speech: The manager insisted that I/he/ Ade left the office.

Whenever you want to report another person's sentence, remember to change the verb in the sentence.

- *As an expression of politeness*: when you want to make a request from someone higher than in rank or age, it is polite to use the past form of the verb. Using the present form does not imply wrong grammatical construction but it is less polite.

(i) The secretary to her boss: I wanted to see you.

Instead of: I want to see you.

(ii) A security guard to a manager: Could you park your car properly, please.

Instead of: Can you park your car properly, please.

(iii) Messenger to secretary: Could you, please come early tomorrow, Sir.

Instead of: Will you come early tomorrow, Sir.

4.2.2. Aspect.

Another grammatical issue closely related to tense is aspect. Aspect, unlike tense, does not reflect timing per se, but tells you whether the action is completed (finished) or continuous (on-going) at the time of speaking or in the past. There are two parts of aspect – *perfective* (completed) and *continuous* (on – going) aspect.

Examples:

- (i) I am writing. (on – going)
- (ii) They are sleeping. (on – going)
- (iii) He is driving the bus. (on – going)
- (iv) The directors are meeting in this office. (on – going)
- (v) She had written the letter before I made my request. (perfective)
- (vi) They had slept before I came in. (perfective)
- (vii) The directors had met in his office. (perfective)
- (viii) He has sent the parcel already. (perfective)

Once again, you have to recall what you learnt from the section on morphological forms of the verb in 2.2.4. (The contents of the course are interrelated. Endeavour not to forget what you have learnt in any unit because you will need them in subsequent units).

Notice in the examples above that the *-ing* form of the verb is used to denote the *progressive* (on – going) aspect while the *-ed2* form is for the *perfective* aspect.

SAE:

Can you pick out all the verbs used in the examples in 4.2.2 above? Identify which is -ing form and -ed2 form.

Good! What did you notice as you picked and identified the form of the verb? Did you notice that the *-ing* and *-d2* forms are *pre-modified* by *auxiliaries*. Now, pick out all the auxiliaries in the examples. Now, cross check your answers with these:

		Auxiliaries	Verb forms	
Sentence	(i)	am	writing	(-ing)
	(ii)	are	sleeping	(-ing)
	(iii)	is	driving	``
	(iv)	are	meeting	``
	(v)	had	written	(ed2)
	(vi)	had	slept	``
	(vii)	had	met	``
	(viii)	has	sent	``

How did you perform?

Although, there are two forms of aspect, aspect can be combined with tense to accommodate different periods of actions, conditions and states of being.

We have:

Present	Progressive Aspect
Past	Progressive Aspect
Present	Perfective Aspect
Past	Perfective Aspect
Present	Perfective progressive Aspect
Past	Perfective Progressive Aspect

Before we explain each of these notions, let us clarify the use of auxiliaries. Already you know that the “-ing” form indicates the progressive and the “-ed2” form indicates perfective aspect.

PRESENT PROGRESSIVE*Singular**Plural*

I am dancing.

We are dancing.

Bola/she/he is dancing.

The girls/they are dancing.

You are dancing.

You all are dancing.

PAST PROGRESSIVE

I / it was dancing.

We were dancing.

She / he / Bola was dancing.

The girls / they were dancing.

You were dancing.

You all were dancing.

PRESENT PERFECTIVE*Singular**Plural*

I have danced.

We have danced.

Philip / he / she has danced.

The boys / they have danced.

You have danced.

You all have danced.

PAST PERFECTIVE

I had danced.

We had danced.

The girl / she / he had danced.

The girls / they had danced.

You had danced.

You all had danced.

-Present progressive: It is used to denote an action that is on-going (in progress) as at the time of speaking. Such action has not been completed.

Take for example that a meeting is still going on in the manger's office, and you want

to communicates this to a visitor. You say:

They are meeting in the manager's office.

Other examples include:

She is typing the letter.

We are eating our lunch.

-Past progressive: It denotes an action which started and continued for a period of time but had ended as at the time of speaking.

After the meeting has ended and you wish to talk about it, you say:

When you called, they were meeting in the manager's office.

She was typing the letter.

We were eating when she called.

-Present perfective : It expresses an action which started at some point in the past and extended to the present. Sometimes, the action started and continued for a period of time before it ended, but it is still relevant to the present.

Examples: Francis has used his time wisely.

I have read the book.

Mrs Unoalegie has travelled to London.

-Past perfective: It denotes an action which took place in the past, ended before another action began or occurred in the past. Examples:

The contractor had applied for the loan before he cleared his account.

The children had left the scene when I arrived.

They had seen the missing ship before the witness made his confession.

-Present perfect progressive: This denotes an action that occurred over a period in the past and is still going on. Using the committee meeting as an example:

The committee has been meeting for the past two days.

Implication: The meeting has not ended.

She has been typing the letter since noon.

Implication: It is past noon, she has not finished typing.

Mrs. Unualegie has been travelling to London.

Implication: Mrs. Unualegie started travelling to London before now and she still travels.

-Past perfect progressive: This is used to express an action which occurred over a period of time in the past and ended prior to the commencement of another action which also ended in the past.

The committee had been meeting for two weeks and had submitted their findings before your arrival from your journey.

She had been typing the letter since noon and had completed it about two hours ago.

Mrs. Unualegie had been travelling to London before she joined the establishment and decided not to travel again.

SAE:

Write four sentences each to reflect:

- (i) present perfective;
- (ii) past perfect progressive;
- (iii) past perfective, and
- (iv) past progressive.

4.2.3 Grammatical Agreement.

Grammatical agreement refers to the fact that some elements within a sentence must match (agree or concord) in number (singular and plural) or persons (1st, 2nd and 3rd persons).

There are: - subject and verb agreement

- subject and complement

- pronoun agreement.

Any violation of these agreements may produce an unacceptable sentence or lead to a different interpretation.

Subject and verb agreement: This implies that a singular nominal subject takes the –s form of the verb while a plural takes the base form.

-

Subject	Verb	Complement	Adverb
His clerk (single subject)	comes (-s form)		to the office early.
All clerks (plural subject)	come (base form)		to the office early.
The drink (single subject)	tastes (-s form)	sour.	
The drinks (plural subject)	taste (base form)	sour.	

Pronoun subjects are treated as follows:

I come to the office early.

We leave the office late everyday.

You talk too much.

They drink a lot of juice.

The –s form is used with singulars:

He comes to the office early.

She leaves the office late everyday.

It stands on four legs.

Invariable noun: some nouns ending in –s are either singular or plural and are treated as such.

The news is everywhere

The truth is dangerous

Singular subjects

More furniture is required

Subject and complement: It is important that a subject agrees with its complement in terms of number:

The guards are thieves (not thief).

The Jackson family is remarkable artists (not artistes).

My members of staff are blessings from God. (not blessing).

Pronoun agreement: Some pronouns, especially indefinite and plural oral, are often used wrongly.

The two staff members try to excel each other.

But more than two, say:

The staff members try to excel one another.

The clerks fought each other (not themselves).

Every staff is disciplined. (not are).

He is one of the clerks who are early to work.

The secretary is that lady who looks happy.

4.3. Conclusion.

It is very important that you master this unit very well before you move on to the next unit. If you are confused, check your dictionary, any of the references or a good text on grammar. Tense, aspect and agreement are often used wrongly by many English speakers. Be an exemption.

4.4. Summary.

You have learnt how to construct correct sentences free from wrong use of tense, aspect and agreement. Tense indicates the time of the action or condition of the verb; aspect deals with the notion of completeness and agreement implies that certain grammatical elements within the sentence must match in terms of number (singular and plural) and person (pronouns – 1st, 2nd and 3rd).

4.5. Tutor-marked Assignment.

1. Explain tense and Aspect.
2. Write four sentences each group to reflect each of the following: Present perfective

Past progressive

3. What is grammatical agreement?
4. Demonstrate how the “be” verb is used to achieve concord in sentence construction.

4.6. Reference.

Agbara, Clara U.B (2005): *Element of English Grammar*. Lagos: Concept Publications.

Dumont, Raymond A. (1985): *Business Communication*. Boston: Little Brown
& Company.

Quirk, R. & Sidney Greenbaum (1987): *A university Grammar of English*.
London: Longman.

**MODULE 1, UNIT 5: CONSTRUCTING ENGLISH SENTENCES FREE
FROM GRAMMATICAL ERROR**

5.0 Introduction

What you say or write is as good as each of the sentences you construct. Sentence errors amount to wrong grammar, and these imply that you are not competent in English. Similarly, making people interpret your complicated sentences may be problematic, and that makes your interpersonal communication skills questionable.

Therefore, in this unit, you will be exposed to common sentence errors, which can mar your writing and utterances.

5.1 Objectives

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

- (i) identify faulty sentence constructions;
- (ii) correct any sentence error that you encounter, and
- (iii) construct English sentences that are free from grammatical errors.

5.2 Content

5.2.1 Dangling Sentences

Any sentence that does not make sense to its listener/reader because of lack of subject or predicate or any essential element is referred to as a dangling fragment.

Examples:

The staff that I saw. (Dangling: what happened to the staff?)

Before the police arrived. (What about it?)

My boss an intelligent man. (What happened to him?)

- (i) Whenever your construction makes your audience wonder what you mean, the sentence should be restructured. The above should be written as:

The staff member that I saw wore red shirts.

The thieves ran away before the police arrived.

My boss, an intelligent man, is a man of the people. Or:

(ii) Be careful not to write dependent clauses as full sentences. Always watch out for agreement between your subject and its verb. You should recognise statements which seem to contain verbs when actually they do not contain finite verb. Examples:

My boss being funny.

The staff wearing red shirts.

Caught in the act. (No subject)

Disappointed by the firm. (No subject)

(iii) *-Ing and ed2* forms do not function as verbs without being assisted by auxiliary verbs like *is, was, will be, are, were* etc.

Rewrite the above as:

My boss was being funny.

The staff member was wearing a red shirt.

He was / will be caught in the act.

Or: Caught in the act, he was ashamed.

The new directors will be disappointed by the firm. Or

Disappointed by the firm, he resigned his office.

(iv) Similarly, *the to + verb* form should not be used as a complete verb.

Thus:

To come to the office early,

To work hard, and

To leave the office early...

should be rewritten as:

To come to the office early is demanding.

To work hard, one needs to be disciplined.

To leave the office early is risky.

5.2.2 Errors with Subordination and Co-ordination.

Coordination is the placing of ideas of equal importance or emphasis side by side by using *or, but, and, nor, both... and*. Examples:

The children left the house early *but* they got to the venue late.

Bola bought a red car *and* Bose bought a green one.

Bibi must have gone to the church *or* she has gone to the gyms.

Subordination is done when you make less important idea dependent on the more important ones by using subordinators like *although, so that, despite, that, when, because, if, while, until, whether*, etc. Examples:

Mother did not cook the beans *because* the children do not like bean meal.

She came early *so that* she can occupy the front seat.

John travelled to England *when* the wife was on two weeks leave.

(v) Avoid co-coordinating ideas that are not logically related:

John studied very hard but his brother is illiterate.

John studied very hard is not related to *his brother is illiterate*.

Change to: John is literate but his brother is a dunce.

Or: John is well read, but his brother is illiterate.

(vi) Always place more important ideas in the main clause and less important ideas in subordinating or dependent clauses. For example,

When workers came early to work and put in their best, they like to be rewarded.

Main clause, more important idea

The two examples below are faulty:

- a) The storekeeper is often late to work; she refuses to write her weekly report, and she is a friend of the chairman's wife.
- b) Because she is a friend of the chairman's wife, the store keeper is often late to work and refuses to write her weekly report.

Sentence (a) is faulty because, the writer used coordination instead of

Subordination by using *and*. Also sentence (b) is faulty because the most important idea: *She is a friend of the chairman's wife* was subordinated to less important ones.

The two sentences should be corrected to:

The store keeper is a friend of the chairman's wife: that is why she
is often late to work and refuses to write her weekly report.

Or: The store keeper is a friend of the chairman's wife; hence she is often late
to work and refuses to write her weekly report.

5.2.3 Faulty Usage of Pronouns

Pronouns have three cases: nominative (subject slot), objective (object slot) and possessive (ownership).

Nominative	Objective	Possessive
I	Me	Mine
She	Her	Hers
He	Him	His
It	It	Its
We	Us	Ours
You	You	Yours
They	Them	Theirs

Say: If I were she (not her), I would not take it from her. (Not she / he)

It was he (not him) who insulted the client.

A send-forth party was organised for her (not she).

The red car is his/mine/hers.

His/her request was not granted.

The food was bought for the clerk and me (not I)

A few of us (not we) are travelling.

- (i) The pronouns you use make sense only when they refer to specific nouns and such pronouns must agree with the nouns in gender and number. Examples:

The sectional *heads* had *their* meeting last week.

The *child* gave *her* class teacher a gift. (Not their class teacher)

The staff *members* should be allowed to go on leave when *they* are due.

- (ii) Avoid ambiguous pronouns, example:

The sales officers are not pleased with the account officers because
they refused to obey *them*.

Who refuse to obey who - sales officers or account officers?

Write to: The *sales officers* are not pleased with the *account officers* because
the account officers refused to obey *them*

- (iii) Indefinite or universal pronouns (anyone, everyone, somebody, each, anybody, none, etc.) are treated as singular.

Anyone can lock *his* or *her* office at the close of work.

Each Secretary feels cheated by *her* boss.

If *someone* calls, tell *the person* that I am not available.

5.2.4 Consistency

- (i) Use grammatical items of the same importance in the same form within a sentence. If you use present tense, maintain it all through.

As soon as the manger *entered*, the secretary *stopped* her work.

Whenever the manager *enters*, the secretary *stops* her work.

The decision was cancelled after the committee *had made* all the necessary arrangements.

Each time the secretary *collects* the mail, the clerk *takes* it from her.

- (ii) Similarly, if you are using nouns or adverbs, or adjectives, ensure that you use the same all through.

During his leave, he felt *lonely* and *friendless*. (Do not write without a friend)

He hopes *to work* hard and *to achieve* much before he will be retired.

We *came*, *saw* and *liked* it; so, we *bought* it.

- (iii) You should also endeavour to use the same pronouns for the same person.

If *anyone* comes, tell the *one* to come back later.

When you buy what *you* like (not one likes) then, *you* appreciate (not one will appreciate) it by the way *you* handle (not one will handle) it.

Whenever I am on break, no *visitors* should be allowed in, but if the *person/visitors* (not they) should insist, then such *a person / visitors* should be allowed in to face my anger.

5.2.5 Ambiguous Sentences

When you construct sentences which can carry more than one meaning, such sentences are said to be ambiguous. When there is ambiguity, the receiver chooses the option that suits him / her. Ambiguity in sentences can be caused by any of the following:

- (i) vague reference to a pronoun. If the antecedent of a pronoun is not clear, there is bound to be more than one interpretation, as in:

The two sentences below are ambiguous:

- The messengers informed the directors that they were unhappy about recent happenings. (Who were unhappy, the messengers or the directors?).

- Whenever one is on break, no one should be allowed in, but if the person should insist, then allow him / her to have his / her way.
(who is insisting? Who is to be allowed to have his / her way?).

To clarify the information, repeat one of the nouns instead of pronoun, thus:

- The messengers informed the directors that the messengers were unhappy about recent happenings.
- Whenever one is on break, no visitor should be allowed in, but if the visitor should insist, then allow him / her to have his / her way.

Also vague is:

When the commissioner visited the site, he met old men staggering under the weight of hard and unjust labour. They have no hope for lunch since they have not been paid their salaries for two months. This is what the new commissioner has to address first.

(what is wrong with this construction? Can you reconstruct it?) Which of the two conditions will the commissioner address- unnecessary inhuman treatment of old men or payment of their salaries?

To specify what the commissioner should address, write:

When the commissioner visited the site, he met old men staggering under the weight of hard and unjust labour. They have no hope for lunch since they have not been paid their salaries for two months. The new commissioner has to address first the issue of payment of the salaries.

OR:

When the commissioner visited the site, he met old men staggering under the weight of hard and unjust labour. They have no hope for lunch since they have not been paid their salaries for two months. The new commissioner has to address the inhuman treatment first.

(ii) Faulty ellipsis: Ellipsis is the omission of some words which can be understood from the construction. Faulty ellipsis can cause ambiguity when an elliptic word is made to perform the work of a completely different word in addition to its own function. Examples:

Such appraisal neither contributes nor detracts from staff reputation.

Rewrite:

Such appraisal neither contributes *to* nor detracts from staff reputation.

A friend and sister (refers to one person).

A friend and a sister (refer to two persons).

The labourers finally arrived at the site. They were anxious to start the
work, but some were not.

Change to:

The labourers finally arrived at the site. Some of them were anxious
to start the work, but some were not.

Also, this statement is vague:

The manager's presence here is as good, if not better than, his absence.

Write: The manager's presence here is as good as, if not better than, his absence.

(iii) Faulty construction with correlative conjunction: Correlative conjunctions are

neither...nor, either...or, both...and, not only... but also, rather...than. The

construction following the second correlative should balance the first. The same part of speech should be used in both halves, as in:

We were not only interested in his achievement but also impressed by
his potential.

Neither the guard on duty nor the one who handed over to him was
careless. (implies that both of them were not careless).

But this statement is different:

Either the secretary or the boss is to blame. (Implies one of them is guilty).

You should rather do it late than not to do it at all.

5.3 Conclusion.

There are many faulty sentences. The ability to identify these sentences and correct them is a major step to your competence in English.

5.4 Summary

In this unit, you have been exposed to some common sentence errors. There are many possible sentence errors, ranging from dangling sentences, faulty coordination and subordination to ambiguous sentences. Master these forms of errors and others which you will come across. Whenever you construct a sentence and the construction looks awkward or vague, endeavour to rewrite such a

sentence.

5.5. Tutor-marked Assignment

(1) What do you understand by an ambiguous sentence?

(2) Comment on the following sentences and rewrite where necessary.

(a) Whenever the governing board visits there, they were always astonished to find the place well kept.

(b) Tell madam or her secretary that she should see me.

(c) She comes early and likes to leave early.

(d) My boss is a well behaved man and he smiles always.

(3) What do you understand by the term “ellipsis”?

(b) Demonstrate how a faulty ellipsis can cause vague information.

5.6 Reference

Agbara, Clara U.B. (2005): *Elements of English Grammar*. Lagos: Concept Publications.

Dumont, Raymond A. (1985): *Business Communication*. Boston: Little, Brown & Company.

MODULE 2

Unit 1: THE BASICS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

1.0 Introduction

Interpersonal communication is the communication that takes place between two or more participants. In other words, there is a sender and a target receiver (receiver). This type of communication assumes different forms, such as oral/ verbal, written, audio-visual, body talk, signs and symbols. For you to be an effective communicator, it is crucial that you are conversant with the basics of effective communication. These consist of accuracy, completeness, clarity, conciseness, identifying barriers to effective communication, choosing the appropriate medium and effective use of feedback techniques.

1.1 Objectives

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

- i. identify possible barriers to effective interpersonal communication and the solutions;
- ii. identify ways of achieving clarity in communication;
- iii. choose the appropriate channel for your message, and
- iv. make proper use of feedback techniques.

1.2 Content

1.2.1 Characteristics of Effective Communication

Effective communication hinges on your ability to encode the message in appropriate linguistic terms or signs; so that the receiver understands your meaning and replies in terms that move the process forward. To achieve your communication goals, it is important that the message is characterized by the following basic criteria:-

1. *It's accurate*: This means that the message must be correct and reliable. For the message to be accurate, the signs, symbols, sentences, expressions, spellings, pronunciation, and other element must be correct and appropriate.
2. *It's clear*: The receiver should be able to decode the meaning of the message as intended by the sender. Therefore, the sender of the message must ensure that the message content and the language are straight forward.
3. *It's complete*: The message is complete when all the necessary information is made available to the receiver. The sender should not withhold some information based on his assumption that the receiver will understand; neither should he overload the information with unnecessary information. Deletion or addition of information depends on how much of the subject matter is known by the receiver.
4. *It saves time*: The style, organization, content, diction (and the visual impact of the written message) should be such that the receiver is able to understand and act on the information as quickly as possible.
5. *It's concise*: No message should be overloaded because of achieving completeness. The message should be brief and complete. It should be short enough to contain all necessary information.

6. *It builds goodwill*: Every message – written or spoken- should be presented in such a way that the receiver is perceived as a person and not an object. Any effective communication should create good rapport between the parties involved.

These criteria apply to all forms of communications irrespective of whether the content contains good or bad news.

1.2.2 Barriers to Effective Interpersonal Communication

These are some obstacles which may prevent you from conveying your intended messages properly and some others which may hinder you from decoding and interpreting messages correctly.

(i) *Wants and needs*: In every communication, there are two parties. Each of these two parties may have conflicting attitudes, desires, wants and needs, which may hinder one of the parties involved in the communication process from conveying or receiving the message correctly. To be a good communicator, you must be aware of these conflicting attitudes, desires and needs. The first solution to the

problem is to recognize that the barriers exist and then strive to break down these barriers by maintaining good eye contact, avoid conflicting body language and listen attentively or speak convincingly.

(2) *Lack of clarity of expression*: For you to be a good communicator, you must learn how to communicate in clear terms. First, whatever you wish to communicate should be clear in your mind. There is no need to embark on communication when you are not convinced of your message and what you want to achieve by your communication. Once you have your idea right, half of your job is done. The other half is the ability to choose and use correctly appropriate linguistic symbols which your receiver is familiar with and can easily decode. You should not assume that the receiver knows the interpretation to be given to your special or unfamiliar symbols in your communication.

To achieve clarity of expression ensure, that you make new and strange words familiar to your receiver the first time you use the symbol. There are different ways to make the meaning of a symbol (word) clear:

a. Illustrative Context:

You should use the words in s way that helps your receiver to get the meaning from the context. In other words, use the sentence construction to bring out clearly the meaning of the word.

For example, the meaning of *courageous* is illustrated in the sentence.

The guard was very *courageous* for he stood his ground although
attacked by five armed robbers.

The sentence has fixed the meaning of *courageous*

b. Glossing:

You should insert an explanation or a note within the text by the use of a parenthesis or a side comment.

Example:

Diabetes – excess sugar in the body – has been on the increase in Nigeria in the last five years.

In the example, an explanation is put beside diabetes in parenthesis to enable the receiver decode the meaning.

c. Definition:

You can define by explaining or using the synonym or antonyms of the word. Definition is easy if the noun is concrete. Therefore, endeavor to use concrete nouns more often. But, if you have to use abstract nouns, ensure that you concretize the nouns by describing, explaining, or classifying them into their groups.

Example:

Effort refers to the physical or mental energy you require to
perform an action.

Effort is an abstract noun, but through its definition the receiver can decode the meaning.

(3) *Faulty grammar and pronunciation:* To achieve clarity, you must construct correct sentences, and when speaking, pronounce words distinctively. If your sentence construction is faulty, then your message will not be clear. Similarly if your pronunciation is incorrect, there is every risk that your receiver will decode wrongly. Therefore, you must improve your grammar and pronunciation. Imagine a clerk say.

* The new staff is illiterating us.

The clerk has pronunciation difficulty with the sound /l/ and /r/. You should be careful with words that can cause confusion in meaning.

1.2.3 Appropriate Medium

Medium refers to the route through which you send your message across to your receiver. It is important that you give serious thought to the medium you choose. The familiar choice is often between spoken and written form. Other media include pictorial, sign and body language. The medium of communication is very important because it serves as a connection or link between you and your receiver. A wrong link can mar your message.

The choice of medium that will match your purpose of communication is influenced by the following:

- i. *Speed:* Your goal and purpose of communication will determine whether the message is urgent or not. If the message is not urgent, for how long can it be delayed? For speed and immediacy, speech is the best form if the receiver is available or can be reached on the telephone.

- ii. *Convenience*: You need to think about your convenience and that of your receiver(s). If writing will consume more of your time, then, you can use other means that are less time-consuming.
- iii. *Permanence*: Does the nature of your message require future reference or not? Or does it require accessibility to a large receiver? This will influence your choice of medium. For it to be accessible and permanent, it has to be in the written form from which more copies can be produced.
- iv. *Confidentiality*: Sometimes the message is meant for a particular person or persons, and not for a third party. When the message is to be treated as secret, then you must consider the medium seriously. There are some medium that can not be used for confidential messages. Such should be avoided. They include telephone, telegram, e-mail, fax.
- v. *Orderliness*: When your message contains a lot of ideas, or opinions which need to be arranged in an orderly manner, you should decide properly which medium to use.
- vi. *Accuracy*: Closely related to orderliness is the matter of accuracy. This is another important factor in your choice of a medium. Sometimes, your message contains data or figures that must be accurate; otherwise, your receiver may be misinformed.

Effective communication is partly the ability to select appropriate media which suit the message and the purpose and partly the ability to express the ideas accurately.

1.2.4 The Various Media of Communication

Media of communication can be classified into: *the written word*, *the spoken word (speech)*, *the symbolic gesture*, *the graphic image (visual)* and *a combination of these*. These methods can be used individually, but using two or more methods together helps to increase interest, comprehension and retention.

Each of these media has its own advantages and disadvantages.

SAE:

Write out five advantages and disadvantages for each of the media.

Feedback Techniques

Feedback is an essential part of communication. Feedback is an act which enables you to react to what you have heard or seen. It provides a means of reassuring you or your receiver that the message has been comprehended, or that there is a need for modification so that the message can be correctly interpreted. Feedback can be negative or positive. When it is positive, it spurs you on. You should not allow negative feedback to discourage you as a communicator– it is only an event that will enable you to adjust your message or method and achieve successful communication.

When you need to give negative feedback to the initiator of the message, ensure that you do this in such a way that your source does not feel antagonized. Be conscious of your partner's emotions.

Feedback varies; it could be a nod, a smile, restless fidgeting, a doze, a stifled yawn, a murmur, silence, a frown, a written note, a change in behaviour, or a spoken word.

1.3 Conclusion

Endeavour to be a good communicator by putting into practice the factors discussed in this unit.

1.4 Summary

In the unit, you have learnt the basics of interpersonal communication, consisting of obstacles to effective communication and criteria to effective communication. It is important that you recognise these obstacles and make the effort to be an effective communicator.

1.5 Tutor-marked Assignment

- (1) Identify three barriers to effective communication and suggest the solutions to the barriers.
- (2) Discuss ways to achieve clarity of expression.
- (3) What do you understand by the term “feedback”? How important is feedback in communication?
- (4) Explain the different forms of media of communication. Which factors will influence your choice of a medium?

1.6 Reference

Helier, Robert & Tim Hindle (1998): *Essential Manager's Manual*. London: Dorling Kindersley Limited.

Mac Abraham–Inajoh, Nath and Mangrwat, Solomon Elisha (2000): *Effective Business Communication - An Introductory Text*. Lagos: Don Vinton Limited.

Olu, Chukwuenweniwe U. (2001): *Effective Business Communication: Theory*

and Practice. Lagos: Concept Publications.

MODULE 2 UNIT 2: ORAL REPORTS

2.0 Introduction

In the previous unit, you were exposed to the basics of communication. These consist of barriers to effective communication, clarity of expression, appropriate media and feedback techniques. In this unit, you will be exposed to how some of these bases are put into use.

As a communicator, you will often have a need to present reports. We will examine reports in general but we shall discuss more on formal oral reports in this unit. Formal oral reports may include speeches at meetings, seminars, conventions, person-to-person information to senior officers or company personnel, clients, etc.

2.1 Objectives

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

- i. identify various forms of oral reports;
- ii. explain types of report delivery ;
- iii. definite report , and
- iv. present an oral report.

2.2 Content

2.2.1 Definition of Reports

Report or reporting is a daily activity performed by all - telling of ones experience to another person, delivering messages, explaining an incident or describing an encounter to a target receiver. The term is used to refer to given an account of event which one has seen, heard, or participated in. Reports can be formal or informal, oral or written; and the length and importance of reports vary depending on the purpose, kind and the target receiver.

In organizations, written report refers to document which contains:

- *Information only*: e.g Sales reports, progress reports, productivity reports, quarterly reports.
- *Information plus analysis*: e.g., annual reports of companies, audit reports, financial reports.
- *Information plus analysis and recommendation*: e.g., problem-solving reports, feasibility reports.

(Written reports will be discussed in later Module 3, Unit 5)

2.2.2 Oral Reports

Oral reports refer to any spoken statement which contains an account of events or of an investigation carried out by the speaker. Reports have to be developed and, therefore, require planning and organization. An oral report can be given at meeting, seminars and conventions and as a person-to-person feedback to some company personnel or clients. The report can be in the form of briefs, speeches or lectures. Oral reports are personal and elicit immediate feedback from the receiver.

2.2.2 Official Briefs

A brief is a form of report. Like any report, it could be spoken or written. A brief is telling or explaining to a person (whether a client or a colleague) what his/her job entails – the purpose, means of carrying out and extent of the job. Briefs may be about actions to be taken or about explaining what has happened and why it happened.

In giving briefs, you must ensure that your points are clear and concise. Be specific about the persons involved, identify exactly what has to be done, when, how and how long (if necessary). If money is involved, specify approximate the amount required. When presenting your points, you can refer to your notes, but do not read directly from them or your briefs will look artificial. Ensure that your sentences are short and straightforward. Also, move smoothly from one point to another. Watch out for feedback information or event which may affirm or oppose your points. Practise briefing and remember that, as a communicator, briefing is a constant exercise.

The Structure of a Brief

Briefs should be organised and well planned. Before jotting down your points, ensure that you have done a thorough research or investigation on the subject. When compiling your brief, you must provide all necessary information which will assist the receiver to understand the briefing:

- Specify the aim;
- List out the required tools in the order of priority;
- Identify the available resources;
- Describe the method or methods to be used;
- Explain the merits and demerits of the different methods;
- Approximate a time frame, if necessary, and
- Provide the cost, if it involves money.

When briefing someone, you should:

- ❖ Be concise: give only the necessary information;
- ❖ Be clear: use clear and simple language. Explain any technical jargon so that your receiver is carried along;
- ❖ Be vivid: make the briefing interesting, captivating and lively;
- ❖ Be natural; make your speech natural not pretentious or artificial;
- ❖ Be courteous: avoid 'showing off' in order to impress others, do not interrupt your receiver while speaking and avoid unnecessary contradiction. Avoid irritating or discourteous mannerisms of speech or gestures.
- ❖ Be patient: do not be in a hurry to end the briefing. Listen to your receiver and give necessary explanations to clarify difficult points.

2.2.4 Speeches

Speech making, like briefing is a common event in communication, but, unlike briefing, it is more demanding, complex and technical. Speech making or public speaking is an elongated monologue. Speech making allows you to talk for a longer period without interruption. Therefore, ensure that your speeches are real, interesting, purposeful and sincere.

The general purpose of speech making includes:

- To inform the receiver (by describing or explaining an incident/project)
- To influence and persuade the receiver (to induce colleagues to vote, accept or reject a management proposal, or to sell a product).
- To amuse the receiver (to while away the time at ceremonies)

Types of Speech Delivery

The success of a public speech depends largely on how you deliver or present the speech to your receiver. There are four methods:

- i. The *impromptu* method is an unprepared speech. This method comes into play when you are invited to speak without prior notice. This type of speech is not prepared and is often characterized by lack or insufficiency of information, clarity and coherence. It is difficult for beginners to handle, but an experienced public speaker may be able to cope with it. Impromptu speeches are usually short and straightforward.
- ii. *Memorized Delivery*: A memorized speech is that which has been prepared, written and committed to memory. During delivery it is possible to forget a line or a point and that can mar the entire event. When you have forgotten your point, your receiver's interest can be retained through your gestures and body movements.
- iii. *Reading From Text Method*: This method is similar to the memorized speech in the sense that it is prepared and written beforehand. Unlike the memorized method, you read directly from your text. This can easily bore your receiver. However, the receiver's interest can be retained by your maintaining eye contact with them and using gestures and a good voice quality.
- iv. *Extemporaneous Method*: An extemporaneous method implies that you have carefully planned, organized and practised your speech. The main ideas of

the speech are written in phrases or in short sentences on a sheet of paper which you can glance at during delivery. The extemporaneous delivery allows you to speak in a natural and conversational way and to adjust your procedure on the basis of the feedback from your receiver. The receiver's interest and attention are easily maintained.

Before you present your speech, you should practise the speech before a mirror and a recorder or before your colleagues or friends who will be able to pre-empt the reactions of your receiver. Be conscious of your voice quality and body language. These will contribute to the dynamism of your delivery

Preparing the Speech

You cannot present or deliver your speech successfully if you have not done thorough preparation. Therefore, making a good public speech depends on good planning and organization and on a good delivery method. To prepare your speech, you should follow a step by step procedure:

- i. *Subject of the Speech:* If you have not been assigned a specific topic or an area, ensure that you choose your topic or subject from a field that you are familiar with or is of interest to you. It will be ridiculous to speak on what you are not interested in and know little or nothing about.
- ii. *Receiver:* It is not enough to choose a subject that you are interested in; you must also consider your receiver. Ask yourself the following questions as you plan your speech:
 - Will the subject be of interest to the receiver?
 - Is the subject appropriate to their level (age, education)?
 - What is their social status?
 - Does the receiver know anything about the subject?
 - What are their views on the subject?
 - Is the receiver a mixed group (in terms of knowledge, belief, age, etc.)?

Having answered these questions, ask yourself:

- How can I make my speech suit my receiver?

- How can I make the speech interesting and lively?
- iii. Purpose of the Speech: Every speech has a general purpose, as well as specific ones. In other words, what do you want to achieve by your speech? What effect do you want your speech to have on the receiver? Why did you choose this particular topic?

You should also ensure that your speech conforms to the prevailing spirit of the occasion. The purpose of your speech at a funeral will not be the same as your speech at a birthday ceremony or at a valedictory gathering.

Composing the Speech

Having chosen your subject and identified your receiver and purpose, you are now ready to start gathering information for your speech. You may need to consult some reference material,, ask some people questions or visit some places connected with your topic. All these will aid you in writing down your points.

Like every good write-up, a good speech contains three parts: *introduction*, *body* and *conclusion*.

i. The Introduction:

The introduction is a very crucial part. It can mar or make the entire speech. The introduction should catch the attention and interest of your receiver, as well as arouse their curiosity.

In the introduction, you need to inform the receiver of the topic entails and of the purpose of your speech. These should be written in simple sentences or phrases which you will expatiate on during the delivery.

You can begin your speech with a popular saying, an anecdote, humour, questions, a quotation or even a personal encounter. In whichever way you

begin, ensure that it will arouse the interest and curiosity of your receiver. In addition to these, you should give, in the introduction, an outline of the major point.

ii. *The body*

The body of your speech should be such that it can sustain the interest which was aroused during the introduction. In the body, you should present your points one after another with illustrations, explanations, descriptions or other devices,, depending on your purpose and the occasion. You should have just enough points not to bore your receiver. If your speech is too long, the receiver may get bored. So, as you prepare the body of your speech, bear in mind your receiver.

iii. *The Conclusion*

A speech should not end abruptly, or else all the efforts you put into the introduction and the body of the speech will be destroyed. A good speech should be concluded in such a way that your receiver will have something to hold on to. The purpose and occasion will influence how you conclude your speech. You can conclude by one or a combination of the following activities:

- i. Summarizing the major points;
- ii. Evaluating the main points;
- iii. Suggesting solutions to problems raised in the body of the speech,
and
- iv. Paraphrasing the introduction.

Whatever approach you decide to use, do not apologize nor introduce a new idea. The conclusion should impress your receiver.

Having compiled your speech, write your outline in sentences or phrases in note cards, which you can hold and shuffle when necessary, or you can insert them into a booklet.

2.4 **Conclusion**

Ensure that you always prepare your briefs and speeches even if it is a short preparation that you can make. Also endeavour to put something down in black and white to aid your memory. Do not try to show off or you may expose your ignorance.

2.5 **Summary**

Generally, reports are meant to inform, influence or persuade. A good report should have an introduction, a body and a conclusion. As a communicator, making oral reports is a task which you cannot run away from. Oral reports include briefs (telling someone what his/her job entails or about actions to be taken), speeches and lectures. These should be planned and organized before delivery. There are four different ways to present oral reports – the impromptu, reading from text, memorization, and the extemporaneous method.

.

2.6 **Tutor-Marked Assignment**

- (1) What do you understanding by the term “oral report”?
- (2) Identify and explain the different ways in which you can deliver your speech.
- (3) Imagine that you have been invited to present a valedictory speech at the send-forth party organized for your immediate boss whom you have worked with for ten years. Write an outline for your speech.

2.7. **Reference**

Dumont, Raymond A. and John M. Lannon (1985): *Business Communications*.

Boston: Little, Brown & Company.

Mac Abraham-Inajoh, Nath (2000): *Effective Business Communication: An*

Introductory Text. Lagos: Don – Vinton Limited

Modigie, Clara U.B (2000): *Developing Writing Skills*

Lagos: Concept Publications.

Olu, Chukwuenweniwe U. (2001): *Effective Business Communication: Theory*

and *Practice*. Lagos: Concept Publications.

MODULE 2, UNIT 3: CONDUCTING MEETINGS AND INTERVIEWS

3.0 Introduction

In the previous unit, you learnt how to prepare and present briefs and speeches. These briefs and speeches are sometimes presented at meetings and interviews. In this unit, you will be exposed to the procedures at meetings and interviews.

3.1 Objectives

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

- i. explain the procedures at meetings and interviews;
- ii. organize meetings and interviews, and
- iii. participate effectively at meetings.

3.2 Content

- 3.2.1 **Meetings:** A meeting can be a productive way in which people who has common interests and objectives can communicate with one another. It offers the most important opportunity for the application of oral communication. As a communicator, you are bound to attend one type of meeting or the other, if not as an organizer, at least as a participant. There are various forms of meetings ranging from informal to highly formal ones. These include:

- i. Informal Meetings;
- ii. Formal Meeting, and
- iii. Command Meetings.

- i. Informal Meetings:

These are meetings which are not guided by any strict rules or procedures. The issues discussed at informal meeting are usually not very important for the common

welfare of the participants. Votes are usually not taken, nor are there records of proceedings. It has no leadership or hierarchy.

ii. Formal Meetings:

Formal Meetings are guided by strict rules and regulations. Motions are made formally, votes are taken when necessary and records of proceedings are written down. There are officials who organize and see to the smooth-running of the gathering.

Formal meetings are aimed at producing group decisions which are binding on members. Formal meeting are of two forms:

- i. Public Formal Meetings,
- ii. Private Formal Meetings.

Public Formal Meetings refer to organized gatherings which are guided by convention, and they deal with matters that concern the public. The meetings are held in public places and are open to the general public, with or without official invitation. Examples of such meetings are the House of Representative, the Senate, Annual General Meetings of Companies, etc.

Private formal Meetings are formal gatherings, dealing with sectional interests of the public. Only members of such gatherings are admitted to the meeting. Examples are trade union meetings, town/village meetings, staff meetings, etc.

iii. Committee Meetings:

Committee Meeting refer to official gatherings of some delegates who have been appointed or elected to deliberate on certain matters. The scope of operation of such gatherings is determined by terms of reference and the gatherings are to arrive at group decisions or recommendations. In ad hoc committee, the

committee is expected to write a report of their findings and/or recommendation to whoever formed the committee. Ad hoc committee meetings are not permanent; they are dissolved as soon as they have complete their assignment. Standing committee also meet to deliberate on issues assigned to the committee, (e.g. appointment and promotion of staff, disciplining staff, etc).. Members of a committee may have divergent interest, knowledge, status etc. Whatever the case may be, as a committee member, learn to express your views objectively when you want to contribute your quota.

iv. Command Meetings:

Command meetings are, to some extent informal gatherings initiated by a department head (manager, sectional head, etc) as a venue for conveying information to those under him/her. In command meetings, decisions are arrived at by the initiator of a meeting after due consultation with his/her subordinates. The main difference between these types of gatherings and committee meetings lies in the method of arriving at the decisions taken; in which decisions in committee and formal meetings are a joint responsibility decided by a majority vote, in command meetings, subordinates only express their opinions or suggestions, which may not influence the decision taken.

If you have to initiate a command meeting, you must ensure that your communication skills are good. Your oral presentation should be free from grammatical mistakes, and your body language, accent and tone should be such that do not cause for ambiguity; otherwise, there will be communication breakdown.

3.2.2 Effective Participation at Meetings

For you to participate effectively at any meeting, you need to possess a good command of English, as well as skills of oral communication. As a member of a formal gathering, you should note the following points in order to be effective participants:

- Your language should be a clear and concise and are unambiguous expression of ideas to avoid misunderstanding and confusion. Also,

your language should suit the topic (agendum) and the meeting environment. A wrong choice of words and faulty language may result in loss of confidence and trust in, and cooperation with you from other participants.

- You should be willing to make compromises where necessary, as well as to maintain a good listening culture. It is necessary to listen and understand the view of a speaker so as to know how and when to give your view.
- It is not compulsory that you say something. If you have no contribution to make, support and encourage other speakers by being attentive.

3.2.3 Effective Presiding of a Meeting

To chair a meeting effectively, you need to do a lot of networking before the meeting commences. When preparing for a meeting, ask yourself the following questions:

- ❖ What is the purpose of the meeting?
- ❖ Which of the items on the agenda are more important? The important issues should be discussed first.
- ❖ For how long will each item be discussed?

Your answers to these questions will help you to be in control and to prevent any argument from getting out of hand. You should ensure that the discussion process moves forward smoothly and that everyone who wants to contribute to the discussion has a chance to express his/her opinion. You should set time limit to each discussion, so that the meeting can end at an appropriate time.

Meetings have opening and closing procedures. For the meeting to start, ensure that you declare it open according to the approved practice of the gathering. Before declaring a meeting closed, ensure that unfinished business is properly assigned to members in clear terms.

3.2.4 The Interview

An interview is a business-like gathering made up of a series of questions and answers that have a specific purpose. The interview comprises two groups of persons – the ones asking the questions (interviewers) and the one or ones answering the questions (interviewee or interviewees).

There are several types of interviews, namely:

Job/Selection interviews;

Promotion interviews, and

Disciplinary Interviews.

The job/Selection Interview

This type of interview is used to determine the level of knowledge and experience, as well as the attitudes of the interviewee who is applying for appointment in an organization. The job interview is a strategy used by organizations to get the most suitable candidates to fill existing vacancies.

The Promotion Interview

It is similar to the job interview in the sense that it is also a strategy used in organizations for determining whether a staff member is qualified for promotion. The promotion interview is used for certain positions within some organizations.

The Disciplinary Interview

Unlike the preceding two, it is a strategy used to find out whether the interviewee has committed an offence under investigation. It is used in firms and institutions.

An interviewee may be an employee or student of whomever that may have initiated the interview session. Like the job and promotion interviews, the disciplinary interview is used to elicit information from the interviewee.

Attending an Interview

When you are invited for any form of interview, you should remember to practise your public speech skills. The panel of interviewers is usually very attentive to minute bit of information, as well as to mistakes. Everything about you speaks – your dressing, your composure, voice quality, pronunciation, tone. Speak up, using a strong, clear voice, with good articulation. You should be natural and relaxed. If you are tensed up, you will make mistakes. Be confident and tell yourself that the interviewers are human and that all of them must have at one time or the other gone through what you are going through now.

3.3 Conclusion

Meetings and interviews are aspects of oral communication which you cannot run away from. Therefore, acquaint yourself with their procedures.

3.4 Summary

You have been exposed to the procedures of interviews and meetings. There are different forms of interviews, ranging from the job interview (which is the commonest) to the disciplinary interview. Whichever one you are invited to, be prepared and compose yourself for it. And if you are the interviewer, endeavour to be nice to the interviewee.

Similarly, there are all forms of meetings – committee meetings, command meetings, and formal and informal meetings. These are avenues for speaking out and expressing yourself. If you are presiding over the meeting, give at least the majority of participants a chance to air their opinions.

3.5 Tutor-marked Assignment

- (1) What do you understand by the term 'meeting'?
- (2) List and explain the various forms of meetings.
- (3) What is an interview?
- (4) Identify the types of interviews that you know.
- (5) What is expected of you when:
 - a. you chair a meeting;
 - b. you participate at a meeting, or
 - c. you attend an interview?

3.6 References

Appleby, Robert (1994): *Modern Business Administration*. London: Pitman Publishing.

Chapel, R. T. & W. L. Read (1984): *Business Communication*
London: Macdonald and Evans

Helier, Robert & Tim Hindle (1998): *Essential Manager's Manual*. London:
Dorling Kindersley Limited.

MODULE 2, UNIT 4: USING THE TELEPHONE EFFECTIVELY

4.0 Introduction

The world is fast becoming a global village with the availability and accessibility to many people of a piece of modern technology, like the telephone and the internet. You can communicate with someone who is millions of kilometres away from you as if the person were near to you. Thanks to the GSM (Global Mobile System) and others telecommunication systems.

In this unit, you will be exposed to the effective use of the telephone.

4.1 Objectives

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

- i. use the telephone effectively;
- ii. explain what is expected of anyone using the telephone, and
- iii. highlight the importance of the telephone in interpersonal communication.

4.2 Content

4.2.1 The Telephone

The telephone has become a popular and a firm means of interpersonal communication. With the telephone, you can interact with anybody at anytime and anywhere. The telephone has become an important communication garget. A lot of activities, which would have taken days by journeying to perform and cost so much time and money to carry out, can now be carried within a few seconds and at very little cost. The telephone has made distance no longer a barrier because you can reach the person through the telephone. Also, the fear of the unknown can be reduced to a low level through speaking first with a stranger on the telephone before meeting the person physically. Thus, the telephone can be used to tap opportunities which, otherwise, would be very difficult or even almost impossible to exploit.

In spite of the importance of the telephone, many have ignored the need to cultivate and practise appropriate telephone skills. This telephone is a method of oral communication in a special class, in that, unlike face-face-face communication in which the conversation is supported by gestures and physical environmental conditions, the telephone is restricted to only articulate and non-articulate language sounds which your receiver hears. Therefore, the telephone conversation is quite tasking to both the receiver and the source. There is also a time constraint in the use of the telephone because every second is paid for. Hence, in telephone conversation, you have to be brief and concise and have to go straight to the important points of information.

4.2.3. Voice Qualities

The telephone conversation recipient relies solely on what is heard to decode your information. Therefore, it is crucial that your voice qualities do not conflict with your words. Usually, the norm is that when voice qualities conflict with the speaker's words, hearers tend to believe the voicing.

Voice qualities include the *tone*, *pitch*, *stress* and *volume* of your voice.

The Tone of a voice refers to the rising or falling features of the voice that indicate whether you are asking a question, making a statement or giving a command. Your tone also express your feelings; such as being confident or not, sincere or sarcastic, bitter or friendly, surprised or amazed, harsh or gentle, domineering or meek, cold or warm, etc.

Do not raise your voice too high or keep it too low. Try to strike a balance between a high and low voice or your voice may send a wrong signal to your receiver who cannot see your facial appearance. Endeavour to use words that are capable of stirring the kind of emotional feeling that you wish to rouse. Your tone can affect your receiver in several ways: it can arouse a feeling of friendship, contempt, co-operation, indifference, lack of cooperation, etc, towards you. Put yourself in the position of your receiver and sense how his/her words and sentences affect you and let that guide the kinds of words you choose for the purpose of creating appropriate emotions.

The Pitch of a voice refers to how high or low your voice sounds to your listener. Low pitch voices are perceived as not being authoritative, or pleasant while high-pitch voices are perceived to be authoritative, imposing and pleasant.

Often, when some one is angry or excited or anxious, the person tends to raise his/her voice high. You should balance your voice when speaking on the telephone.

The Volume of voice refers to the notion of harshness or softness of the voice. When you use a very soft voice, combined with high pitch, you give the impression that you are inexperienced and young. It is possible to increase your volume without shouting, if your receiver is not hearing well owing to noise or to some other cause. It is rude to speak too loudly to a stranger or an elderly person. Loud voices signify anger and possible violence.

Stress is quite unique in comparison with the three elements discussed above. Stress refers to the extra force or prominence given to a word or syllable when speaking. A stressed syllable or word sounds higher to a listener than others in the environment. The speaker has to place extra pressure on the syllable or word which he/she wants to stress.

English words and sentences have systematic stress patterns to which meanings are attached. Therefore, it is important that you understand the stress patterns of English words and sentences. A word that is stressed in the midst of others which are unstressed has an implication on meaning because stress can change the meanings of words.

Below are some implications of stressed words within sentences:

BOLA came late to the office yesterday.

Implication (depending on the pitch): Bola, not somebody else, arrived late at the office yesterday.

Bola CAME late to the office yesterday.

Implication: Bola arrived at the office after the appropriate hour yesterday. He did not come early (as somebody might have thought) or leave the office late.

Bola came LATE to the office yesterday.

Implication: Bola came later, not early, to the office yesterday.

Bola came late TO OFFICE yesterday .

Implication: Bola went late, not to any other place but the office, yesterday.

Bola came late to the office YESTERDAY.

Implication: Bola came late to the office, not last week, but yesterday.

Bola came late TO THE OFFICE yesterday.

Implication: It is unusual for Bola to come late to the office.

Bola came LATE to the office YESTERDAY.

Implication: Bola was not late yesterday; she was seen to have come early.

Probably, she was late another day.

A combination of tone, pitch and stress can produce different emotional reactions and give different impressions about you. Closely related to voice quality is the notion of voice modulation.

Voice Modulation.

Voice modulation refers to the changing of the attributes of the voice so as to produce a specific effect. In other words, it is a means of varying the frequency of the voice attributes. Modulation of the voice is achieved through.

- i. change of pace;
- ii. change of pitch;
- iii. change of stress, and
- iv. pausing.

Pace means variation of voice quality, and this should be made to transit smoothly. Speaking slowly or quickly is a product of voice modulation.

Pause refers to the breaks in between long sentences and at the end of a sentence. In writing, pause is indicated through the use of punctuation marks, like the comma, the semi colon, the colon and the full stop (or period). You should pause as appropriate when speaking to achieve a good effect. However, too many pauses may create a wrong effect and a wrong impression.

4.2.5 Effective Use of the Telephone

To communicate through the telephone effectively, you need to ensure that you always adopt a polite and a confident voice even when the person is a total stranger. When you initiate a call, tell your receiver your name by saying “This is so and so” (your name) and proceed to announce the name of your organization if you are representing your organization. On occasion, you may also have to find out if the person on the other end is the actual person you wish to speak with by saying: “May I speak with so and so”; “is that so and so” (giving the person’s name or designation), depending on the situation.

When you are through with the correct receiver, do not turn off your telephone without ensuring that your points were well taken by repeating your points again, that is, check that your message had been correctly decoded by your receiver.

4.2.6 Effective Use of Telephone Features

Most telephones have certain features which are meant to help make interpersonal communication easy and effective. These features include *call waiting*, *voice mail*, *call forwarding*, etc. The effective use of these will help you avoid missing important calls.

Call waiting helps you to end your present call quickly and attend to another incoming call. You can make use of this only if you activate your call waiting features. Endeavour to use the feature to increase your effectiveness.

Call forwarding, like call waiting, ensures that you do not miss any call. It has to be activated if you need it. Its function is to enable your calls (when you are out of reach or busy) to be forwarded to another number the receiver of which can relate your message to you later. When the message gets to you later, deal with it as soon as possible. This will increase your effectiveness.

The Voice mail is another feature which helps communicators to achieve effectiveness. Unlike the previous two discussed above, when you are not available the voice mail allows the sender to leave a message. This is recorded,

and you can replay it when you are available. Deal with the message as soon as you are available. If possible and necessary, call the person back immediately or later, as appropriate..

Similarly, you can also leave messages in the voice mail or answering phones if your receiver is not available. When leaving a message, start with your name, then telephone number and the time of your call. Endeavour to speak slowly and clearly, such that your number and name, and/or your message may not be lost. Be brief and specific when leaving your message.

4.4 **Conclusion**

The telephone is a good piece of technology intended to make communication easy and efficient.. Take advantage of it and its innovations to improve your effectiveness in its use. When you make calls, endeavour to be polite and friendly.

4.5 **Summary**

You have learnt about the importance of the telephone, the effective use of which include the way in which your voice is projected and appropriate application of features of the telephone intended to increase your effectiveness in the use of the telephone. All these will improve your effectiveness in interpersonal

In addition to the above, the notions of pitch, tone, stress, pace and pause were treated in this unit. These will also improve your effectiveness in communication.

4.6 Tutor-marked Assignment

- i. Discuss the importance of the telephone in interpersonal communication.
- ii. Discuss the features of voice qualities and voice modulation.
- iii. What part do these features perform in telephone conversations?
- iv. What is the difference, if any, between face-to-face communication and telephone communication?

4.5 References

Helier, Robert & Tim Hindle (1998): *Essential Manager's Manual*. London:

Dorling Kindersley Limited.

Locker, Kitty O. (2000): *Business Administrative Communication*. Boston:

Irwin McGraw-Hill.

MODULE 2, UNIT 5: NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

5.0 Introduction

The previous four units have exposed you to how to achieve effective oral communication in various modes

In this unit, you will be exposed to that type of communication which does not use words. It is called *non-verbal* communication. Non-verbal communication comprises a series of habitual or spontaneous physical movements which can improve, but may improve communication. These signals or movements can easily be misunderstand or misinterpreted. However, if appropriately used, they often complement the spoken word.

5.1 Objective

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

- i. define the term “non-verbal communication” ;
- ii. identify and explain the different forms of non-verbal communication, and
- iii. compare and contrast types of non-verbal communication.

5.2 Content

- 5.2.1. **Non-Verbal Communication** refers to that type of communication which uses different meaningful signals and signs that are not written or spoken as words but can be decoded by the receiver. Sometimes, these signs and signals are unconsciously made. Some are habitual mannerisms which you have developed over a long period and have now advanced beyond your ability to control. Therefore, they are unplanned. They are instinctive responses to your total environment of sounds and physical features.

Non-verbal communication is culture-oriented. Different cultures may interpret anyone sign differently. Thus, the signs are picked up from our socio-cultural environment. Hence, non-verbal signs can easily create misunderstandings which are difficult to resolve. For example, in some parts of Nigeria a direct gaze at (making an eye contact with) your elder while he/she is speaking to you shows respect and attention, in other parts of the country, this conduct is seen as a sign of disrespect or haughtiness.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (SAE)

Can you identify more signs that can be contradictorily interpreted within your environment? Share your findings with some of your study mates.

5.2.2 Forms of Non-verbal Communication

There are many conscious and unconscious signs. They include *gestures, body postures, eye movements, facial expressions, silence, dressing, paralanguage, space, touch, colours*, and many more..

5.2.1 Body Postures

Body postures are the most common, most unconscious and most misunderstood signs. Body posture implies the way you carry yourself, i.e., the way you sit, walk and stand. The way you sit, walk and stand says a lot about you – it could mean that you are confident, afraid, anxious, happy, proud, sad, to mention a few. You should, therefore be conscious of your body posture and cultivate a positive body carriage. Here are some types of body postures and their possible interpretations in Nigeria.

- Standing with your hands on your hips, and your chest out implies confidence and ability to take control of a situation.
- Standing with your hands on your sides, with a direct gaze, shows attention and freedom from of tension.

- Standing with one hand on the shoulder and the other hand in the pocket indicates doubt and lack of confidence.
- A slight shoulder slumping indicates lack of confidence.
- An indirect gaze indicates evasion and a sense of uncertainty and tension, and of being defensive.
- Sitting with the two legs firmly on the floor shows respect and freedom from fear.
- Sitting and shaking one's legs indicates tension, restlessness or anger.
- Walking with the shoulders raised high indicates pride and/or confidence.

SAE: Identify more body postures and discuss their meanings with your study mates.

5.2.2.2 Gestures

Gestures refer to the movement of the hands, head and face to convey some meanings. Gestures play important roles in communication; indeed they play crucial roles in noisy environments in which speech is made impracticable. It is very useful when you find yourself in an environment in which you do not understand the spoken language of the place; in such a place, you can resort to making gestures to obtain information. Gestures include the *waving of hands*, the *raising of some fingers*, *nodding and shaking the head*, *banging a table*, *smacking the fingers*, *pointing*, *opening the palm*, the *placing of fingers on the cheek or chin*, etc.

Often, both educated and uneducated speakers use gestures to emphasize a point or to complement their message. Gestures are very commonly used but it is decoded differently in different societies. Gestures that mean approval in one culture could mean disapproval in others.

SAE: Identify different gestures and share their meanings with your study mates.

5.2.2.3 Facial Expressions

Facial expressions include *smiling, blinking the eyes, the winking of eyes, nose-pinching, frowning, raising of eye brow, wrinkling of the nose, picking the nose, grinning, lips- separating, twisting the mouth*, etc. These and many more are used to express different emotions and attitudes, like disgust, surprise, anger, contempt, affection, dislike, anxiety, appraisal, uncertainty, confusion, etc. Unlike other non-verbal expressions, facial expressions tend to be more universal in meaning. Facial expressions come into play mostly during face-to-face communication. Either the source or the receiver can employ them as a means of buttressing an idea, feeling or attitude. Therefore, as a communicator you should be very observant of your receiver's facial expression, as well as other non-verbal cue because these can betray a person's hidden emotions and feelings.

To be a good communicator, ensure that your facial expression agrees with what you are saying except when you deliberately wish to run counter to your speech. And as a good listener, it is important to note that if the message that comes from your source's expression differs from the message of his/her utterance, it is better to take seriously what is spoken than what is expressed through non-verbal symbols because non-verbal symbols are sometimes unconscious communication

of which the communicator may not be aware.

5.2.2.4 Para-language

Paralanguage refers to voice qualities and modulation, in other words, the difference between what you said and the manner in which you said it. Your voice can betray your emotions and attitudes towards what you are saying. The way in which you say, "thank you", "yes", "no", "can I help you?", or "what do you want", and many other word groups, can be modified to reflect different meanings from the actual meanings of the word groups. Their actual meanings can be affected by your voice modulation and quality.

5.2.2.5 Grooming and Dressing

Grooming and dressing are important communication devices. Your garments and shoes and your general dressing say a lot about you, especially when you are meeting someone for the first time. First impressions are very important. This impression is usually created on the basis of how you talk and dress.

Grooming and dressing are very effective ways through which you can communicate details about yourself. They give such details about you as your profession, religious beliefs, attitude to life, behaviour, emotions and social status. The way you dress and decorate your body is capable of sending out signals which may not be a true reflection of who you are.

Therefore, it is very important that you make sure that you encode the appropriate and desired meaning about yourself in your dressing and grooming so that your dressing and body decorations do send out the right and desired signals.

Sometimes, there is a conflict between the message that you want to send out about yourself as an individual person and that which you are expected to send out in your business environment. Take for example that you wish to be seen and known as a practising “born again” Christian but you work as a receptionist at an airline firm. The nature of your work requires that you dress with body decorations that make you look smart, attractive and elegant, but your religious dressing requires casual or simple dressing without ornaments on your body. There is a conflict. If you neglect your public role as a receptionist and dress in a manner to portray you as a “born again”, your dressing will be seen by some customers as portraying you as a lousy and carefree receptionist who is unfit for your job.

In a situation such as this, it is important that you do not dress only to suit yourself, but also to suit your profession (and when you are not on duty) to suit your religious beliefs. Your job as a receptionist is to create a good image (through being admirable and good looking) of your corporate organization so as to win customers patronage and thus secure your job. Your hair-do (whether it is long, neatly kept, well kept or tattered), your make-up, foot-wear, nails, etc; will all be assessed and

decoded to reach a conclusion about your person. Therefore, you should be conscious of the fact that you are being subjected to assessment on the basis of your complete dressing and grooming.

Different situations (office, birthday party, burial ceremony, gala night etc) demand its own unique form of dressing. Wearing office dresses (skirt suit or a three piece suit) to a naming ceremony may look out of place and send a wrong signal about you.

5.2.2.6 Space

Space refers to the distance a person maintains from the other person during communication. The distance maintained usually depends on age, sex and the situation involved. Four distance zones have been identified, as followed:

- i. *Intimate distance*: In this type of distance, the parties involved in communication have intimate relationship, such as friends and family members have. During communication between friends or family members, the distance is close and each participant feels free to reach out and touch the other person because of the intimacy existing between them.
- iii. *Personal Distance*: In this type of distance, the parties involved have a casual relationship. The distance maintained is not as close as in intimate distance but close enough for communicators to hear each other or one another. You should watch the distance between you and your family members during discussions, and between you and your classmates whom you are not familiar with.
- iv. *Social Distance*: This is the distance created in formal settings, for example, between a boss and his/her subordinates, teacher and student, etc. Sometimes, the individuals involved in the communication process may not know each other very well or even at all.
- v. *Public Distance*: This is the distance maintained at public speeches for example, political speeches, lectures, delivering a paper etc. It is the distance maintained when one person is addressing a crowd – there is seldom a one-to-one interaction.

It is important that you are conscious of the space between you and your receiver, bearing in mind the situation, their age, sex and your level of intimacy with them. When persons of the same sex or age are communicating, the distance between them is closer than when they are communicating with people of the opposite sex or with older or younger persons with whom they are not familiar. When next you are communicating with a person and he / she moves away or backward, the person probably feels that his/her space is being invaded. Cultural differences can also affect the distance between a speaker and his/her receiver. Similarly, one tends to be closer to one's receiver during social gatherings than during non-social situations. Remember that leaving appropriate distances between people is an aspect of non-verbal cues.

5.2.2.7 Colour

Most organizations, religions, countries, political parties, etc, have different colours with which they can be identified. For example, anywhere in the world in which a plain green and a white green flag is seen, the receiver will decode it as the Nigeria colour. Note that a plain green flag signifies Libya, that a green, yellow and red flag identifies Mali, while a green white and blue flag identifies Sierra Leone. Colours are particularly useful in labeling objects.

Similarly, individual colours are used to signify different meanings. The interpretations of most colours are universal. For example:

Red signifies Danger and Royalty.

White signifies Purity and peace (sometimes colour of mourning).

Blue signifies Life/earth.

Purple denotes Nobility.

Green denotes Fruitfulness/Spring, nature, safety.

Pink is associated with the girl child.

Blue are associated with the boy child, sea and water.

Some individuals prefer some colours to the extent that, if you are wearing their favourite colour while making a reasonable request, they grant such request because of the colour that you are wearing. But if you wear a colour disliked by the person, your request may be refused and you will wonder why.

SAE: Carry out a research on colours and their meanings

5.3 Conclusion

Non-verbal communication includes a huge range of unconscious signals which can be interpreted differently in different cultures, and by different people. Hence, distortion, misunderstanding and misinterpretation abound in encoding and decoding encoding non-verbal cues.

5.4 Summary

In this unit you have been exposed to that process of communication whose means of expression is not speech or writing. It employs a series of means, ranging from body language, gestures, facial expression, distance, touch, time, colour, age, etc. Its interpretation is complex and it varies from person to person and from culture to culture. These differences in interpretation can lead to misinformation and confusion. Hence it is important that you are conscious of them so as not to send wrong signals to people. However, there are a few non-verbal cues that have universal meanings.

5.5 Tutor-Marked Assignment

- (1) Explain the term 'non-verbal communication'.
- (2) Compare and contrast oral communication and non-verbal communication.
- (3) Identify and explain four different forms of non-verbal communication .
- (4) Why does the interpretation of non-verbal communication create difficulties for communicators? How would you, as a communicator, deal with these difficulties?

5.6 Reference

Helier, Robert & Tim Hindle (1998): *Essential Manager's Manual*. London:
Dorling Kindersley Limited.

Locker, Kitty O. (2000): *Business and Administrations Communication*
Boston: Irwin McGraw Hill.

McAbraham-Inajoh, Nath & Mangrwwat, Solomon Elisha (2000): *Effective
Business Communication: An Introductory Text*. Lagos: Dan Vinton
Limited.

MODULE 3

UNIT 1: THE WRITING PROCESS 1.

1.0. Introduction

Among the three modes of communication, i.e., *speech*, *non-verbal* and *writing*, writing is probably the most tasking and demanding of the three modes. It is a painstaking activity which requires a high level of creativity, as well as a high degree of organization. To be a good writer, you must be motivated to write, and also have the ability to produce well structured sentences, to punctuate and spell accurately and write convincingly.

In this unit, you will be exposed to punctuation and spelling techniques.

1. 1. Objectives

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

- (i) explain spelling techniques, and
- (ii) use at least principal punctuation marks accurately.

Content

Spelling Techniques

Spelling English words is a tedious task for most Second Language (L2) speakers of English. This is a result of the nature of many English words which do not have a one-to-one correlation between their spellings and their pronunciations. Hence, there are many anomalies in the spelling of English words. However, some general rules can be deduced

from these anomalies and these general rules can serve as a guide to L2 users of English.

Here are some basic rules of spelling:

Rulers for Spelling **Prefixes and suffixes**

Prefixes are morphemes which precede the root of a word, while

suffixes are those which come after the root of a word. Examples:

PREFIXES:

Archbishop

Out live

Superman

International

Irresponsible

Unilateral

Unkind

multipurpose

SUFFIXES:

Friendlyy

Playful

Selfish

Acceptable

Workers

Coverage pages

Symbolize

Quickly

Bigger Boxes

Prefixes

Rule 1: In attaching the prefix in- to a root word, there are some variations, depending on the letter which starts the root word.

When the root word begins with the letter r, in- becomes ir - as in irresponsible, irrelevant, irrevocable, irredeemable. However, when the root word begins with l, in- becomes il as in illogical, illiterate, illegal, illegitimate. On the other hand; when the root word begins with m or p or b, in- becomes im -as in immortal, imbalance immovable, improper.

However, when the root word begins with any other letters apart from r, m, b, and l, in is maintained -as in:

inappropriate, insane, indiscipline, indigestion.

Rule 2: You should not drop any letter if the first letter of the root word is the same as the last letter of the prefix:

Mis- + spell = misspell

Dis - + satisfied = dissatisfied

Un- + necessary = unnecessary

Rule 3: You should not double the -s in mis or dis when the first letter of the root word does not begin with s, as in:

Dis- + appear = disappear

Dis - + connect = disconnect

Mis- + leading = misleading

Mis- + inform = misinform.

Suffixes

Rule 4: You should drop the final e of the root word if the suffix begins with a vowel sound. (Note that sounds are different from letters. Do you know the vowel sound? There are twelve pure vowel sounds which can be compressed to /a, e, o, u, i/).

Examples of the rule:

Write + ing = writeing = writing

Salute + ation = saluteation = salutation

Fame + ous = *fameous = famous

Love + able = *loveable = lovable.

Bore + ing = *boreing = boring.

Achieve + ing = *achieveing = achieving.

Rule 5. You do not have to drop the final e of the root word if the suffix begins with a consonant sound:

Hope + ful = hopeful

Late + ness =lateness

Care + less = careless.

Rule 6: You do not drop the final e of the root word even when the suffix begins with a vowel when the root word ends in -ce or -ge:

Notice + able = noticeable

Courage + ous = courageous

Service + able = serviceable

Advantage + ous = advantageous

Peace + able = peaceable

Manage + able = manageable

Rule 7:

When a root word ends with a consonant preceded by a single vowel, you should double the consonant if the suffix begins with a vowel:

Stop, stopped, stopping

Thin, thinner, thinnest

Swim, swimmer

Run, runner

Exceptions:

There are some exceptions to these rules.

How do you spell the colouring of clothes?

Dye + ing = dyeing (colouring)

Mile + age = Mileage

Hoe + ing = hoeing

This letter – e is not deleted because it is needed to produce the right pronunciation. If you remove the –e, you have;

* Dying , milage, hoing, canoist (which are incorrect).

Exception to Rule 5:

True +ly = truly

Argue + ment = argument

Exception to rule 6:

Practice + able = practicable

1.2.1.2 Unpronounced Letters.

There are some English words which have some letters that are not pronounced. Such words sometimes create spelling problems for L2 speakers. Some speakers are confused whether to drop the unpronounced letters or not.

Examples:

LETTER K

When letter *n* is preceded by this letter, the letter *k* is often not pronounced, but, in spelling, it is to be written, as in:

Knack	/nack/	knickers	/nikas/
Knave	/neiv/	knife	/naïf/
Knead	/ni:d/	know	/nou:/

Knee /ni:/

Letter G:

When letter *n* is preceded by letter *g*, the letter *g* is not pronounced but should be written when spelling, as in;

Gnash sign

Gnat reign

Gnaw

However, in signature, signal, signify, the letter *g* is pronounced because the letter *g* marks the end of a syllable, while letter *n* begins another syllables; hence:

Sig nature /sig natsr /

Sig nal /sig nal /

Sig nify /signifai/

Letter W:

An unpronounced letter *w* often has letter *r* or *h* after it, as in?

Wrap wrath

wren whom

Wrist wrought

Who whole

Whore whose why

But in *what, white, whether, which, whoop*, etc. the letter *w* is pronounced, while letter *h* is unpronounced.

Letter t: when letter *t* is in the middle of a word and is preceded by letter *s* or followed by *ch*, the letter *t* is unpronounced, as in.

Castle match

Listen pitch

Whistle sketch

Christmas

However, when the letter *t* in the middle of a word is preceded by letter *s* and the letter *t* marks the beginning of a syllable while the letter *s* marks the end of the previous syllable, the letter *t* is pronounced, as in;

Castigate listeria

Masticate master

Pigsty piston etc

Letter D:

An unpronounced letter *d* is often followed by letter *g*, as in;

Badger, judge

Bridge lodger

Dodgy Budge

Do not confuse the */-dz-/* in the pronunciation with letter *d*. Combined letters *dg* is pronounced like letter *j*.

When an unpronounced letter *p* begins a word, letter *n*, *s* or *t* often comes after it, as in;

Pneumatic Psych receipt

But when letter *P* and *t* belong to different syllables with the same word, the letters *p* and *t* are pronounced as in:

Receptive /riseptiv/ receptor / riseptor/

Tricky Letter Combinations

Words containing letters *ie* or *ei* often create spelling problems for L2 speakers. However, there is a rule which can help clear this confusion:

when letters *ie* or *ei* has /e/ or /ee/sound, write letter *i* before *e*

(*ie*), but if there is letter *c* before the sound, write *e* before *i*

(*ei*), as in:

Write *i* before *e*:

yield, piece, achieve,

field, belief, wield,

grief, chief, niece.

write *e* before *i*:

receive, deceive, receipt,

conceit, perceive.

1.2.2 . Punctuation

The essence of writing is to communicate your feelings, ideas and opinions. You should ensure that your receiver gets these feelings and ideas correctly through your use of appropriate punctuation.

Punctuation is a writing device used to indicate pauses which occur in the spoken language. It does not make up for faulty grammar, but helps to control and break up streams of thought into manageable and comprehensible units. Punctuation marks can be classified into *end marks* (or stop signs), *internal marks* (or slow-down signs) and *enclosure marks* (or parenthetical marks).

1.2.2.1. End marks

The end markers are used at the end of a unit of information. They include:

(1) The full stop (.)

It is used for the following purposes:

(a) To indicate the end of a declarative and imperative sentence, as in:

- The manager has travelled abroad.
- She comes late always.
- Get out of this office now.
- Give me the file.

(b) After name initials and abbreviated words, as in:

- Dr. U.S. Okocha was here today.
- Mrs. B.C. Uwa has travelled to Aba.
- It is a C.O.D. affair.

Note that the full stop may be omitted in common abbreviations like:

Mr - Mister

Dr - Doctor

PHD - Doctor of Philosophy

The full stop is nowadays usually omitted in abbreviations that are made up of capital letters as in:

WHO - World Health Organization

BBC - British Broadcasting Cooperation

AIT - African Independent Television

(2) The question mark (?)

It is used for the following ways:

(a) To indicate the end of interrogative sentences, as in:

- When did you enter this office?
- Who are you?

As an indication of the writer's uncertainty of the correctness of

given information, especially dates, as in:

- Democracy was ushered in (?) 1999.

(3) Exclamation Mark!

It is used as follows:

(a) To end a sentence expressing emotions of joy, anger, surprise, etc., as in:

- What a beautiful office!
- That's wonderful!
- Not again!

(b) In blessings and curses, as in:

God bless the manager!

May your way be rough!

Internal marks

Internal marks function as slow-down signs.

They include:

(1) The comma (,) which indicates a short pause and is used as

follows:

(a) To separate words, phrases and clauses in a series of three

or more, as in:

- The boss, his wife and children travelled to Abuja.
- If you come early, clean the office and arrange the seats for the meeting.

- We came, we saw, we liked it and bought it.

(b) To set off the name or title of a person being directly addressed, as

in:

- Bola, will you come early tomorrow?
- Will you come early tomorrow, Bola?

(c) To set off words or phrases that give additional information about the noun that it follows, as in:

-My manager, the tall dark man in green shirt, has just arrived from
London.

- The captain of the team, Kanu Nwankwo, was injured.

(d) To set off introductory words, phrases or clauses in a sentence, as in:

- By the way, do you like it?
- No way, I won't allow it.

(2) The semi colon (;) is used to indicate a longer pause (as compared with the comma) in the following ways:

(a) As a separating mark in expression which already contain commas in sentences, as in:

- The secretary visited Lagos, Nigeria; Accra, Ghana; Freetown, Sierra Leone and Contonou, Benin last year.

(a) Between two or more main clauses or simple sentences which are closely related and are not linked by coordinators:

- The chairman was here; you were not in the office then.
- The life of man on earth is brief; the greater part of it is spent in pain and struggle.

(3) The colon (:) is a longer pause than the semicolon and comma. It is used as follows:

(a) To introduce a list of items:

- My office requires the following: a packet of files, a roll of typing sheets and a packet of pens.

(b) To separate two coordinated clauses if the second clause explains or repeats (by paraphrase) the information contained in the first, as in:

- Avoid over feeding a watchdog at night: starvation makes dogs aggressive guards.
- My former office was better: at least we were allowed to use our initiatives and there was job satisfaction.

It is also used for making weighty elaborating declarations:

- The South Africa fight is not for us exiles: it is for those down there in the south.

(4) The apostrophe (‘) is used as follows:

(a) To indicate the possessive or genitive case in nouns:

- The lady’s bag on the table is beautiful.
- Boy’s shoes are expensive.

(b) In contractions:-

I’ve - I have

I’m - I am

It’s - It is

They’d - They had / would

(5) Hyphen (-) resembles the dash. The hyphen is used as follows:

(a) To form a compound word from two or more words, as in:

- God-fearing man
- Mother-in-law
- Thirty-four
- Twenty-nine

(b) Sometimes, to separate a prefix ending in a vowel from a word which begins with the same vowel or after a prefix with a proper noun, as in:

un-English, co-ordinate, anti-Christians

(c) To separate a word that is divided between one end of a line and begins at the beginning of another line. Such words should end on the first line with pronounceable morphemes or syllables.

(6) The dash (-) is used in the following ways:

(a) To indicate in a comment or summary what has gone on before, as in:

- The files were scattered on the table, papers were littered

on the floor, coats were thrown on the chairs - the entire

room was untidy.

- You have misused the opportunity given to you - how

can I allow you again?

The Enclosure Marks

The enclosure marks are used as parenthetical signs and they go in pairs. They are brackets, double dashes and double commas.

(1) The brackets () are used as follows:

(a) To enclose clarifications or explanations that are not part of the sentences in which they are inserted, as in:

- My manager is travelling to London and China. (No management

staff can stop him).

- Take advantage of our Christmas bonus (see price list enclosed).

(b) To enclose a reference:

- It is a rule that every staff member goes on annual leave (see your employment letter).

(2) Square brackets [] are used as follows:

(a) To insert a grammatical correction within a quotation.

- She said; "The manager insist[ed] that the staff should not be paid."

(3) The double dashes (--) are used as follows:

(a) To express a sudden change in thought:

-When I joined the establishment - I will rather not bother you with
the detail - things were not organized.

(b) To express an emphasis in the form of an explanation within a sentence, as in:

- Lady J - a true friend indeed – is always available with a
helping hand.

(4) The double commas (,...,) is used as follows:

To insert appositives

- Usa, the No. 1 supervisor, is an understanding and caring boss.

Note that you can also use the double commas in place of double
dashes, although the dashes give much stronger effects than commas.

1.3. Conclusion

Correct spelling and punctuation is very important in writing. When
you are in doubt of any spelling, check it up in your dictionary. Use
British, not American, spelling because there are spelling differences
in some words. Nigeria uses British spellings.

You should avoid using punctuation marks where they are not needed.
They will create confusion for your receiver. Internal marks should be
used sparingly to create the correct effect. Always read your work
aloud to enable you feel the pauses created by the punctuation marks
that you have used.

1.4 Summary

In this unit, you have gone through spelling techniques as well as the appropriate use of punctuation marks. There are rules governing how to handle prefixes and suffixes combined with root words, rules governing the spelling of words containing unpronounced letter and rules governing the handling of tricky letters.

Punctuation marks are divided into *end marks*, *stop signs*; *internal marks*, *slow-down signs*, *enclosure marks* and *inclusion signs*. These should be used appropriately.

1.5. Tutor-marked Assignment

- (1) Identify three end marks and discuss their usage.
- (2) What is the importance of punctuation in the achievement of unity in writing?
- (3) Discuss in detail the combining of prefixes with root words.
- (4) How would you handle the combining of tricky letters in the spelling of words?

1.6. Reference:

Modigie, Clara U.B (2000): **Developing Writing Skills** Lagos:
Concept Publications.

MODULES 3 UNIT 2: THE WRITING PRECESS II

2.0 Introduction

In the preceding unit you were exposed to punctuation and spelling techniques as part of the steps that will enable you produce good written documents. In this unit, you will examine the stages involved in writing and to the choice of the appropriate language to achieve the use of an effective style in your document.

2.1 Objectives

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

- (i) use appropriate styles that suit the message, receiver and Purpose of your communication;
- (ii) identify the different methods of organizing ideas;
- (iii) explain the five issues which the writer should consider in order to achieve effective communication, and
- (iv) identify the stages in writing.

2.2 Content

2.2.1. The Writing Process.

Writing is a complex process and it requires organization, unlike spoken communication in which you have the opportunity to clarify a

point or sentence if there is misunderstanding or misinformation. With written communication, on the other hand, you may not be available to clarify a point or give detailed information. Hence, it is important that you do proper planning before you start writing and a thorough editing before sending the write-up to the receiver. Once the document leaves your hand, it will be read and interpreted by different people who have different opinions and knowledge on the subject. It is almost always impossible to retrieve a document or an utterance in order to correct wrong information.

You may be writing to a customer or client, an employer or a colleague. No matter whom you are writing to, it is important that you decide what you wish to convey and how decide to convey, your information will determine the effectiveness of your information.

Before you start writing you need to ask yourself certain questions concerning the follow matters:

- (1) The purpose of your writing;
- (2) The receiver of your writing;
- (3) The content of your writing;
- (4) The arrangement or organization of your writing, and
- (5) The style of your writing.

Each of these has a very important part to play for your writing to be successful. If anyone of these (purpose, receiver, content, arrangement, and style) is defective, the entire writing will not be effective.

2.2.1.1. The Purpose of Writing.

The purpose of your writing refers to your reason of writing. Ask yourself what you wish to achieve with your writing. Is your purpose to give information, make a request, persuade somebody, ask for information or give instruction? The statement of your purpose should be made in clear terms. Your purpose should not be too vague; be specific.

Assuming that you are the training manager of your firm and you are understaffed and some pieces of equipment are outdated. Write to the Executive Manager (Personnel) to convey these concerns. Write your statement of purpose:

* I wish I bring to your notice the fact that we would produce more effective trained staff if the management increase the number of existing trainers and replace some of the present equipment we are using.

Is this a good statement of purpose?

If you were the EDP, will you respond positively?

Identify the flaw. And rewrite the passage.

The purpose is not specific and direct. The essence of your written

message is to make a request for more trainers and new equipment.

Let us rewrite it :

I wish to inform you that we need to employ more staff trainers and acquire new equipment so that we can produce more effective trained staff.

This passage is specific and direct. The key words are:

...to inform you ...

...need to employ more trainers....

...acquire new equipment...

...produce more effective trained staff.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (SAE)

Write statements of purpose for the following messages:

- The replacement of typewriters with computers in your department
- The introduction of incentive measure for junior and factory workers.

2.2.1.2. The Receiver

Your writing is directed to someone or some persons. Whomever the message is directed to is the receiver. Your receiver is the person who will use your information, or act on it or who needs to know about what you have written. Your receiver may need to make a decision or solve a problem or gain information, etc. Whatever it is, you should supply enough information which will enable the person understand your writing. Your choice of words should fit your receiver's status. Anticipate your receiver's questions and write the response that will suit his/her questions.

Referring to the sample situation is 2.2.1.1, the receiver is the

Executive Director (Personnel, EDP) and she is a senior colleague and

in authority. Your write-up should be structured to reflect this. You

should be conscious of the EDP's temperament and personality:

- Is the EDP biased towards your department?
- What is the EDP's attitude, interest, etc, towards the training department?
- What does the EDP know about your department already?

These questions and many more (which you will generate, depending on the situation), will determine what to write and how to write it in order for your message to be effective.

2.2.1.3 The Content of the Message

The content of your message is the information you wish to pass across to your receiver. Your ability to define your purpose and identify the needs of your receiver will enable you to discover what you want to say. Your decisions concerning your purpose and receiver will determine your content and enable you to identify what to include and what to leave out.

Your content is the raw material of insight, opinion, facts, ideas, illustrations, and descriptions, etc, which will help to satisfy your receiver need and achieve your purpose. To produce a worthwhile content, you need to brainstorm. Brainstorming implies jotting down every thought which comes to your mind as you think about your message. In brainstorming, do not bother whether the point is relevant or not, whether the sentence or spelling is correct or not. Just keep writing, let your imagination flow, when you feel that you have

exhausted the relevant points, then, you can take a break.

Your list is a mixture of relevant and irrelevant points. Take a careful look at your list and then strike out what is not relevant to your purpose, receiver and message. Rewrite your points in the order in which you wish the points to appear in your writing. If new ideas surface then, write them down. Classify your points into categories of problems and solutions, implications and importance, cause and effect, features and benefits, etc.

Your content should have the qualities of credibility, information value and completeness.

Credibility:

Credibility means that your information is based on fact and that your points are believable and convincing. You can achieve credibility by providing sufficient exemplifications and explanations.

Using our sample situation in 2.2.1.1, which of these two statements below is more credible?

(1) We are short-staffed and most of our equipment is outdated.

(2) The rate of trainers to trainees is 1.25 at present in addition to the fact that we are using type-writers as against modern computers, which have advantages of time saving and storage effectiveness.

The second statement is more convincing and contains facts which can be verified.

Information value:

Your receiver should be enriched by your message. Your content

should supply new information which is relevant to your receiver and

the subject matter. If you reiterate what your receiver already knows

or is already in support of then, your content lacks information value.

You have to go the extra mile of introducing something new or giving

a fresh insight into the subject.

For example, if your writing tells the EDP about the ratio of trainers to

trainees, the EDP is aware of this already, then your writing lacks

information value. You should include the implications and effects

which the ratio has for the organization.

Completeness:

This implies that your receiver understands all you have written and that you have provided enough illustrations, clarifications,

explanations and implications of the information that you have given.

The amount of illustration, clarification, explanation and implication

to be given depends on your purpose and receiver.

For instance, your information to the EDP should include:

the negative effect of lack of trainers;

the implications of poorly trained staff;

illustration of the ineffectiveness of the old equipment, and

the benefit to be derived from purchasing new modern equipment, etc

These three criteria – credibility, information value and completeness - will make your content worthwhile and convincing.

2.2.1.4 The Arrangement of the Message.

The arrangement of ideas should be such that your writing achieves coherence. There are several ways in which you can arrange or organize your ideas, points, sentences and paragraphs. The choice of an arrangement pattern will depend on your purpose, receiver and content. Organizational patterns include order of importance, chronological order, cause and effect, etc.

Order of Importance:

This method enables you to discuss your points in the order of their importance. That is, you either discuss important things first and the least important things later, or you begin with the least important and more on to the most important.

Let us assume that your writing to the EDP requires that you explain the importance of increasing the number of staff trainers. Your passage should look like this:

It is important to increase staff trainers because there are several benefits to be derived by the organization from this. First, increasing the number of staff trainers is cost-effective because less time will be spent on training individual staff member and the money wasted in training the individual staff member will be reduced or completely saved. Secondly, the quality of

training will improve because more trainers will make it possible to have one-to-one interaction with the trainees; this will mean that the trainees will be better exposed to good customer relation techniques. Finally, improved trained staff will imply more efficient staff and an increase in customers.

There are some words which are used for connecting sentences and paragraphs. They are called *transitional devices*. Some transitional words for order of importance are *first, second, fourth next, last, finally, above all, more important, most important, in addition to, etc.*

Chronological Order;

This is used for information related to historical events and explanation of processes and procedures. The information will be written in a step-by-step order to reveal how the event occurs or how the procedure can be carried out. Its transitional devices are the same as those of order of importance, but they also include *before, while, after, as soon as, since, first, second, next, until, etc.*

SAE: write a chronological passage. Use any topic of your choice.

Cause and Effect Method:

In this method, you discuss the reason (cause) for something and then you discuss the result (effect) of the cause. Transitional signals for cause and effect organization include *the first cause, the second reason, the next reason, because of, due to, to cause, as a result, the effect of, to have an effect, consequently, therefore, thus, hence, etc.*

Below is a model passage

The cause of the staff's inability to be efficient on the job is insufficiency of staff trainers that can make it possible for the staff in training to imbibe the necessary skills required. In other words, staff are not taught enough skills in good customer relation techniques.

Consequently, lack of quality training of the staff makes them inefficient and, thereby, reduces the acquisition of customers. This is so because any customer who feels badly treated will not patronize the establishment any more.

SAE: Can you pick out all the transitional devices used in this passage?

Identify the sentences which state the cause and, then, those which state the effect.

Comparison and Contrast

Any issues that belong to a general class can be compared and contrasted. When you compare, you show how certain aspects or features of one item is similar to the features of another item.

However, when you contrast two items, you bring out the differences between them, i.e., how they are not the same or alike.

For instance, you can compare and contrast the features and functions of typewriters and computers,

SAE: Write out two paragraphs on typewriters and computers; bring out their common features and functions, as well as their dissimilarity.

2.1.2.5. The Style of Presentation of the Message,

Generally, *style* refers to “how” a writer (or speaker) writes (says) what he has to write or say. It is the manner of using language to express one’s ideas. Style is the totality of the techniques employed by the writer (speaker) to achieve his/her purpose and which suits the receiver. The style of a communicator may be viewed in terms of *register* and *diction*, (i.e., the choice of words and the appropriateness of the words) the sentence structure or syntax, the communicator’s attitude to the subject of the message, his/her tone and other features.

The communicator’s style is influenced by the following factors:

- The relationship between the source and the receiver, it could be subordinate/ boss, boss/subordinate, colleagues, friends, etc.
- The nature of the message or content, which could be
- positive/negative, request/information, instruction/demand, etc.
- The context or situation of the communication: is it formal, informal or semi-formal?
- The means of transmitting the message: is it written or spoken?

As a communicator, you should know which language to use to suit the receiver and situation. For instance, you can say to a junior colleague:

I warn you to stop this joke.

I want to see you in my office now.

To express a similar message to your boss, you would have to employ a different language style. Thus:

I wish you do not repeat this expensive joke, sir.

I would like to see you in your office. Or

I wanted to see you in your office. Or

Could I see you in your office, sir?

Or

Can I see you in your office, sir?

You should ensure that your style is characterized by:

accuracy of expression;

clarity of expression;

appropriate use of language, and

brevity of expression

2.2.2. The Stage of Writing.

Writing is a step-by-step process, which is made up of the following

four stages:

The pre-writing stage;

The writing stage;

The revising stage, and

The proofreading stage

The Pre Writing Stage

This is the foundation stage, which if wrongly handled, will mar the entire process. This stage involves the use of all one's senses to think, create and select ideas relevant to the message; consideration of the purpose, the receiver and the style are also included here. This has been treated in detail in section 2.2.1

The Writing Stage:

This is the core stage where the already generated and arranged ideas are expatiated into full paragraph. Each paragraph contains a major idea. At this stage, you will put into use the arrangement methods which you have decided on, ensuring that you make use of an appropriate style. Your write-up should have three parts: the introductory part, the body and the concluding part.

The Revision Stage:

This stage consists of addition to, subtraction from and rearrangement and substitution of, if necessary, the main ideas and supporting points for the purpose of creating a well-coordinated and well-structured write-up. You should pay special attention to the sentence structure, grammatical correctness, the tense patterns and the overall organization of the writing.

The Proofreading Stage:

This final stage enables you to examine your work and to make final adjustment before sending the message out. At this stage, you assume the role of the reader to assess whether the receiver will be able to interpret the writing in the way that you want it interpreted.

Below are some questions which will assist you in the revision and proofreading stages:

- Does the writing stick to the purpose?
- Do the points show a clear relationship to the central idea?
- Does my style suit my purpose and receiver?
- Is the method of organization an effective one?
- Is the information complete?
- Does the content have information value and credibility?
- Do the verbs agree with their subjects?
- Are there any unnecessary words, sentences and points that should be eliminated?
- Is the organization direct and straightforward?
- Are the sentences and paragraphs connected with the appropriate transitional signals?
- Are the illustrations concrete or rather abstract?
- Is the language officious, biased, sexist, positive, natural, etc?
- Are there sufficient reasons, illustrations, explanations, etc, to satisfy the receiver's need?

2.3 Conclusion:

Every communicator should follow the writing process but may not follow the exact order given in this unit. Decide which sequencing

suits you and ensure that you achieve effective communication.

2.4 Summary:

In this unit, you have been exposed to the steps involved in the writing process. Writing is a complex process and it requires a step-by-step procedure in order for one to achieve effective communication.

2.5. Tutor-marked Assignment

- (1) Define the term "style" and show how style can affect your work.
- (2) Explain briefly the different stages of writing.

- (3) Discuss and illustrate the different methods of organizing ideas in your writing.
- (4) What is the importance of the receiver and the purpose in your writing?

2.6. References

Dumont, Raymond A & Lannon, John M (1985): *Business*

Communications. Boston: Little Brown and Company.

Modigie, Clara U.B. (2000): *Developing Writing Skills*. Lagos:

Concept Publications.

Oshima, Alice & Ann Hogue (1981): *Writing Academic English*.

Reading: Addison - Wesley Publishing Company

MODULE 3, UNIT 3: THE PARAGRAPH: AN OVERVIEW

3.0 Introduction

In the last unit, you were exposed to the different stages involved in writing, as well as to the choice of the appropriate language in order to create an effective style and the method of organizing ideas in your writing.

In this unit you will be exposed to the parts, characteristics and types of the paragraph.

3.1 Objectives

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

- (i) write a well structured paragraph;
- (ii) identify and explain types of paragraphs, and
- (iii) explain the characteristics of a paragraph.

3.2 Content

3.2.1 The paragraph

A paragraph is a basic unit of organization or thought in writing and it consists of a group of related sentences which develops one main idea or point. A paragraph can be made up of only one sentence or as many as ten sentences or more. The number of the sentences within a paragraph is not important what is important is that the idea within the paragraph should be well developed and that it should be clear. To be well developed implies that the main idea in a paragraph should be given enough illustration, explanation, description, etc, such that the reader's need is satisfied. A paragraph has three structural parts: *a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence.*

The topic sentence is one general statement which summarizes the whole idea in the paragraph. It identifies the topic of the paragraph. Other sentences in the paragraph revolve around it by way of explaining, describing, illustrating, etc, the topic sentence. The topic sentence is always a statement, not a phrase or a dependent clause. The position of the topic sentence varies. The commonest position is the initial part of the paragraph. Here, it appears as the first sentence in the paragraph. It can also appear at the end of the paragraph as the final statement in the paragraph.

The supporting sentences are other sentences in the paragraph which help to expatiate the topic sentence by giving reasons, examples, facts, statistics, etc. The number of supporting sentences varies, but the topic sentence is usually one sentence. The concluding sentence, like the topic sentence, appears at the end of the paragraph. It is a single sentence which summarizes the paragraph and leaves the audience with important points to remember. A concluding sentence is not always necessary, but when it is written, it is helpful to the audience.

The following is a model paragraph. Read it carefully:

Tone is an important aspect of effective communication. It can create a negative or positive response from the audience. The tone of the source can arouse a particular feeling or mood in the audience. The tone of an efficient piece of communication can plunge the audience into a calm reflexive mood, a fearful mood, a joyous mood, depending on what the communicator wants to achieve. The ability of the source to choose the appropriate words to create the desired response from the audience is a sign of effective communication.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (SAE)

Identify the topic sentence, supporting sentences and the concluding sentence in the paragraph above.

3.2.2 Constructing a Good Topic Sentence.

A topic sentence is always a complete statement made up of the two parts of a sentence. The two essential parts identify the subject or theme of the paragraph and the controlling, ideas which make a specific comment about the topic, providing a kind of predicate.

For instance:

- Communication is a two way process.
- Noise causes a communication breakdown.
- Distortion in communication is a result of wrong collocation of words.
- Subject language is employed when seeking support from the audience.

Each of the four topic sentences have two parts. The first part (which is underlined) is the subject or theme of the paragraph. The part (not underlined) is the comment on the topic.

The ability to write a good topic sentence makes it easy to write a good paragraph because the comment on the topic limits or identifies what is required in the paragraph. The topic sentence should not be too general or too specific.

Examples:

- Communication involves the source who initiates the information and the audience who is the target of the information.
- Noise in communication can affect the parties involved and make them unable to interpret the symbols effectively.
- “The Manager made the clerk know that *he* was early” is an example of distortion in communication. The distortion is caused by the use of the pronoun *he*. The hearer may not be sure of who the *he* refers to - the Manager or the clerk.
- “The secretary does not perform her duty” is a sentence which can cause misunderstanding.

The first two sentences are too general as topic sentences, while the last two are too specific. It would be difficult to write a good paragraph from any of these topic

sentences. They are all too vague to convey the idea you have in mind.

3.2.3 Characteristics of a Good Paragraph.

The length of a paragraph does not determine whether the paragraph is good or not.

The paragraph length depends on its purpose and the audience's needs. A good paragraph is characterized by, unity of ideas, coherence and completeness. Such a paragraph is said to be well developed.

Unity of ideas

This implies that you discuss only one main point, that is, all the sentences in the paragraph relate to a single major idea. Any word, phrase and sentence that is unrelated to the topic sentence should not be included.

Register refers to the total attribute of a piece of communication

in relation to the specific purpose it is intended to achieve.

It deals with the appropriate choice of words and sentence

structure, such that the chosen words and sentences achieve the

purpose for which they are used. Every situation has specific

words that best describe them, and every audience, depending on their

background and status, has specific needs which can be expressed

by choice of words that suit the needs. Hence, the register changes

to suit the context and the content of a message.

This paragraph has unity of ideas because it has one major point - the notion of register. All the sentences revolve around the idea of the register.

Coherence

A paragraph is coherent when all the sentences are logically knitted to flow smoothly in one direction. In other words, the major idea reflected in the topic sentence and the supporting details reflected in other sentences are arranged in a

logical order by the use of the appropriate devices. When a supporting detail

(which logically should come after the major idea is placed far away), the result is a paragraph that lacks coherence. There should be no sudden jumps. Every sentence should flow smoothly into the next one closest to it. Coherence can be achieved by using any of the following approaches.

- (1) Use pronouns in place of a noun already mentioned in the paragraph as demonstrated below:

Due Tronky knew that the voyage would be risky, but he also knew that *he* had no choice. If *he* and *his* family stayed in *their* country, there was little hope for *their* future. So one night *he*, *his* wife, and ten other members of *his* family boarded a small, rickety boat, taking with *them* only what *they* could carry, and set sail along with thirty-six other Vietnams.

Rather than repeat 'Due Trong; the pronouns *he*, *his*, also *their*, *they* and *them* were used in place of 'Due Tronky family'

- (2) Repeat a key word or idea, or use the synonyms or antonyms of the key words in some sentences.

For instance:

Words are primarily used as symbols. These words are abstract signs with which the source encodes messages and ideas. The initiator of the information is free to assign whatever value he chooses to these codes provided the symbols are familiar to the receiver. If the decoder does not understand the signs, the message will be meaningless. However, the encoder can structure the signs in such a way that the receiver can, within the content, decode the information. Whatever the encoder chooses

to do, he must be conscious of the ability of the receiver.

In this passage, the key words are repeated and some synonyms are used.

SAE: Identify the key words and the synonyms used in the passage above.

(3) Use appropriate transitional devices and other connectors to link words, phrases, clauses and sentences in order to achieve smooth flow of these grammatical units within a paragraph. These devices signify specific meanings or relationships: To signify:

addition use *moreover, and, furthermore, as well as, also again, in addition, etc.*

result, *hence, accordingly, thus, therefore, as a result, consequently, etc.*

explanation *in other words, simply state, in fact, etc*

contrast *however, but, on the other hand, on the contrary, otherwise, still, conversely, nevertheless, etc.*

See section 2.2.14 for more examples.

(4) Use a logical sequence or order in arranging ideas and sentences within the paragraph. (See section 2.2.14). The selection of a logical sequence depends on the topic, purpose and the audience.

Completeness

A good paragraph must be well developed. Completeness implies that the Paragraph contains all the necessary information which will satisfies the needs of the audience. The paragraph should be written in such a way that the audience is not left wandering or groping for the meaning of the paragraph.

The topic sentence should be well illustrated, explained, described, defined or analyzed for the paragraph to be well developed.

3.2.4 Types of Paragraphs

A paragraph can be classified according to the function it performs or the position in which it occurs within a piece of writing. In every piece of writing, there must be three different types of paragraphs, namely, *introduction*, *body* and *conclusion*.

Introductory Paragraph

The *introduction* in any writing is the first encounter which the audience has with the work. It should provide the audience with the general view in the writing. It is the most crucial of all the paragraphs because it can make or mar the entire work. You should make an effort to write an effective introductory paragraph which will arouse the audience's interest and curiosity.

The introductory paragraph has two parts - general statement and specific statement.

The specific statement is called a statement of the thesis and it is the statement which summarizes or conveys the central idea of the work. It covers a larger amount of material than topic sentence. The thesis statement which be written in such a way that it states the major ideas. It should also indicate the method used in organizing the material and list the subdivisions, if possible.

Here are two separate introductory paragraphs for a particular topic:

1. Interpersonal communication is a type of communication which

occurs when a source interacts with another person or group of persons. It employs oral, non-verbal and written forms in the process of interaction. These three forms, though unique, are sometimes interdependent. Each of these forms has its merits and demerits.

- 11 Communication is a daily activity which is performed within or outside the source. When it is outside the source, it is referred to as interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication varies in terms of oral, non-verbal and written types, and the choice of which variant to employ depends on some factors, such as speed, accuracy, confidence, immediacy and convenience.

SAE: _____

Give a title to the passage and identify the thesis statement.

Although the two sample introductory paragraphs are written on the same topic, each of them treats the topic from different perspective. The writer of paragraph 1 examines the merits of the three forms of communication while the writer of paragraph 11 examines the factors which influence the choice of any of the three forms of communication. (It is possible to treat the two perspectives in one write-up.) Note that each of the writers has given the reader clue to what the body of the write-up will contain.

Body Paragraph

The body paragraphs are the subsequent paragraphs after the introductory paragraph. The body of every piece of writing consists of at least two but usually more paragraphs, depending on the subtopics that can be deduced from the introduction. Each paragraph in the body develops an aspect of the thesis statement. The paragraphs function as supporting ideas to the introduction.

Below is a body paragraph deduced from one of the introductory paragraphs above. Can you identify which of them it is?

The major merit of oral communication lies in its immediate feedback in the communication process. This feedback technique enables the source to adjust, clarify, or improve the process, thereby achieving effective communication. However, in oral communication, it is more difficult for the source to hold his/her ground in the face of opposition from the audience. And this inability to hold his/her ground can make the entire process unsuccessful.

Concluding Paragraph

The concluding paragraph is the last paragraph in any piece of writing. It summarizes, reviews or ties up all the points or ideas discussed in the entire piece. New ideas or points should not be introduced into the concluding paragraph. Like the introductory paragraph, it is very important because it ought to create a good impression on the audience. It should provide the audience with a final comment on the topic, summarizes the main points or paraphrase the thesis statement.

Here is a sample:

Finally, interpersonal communication varies in terms of the form it takes with regard to whether it is oral, non-verbal or written interaction. For the source to achieve effective communication, he must bear in mind the factors that will enable him to choose the appropriate form that will suit his message, purpose and audience.

SAE:

Identify the introductory sample paragraph which this conclusion fits. Give reasons for your answer.

3.3 Conclusion

Every piece of writing must contain an introduction, a body and a conclusion. Each paragraph in your writing is very important and should be carefully structured. One badly written paragraph can mar the entire piece of writing.

3.4 Summary

The paragraph is a basic unit of thought in writing and has two parts - a specific statement and general or supporting sentences. In like manner, every paragraph must possess unity of ideas and coherence and must be well developed.

3.5 Tutor-marked Assignment

- (1) Explain the characteristics of a paragraph.
- (2) How can you achieve coherence within a paragraph?
- (3) Write an introductory and a concluding paragraph on:

The Importance of Effective Communication.

Or

The Spread of HIV/AIDS.

3.6 References

Dumont, Raymond A. & Lannon, John N. (1985): *Business Communications*

Boston: Little, Brown & Company.

Modigie, Clara U.B (2000): *Developing Writing Skills*. Lagos: Concept

Publications.

Oshima, Alice & Hogue, Ann (1981): *Writing Academic English*. Reading:

Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

MODULE 3, UNIT 4: CORRESPONDENCE**4.0 Introduction**

In units 2 and 3, you were exposed to the writing process and paragraphing. These will be put into practice in this unit. In this unit, you will examine the act of writing letters and the e-mail.

4.1 Objectives

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

- (1) describe ways of achieving effective correspondence;
- (11) identify and explain the parts of a letter, and
- (111) write a good letter and a good e-mail.

4.2 Content**4.2.1 Correspondence**

Correspondence is the act of exchanging written messages between individuals, between an individual and an organization or between organisations. It is a two-way act because the initiator (writer) sends out a written message – letter, memo or e-mail - and expects a feedback in the form of another written message.

There are basically two types of correspondence - informal and formal letters. The

informal letter is written by an individual to another individual whom the writer is familiar with. The content of an informal letter is usually private and about social matters. The formal letter, on the other hand, is written by an individual to a company or vice versa. The content is always official.

4.2.2 Producing Effective Correspondence

Every written document you produce says a lot about you or the organization you represent. Your written document – letters, memos, fax, etc - is a covert seller through its appearance and content. Therefore, you should ensure that the appearance is attractive and impressive, and that the content is in a correct form and written with correct spellings and in correct grammar and with the appropriate writing style.

(1) Appearance

It does not matter whether you write on foolscap or a plain sheet, or whether you write in hand or you type. Also every document should be framed within margins, leaving some space at both the top, the bottom and the two sides. If the document contains more than one page, the last page should not contain only one or two lines, or only the *subscription* and *the signature*. Rearrange the work so that the last page contains at least five lines or that everything appear on only one page. Avoid any form of abbreviation in the date line and address. Write months, streets, avenues, lanes, company, limited, etc, in full. However, titles – Mr., Dr., Mrs., Jr., Barr., Rev., etc, can be abbreviated. Vary the length of the paragraphs within the document. Avoid extremely long paragraphs - a paragraph should have at most fifteen lines.

(11) Content

The content of your document is also very important. When writing reports and letters, whether social or official, be considerate and courteous by

choosing appropriate words. You should avoid excessive use of 'I' or 'we'.

If you do that, it will show that you are more conscious of yourself than of your audience. You should avoid words and phrases that can cause resentment and hostility from your audience. For instance;

'Your claims..., your assertion..., you stated that..., etc.' These phrases imply that what your audience stated or claimed is not the truth. Similarly, avoid using some adverbs like *obviously*, *evidently*, *apparently*, etc, with the subject 'you'. You should always put yourself in the position of your audience and consider how you will react to some phrases and words. 'Thank you' and 'please' are words that can impress anybody anytime. Always start your letters in a positive way, even when the content is negative. Avoid beginning a letter with any of these: 'We are sorry to ...', 'It was unfortunate that ...', etc

Starting a letter in an apologetic manner may put the receiver off. Reserve your apology for the body of the letter. You can start your letter with what you have done or hope to do to make up for the lapses.

For example:

'Your document has been rewritten to reflect the correct...'

'The issues raised in your last letter have been...'

'Fortunately, we have been able to adjust...'

'Thank you for your ...'

These types of opening statements will stimulate positive responses from your audience. When closing letters, the phrases to be used depend on the relationship between you and the receiver. For instance: 'Thank you for your co-operation' should be used when the writer is a senior colleague and not the other way round.

Also 'We shall be glad to have your reply *immediately*,' sounds impolite.

Instead write '*... as soon as possible*.' 'Thank you in anticipation,' implies that you presume that your request will be granted by the receiver and this may irritate your reader.

Simply write: 'Thank you' if you wish to express an appreciation.

In addition to the above, ensure that your phrases and sentences are clear, accurate and concise.

4.2.3 Types of Correspondence

(1) **Informal letters** are written to friends, acquaintances and family members. They are written to familiar audiences; they employ simple conversational language and are different from formal letters in style, content and appearance.

They contain the

Writer's address: It is written at the top right hand corner of the paper.
But do not write your name here.

Salutation: It is a form of compliment and varies from writer to writer according to the degree of intimacy between the writer and the receiver.

Body of the letter: This is the content or message of the letter. It is usually written in a familiar language and style.

Complimentary close: It is a closing remark, such as *love from, lots of love, best wishes, your loving ...*,etc.

Writer's name: Write the name familiar to the receiver. It is not important to write your surname.

Here is a model letter

10 Busa Lane,

Asokoro District,

Abuja.

12 December, 2006.

Dearest Nkem,

Just a short note to wish you compliments of the season. How are you and your family? Any enjoyment plan for the Christmas holiday?

My children are on holiday already and are anxious to travel to the village to see their granny. Will you go to the village with your children?

Please do come with them. The children will be glad to be together again.

They have a lot of stories to tell about their new school and environment.

Enough about the kids, lets talk about ourselves. You won't believe that I have added so much weight. Why won't I when I have not started work in the new office. Are you laughing? If you were in my position you probably would have added more. Never mind, I will soon start going to the gym.

Extend my regards to your hussy and children.

Luv from,

Cuba.

(11) Formal writings are written within or between organizations and they have a rigid format and style. They are written in a business or official language and

form. There are different types of formal writings such as, *letters, memos, faxes* and *e-mail*. Also, there are various forms of official letters categorized on the basis of the information contained. They include *order letter, adjustment letters, sales acceptance letters, request letters, credit letters, reservation letters, inquiry letters, retirement letters, dismissal letters, claims letters* and many more.

Formal letters have standard parts which include:

Writer's address/ heading: This is the address of the writer or the company, date and reference. Some organizations use letter head paper. In this case, write only the date and reference number if required. If it is not a letter head paper, the address should be written at the top right hand corner. The date should be separated from the address. Sometimes, both the address and the date may be written on the left.

Inside address: This consists of the name and full address of the receiver. It is written below the letter heading but flushed to the left hand corner of the letter. If you know the receiver's status, include it.

The salutation: It comes below the inside address. The salutation varies depending on your knowledge and your perception of the degree of formality with the receiver. The following are a list of salutations.

Dear sir,	Sir,
Dear madam,	Madam,
Dear sir/madam.	Reverend sir,

Sometimes you may use the receiver's name, i.e.,

the title and the surname only. Do not use the first name.

Dear Dr. Adebola,

Dear Dr (Mrs.) Adebola, }

Dear Mrs. Adebola, } Married ladies

Dear Ms/Miss Adebola, }

Dear Dr Omobola, }Singles

Using the receiver's name connotes some level of familiarity existing between the receiver and the writer. So be careful in using names. Also, the use of 'my' in salutation connotes affection. And it is used by a writer who perceives him/herself as being superior either in terms of age, rank or position. The usual and commonly accepted salutation in official letters is Dear Sir/Madam. Stick to this official greetings to avoid any wrong impression.

The letter text:

This consists of the actual message meant for the receiver. Sometimes, the letter text may begin with a statement that matter summarizes the the content of the letter. It should contain three parts – introduction, body and conclusion.

The introduction could be a reference to a previous letter or encounter or a brief statement on the content.

The conclusion could be in the form of appreciation, an assuring statement or a courteous statement expressing hope for a positive response.

Subscription:

It is a form of closing remark. The choice of a closing remark depends on the opening salutation:

Opening salutation

Closing remark

Dear Mrs Omobola,

Yours truly / sincerely,

Dear sir/ madam, Yours faithfully,

Signature: This is written below the subscription and is made up of
your signature followed by your full name and
designation when the latter is necessary.

Other letter parts(these are optional) include:

Attention Line: This is when the letter is addressed to a company, it is
important to draw the attention of the staff member who will
treat the content of the letter. You can write the name and the
designation of the person.

Thus Cuba Group of Company
P. O. Box 12180,
Ikeja.

ATTENTION: Sales Manager

Or

Mr. S. Ogie

Title /Subject Line: The title of a letter tells the receiver the subject matter
of the content. It is a form of caption written after the
salutation. The word 'subject' is not necessary in the
subject Line

ATTENTION: The Sales Manager

Dear sir,

Faulty Equipment

Enclosure Notation: This is written to alert the attention of the receiver of the document accompanying the letter. It is usually written after the signature and name of the writer. The caption, 'Enclosure', 'enclosed', or the abbreviation: 'Enc'., 'Encl'., are all acceptable forms.

Distribution Notation: This is written below the signature and name of the writer or after enclosure if the latter is there. It is written when the letter is sent to other receivers apart from the primary receiver. Any of these abbreviations 'CC', 'PC', 'XC' are used. The names or the official designations of the secondary receiver(s) are written after the signature of the writer.

Postscript: This is used to attract the reader's attention to additional point after the designation.

Forms of Official Letters

Official letters have a rigid style of indentation of the addresses and paragraphs. These are demonstrated in the following letters.

National Open University of Nigeria,
14/16 Ahmadu Bello Way,
Lagos.

December 12, 2006.

Klasun Publishing Company,
Post Office Box 157,
Wuje, FCT,
Abuja.

Dear sir,

FORMS OF OFFICIAL LETTERS

We wish to inform you of the forms of the letter to be used in the textbooks.

The address style is the block form, that is, every first word on every line starts on the same point below the previous line and the punctuation style is closed. Closed punctuation permits the use of commas at the end of each line of the address and full stop at the end of the address.

The paragraph style is the indented type; i.e., every first line of each paragraph is pushed in to the right, while subsequent lines are started at the left margin.

The style used in this letter is closed punctuation, with a blocked address style and indented paragraph

We shall appreciate it if these styles are used in your own textbooks.

Yours sincerely,

(Signature)

U. Stephen

Text Supervisor

Klasun Publishing Company

Post Office Box 157

Wuje FCT

Abuja

20 January 2007

Text Supervisor

Publishing Unit

National Open University of Nigeria

14/16 Ahmadu Bello Way

Victoria Island

Lagos

Dear Mr. Stephen

Re: Forms of Official Letters

Thank you for your letter instructing us on the forms of official letters to be used in your textbooks. We wish to suggest another form to you.

The letter heading or the sender's address style can be indented, but the receiver's address is always in the block form, and the punctuation can be open. When the punctuation is open, no punctuation mark is written in the address, salutation

and complimentary close. The paragraph style can also be of the blocked style, every line of the paragraph begins at the same point on the left without indentation.

The style used in this letter is that of open punctuation and indented sender's address, while the paragraph style is blocked. Please, do inform us which of the styles you prefer.

Thank you for your patronage.

Yours sincerely,

(Signature)

Dr (Mrs) Vero Z Eboh

It is also possible to have a modified blocked style. This style uses the blocked style for the body of the letter, but the complimentary close is written a little beyond the centre of the page, like an indented complimentary close. The blocked and modified blocked styles are more attractive and are widely used in official correspondence.

4.2.3.3 Classification of Formal Letters

Formal letters can be classified according to their content. The content varies from positive information and unpleasant information to persuasive information. The nature of the various kind of information contained in any letter elicits a particular reaction from your audience. Therefore, it is necessary to organize the presentation of the information in such a way that anger, disappointment and resentment in the audience can be reduced or eliminated.

Positive Information Letters

These are letters the contents of which are informative and favourable to the receiver. Such letters include *inquiry circular, acknowledgement, order, condolence, introduction, appreciation and congratulation* letters. The major point of such a letter should appear in the first paragraph being favourable, it will stimulate the reader's interest. There is no need to keep the receiver in suspense or to delay the information. You should go straight to the point. Having given the receiver the main point, you should, in the next paragraph supply the details or clarification which will answer some questions your reader is likely to raise.

Below is a circular letter

C H E I Z G R O U P O F S C H O O L S
12/14 N V O S I L A N E
W U Y E A B U J A

12 MAY 2005

Dear parents,

SCHOOL DRESSING CODE

It has been noticed that some pupils no longer observe the school dress code and as such, wear wrong uniforms to the school.

The school management wishes to draw your attention to the following:

- 1) The school uniform is light blue, with white stockings and brown sandals only.
- 2) The school sweater is pink with white trimmings.
- 3) White canvas shoes should be worn on all days except Wednesday when physical and health education kits for games should be.
- 4) Female pupils should wear their natural hair without attachment and beads.

Please, join us to bring up disciplined future leaders for our society by ensuring that your child/ward is always dressed in the proper school uniform.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

(Signature)

Dr C.U. Uwabunkeonye

Note that the letter does not contain any threatening sentences, such as:

‘Punitive measures will be taken against offenders.’

‘Footwear and stockings other than of the specified type and colour will be seized.’

Such statements are not courteous and polite, and should be avoided.

The letter contains some passive sentences:

‘It has been noticed that’

‘The school uniform... should be worn....’

These enable the writer to avoid using accusing sentences.

The writer expects the parents to dress their children correctly hence the closing remark: ‘Thank you for your cooperation.’

Unpleasant Information Letters

These are letters the contents of which contain negative or disappointing information which may upset your receiver. It is important that you structure the information in such a way that your receiver's disappointment or anger can be minimized. You can do this by starting the letter with a positive statement; this will enable you to delay the negative information. You can start by giving the reasons for the negative news or state a general principle related to the content. In the next paragraph state the negative information clearly, and this should be followed by an alternative option or a compromise, if any. End the letter on a positive statement and do not refer to the negative message in the conclusion.

The tone of unpleasant letters should be friendly. Certain phrases should be avoided:

'We cannot ...' 'We are unable to ...'

'Unfortunately...' 'You cannot ...' 'We regret to ...'

These are unfriendly phrases which may worsen the already bad situation. It is better to imply your refusal or inability rather than state it directly. For instance:

Direct refusal : Your ward cannot come into the school because he has not completed his punishment.

Indirect refusal: The school does not admit into the school premises students who are yet to complete their punishment..

Direct refusal: I am sorry that you cannot leave your consignment with us any more because it is against our policy.

Better: Customer's consignments are under the care of the company for only one week from the day of arrival.

Improper wording: We regret to protest against the high freight charges imposed by
your shipping line

Better: The charges made for our consignment are too high and
unacceptable to us.

Below is a letter of refusal

U W A S C O N S T R U C T I O N C O M P A N Y
14/16 A F A S H I O A V E N U E
G A R K I 11,2 A B U J A.

August 12, 2004.

The Supervisor,
Boas Transport Company,
29 Jattu Crescent,
Asokoro, Abuja.

Dear Mr. Babas,

RENEWAL OF CONTRACT

The management of Uwas Construction Company wishes to express their

appreciation for the period for which your company carried out the contract of conveying our staff to and from the office.

The contract which took effect from July, 2002, expired in June, 2004. The policy of our company is that requests for renewal of contracts should reach our office three months before expiration of an existing contract.

However, your renewal request did not get to this office until April, 2004 - which is one month before the expiration of the contract. Therefore, the request for renewal came late.

Thank you for your punctuality while the contract lasted. We look forward to doing other businesses with your company in future.

Yours sincerely,

(Signature)

Mr. Lax O. Odigie

Director of Service

Note that the tone of the letter is friendly. The writer avoided the use of negative phrases. The subject line is not 'Rejection or Refusal of Renewal of Contract'.

The opening statement of the letter is a statement of appreciation rather than the negative news. This is followed by the reason for the refusal of the contract before the actual statement of the refusal, which was presented in an indirect way. The letter ends on a friendly note.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (SAE):

Write a letter of refusal to a staff member of permission to go on leave.

Persuasive Letters

Persuasive letters are letters the contents of which are meant to sell a product, an idea, etc. The major purpose of these letters is to make the reader change his/her view, opinion or idea and accept the view written in the letter. To achieve this, you need to provide the reader with necessary and adequate information about what you want him/her to do, as well as to overcome any objection that may prevent the action from being carried out or delayed.

To achieve your purpose of persuasion, you should ensure that your information has the following attributes:

Factual: Avoid any form of exaggeration. Describe only the true situation of things.

Specific: Be direct and clear about what you want the reader to do.

Reliable: Be sincere and objective in your presentation of ideas or views.
Avoid any form of bias.

In addition to these, you must appeal to the emotion of your audience and avoid any form of threat whether explicit or implicit. Threatening statements will provoke your audience rather than spur them to action. Endeavour to convince your readers rather than threaten them. You can convince your readers by using logical arguments expressed in an appropriate arrangement and lucid presentation of evidence, giving specific supporting details in clear terms. References and statistics should be used if available and relevant. Persuasive letters include *claims, requests, permission, fund-raising, recommendations, sales and adjustment letters, etc.*

Below is a sample of a persuasive writing

Z E N E B U V A C A T I O N C E N T R E
26/28 J A T T U R O A D
G W A R I N P A, A B U J A

18 June, 2003.

HURAH! It's holiday time again.

The children are home on holiday. Are you wondering how to keep them from harm while you are at work? Relax! Send them to Zenebu Vacation Centre- a place that is like home and under the watchful eyes of professionals. Our seasoned and experienced facilitators are ever ready to:

- expose the children to lots of funs which are educative;
- give each child the opportunity to be self-reliance and independent;
- guide the children in creative activity and computer programming;
- do many more things.

Parents whose children have attended our centre have had nothing to regret. Rather they have always expressed great appreciation of the tremendous growth and maturity displayed by their children at the end of the children's encounter with us.

It is a fun -packed and exciting world for the young. Let your child be part of this world of excitement and fun.

The fees are moderate. The time-table is made flexible so that it can suit the different needs of the individual children. There are two sessions daily, namely:

AFTERNOON SESSION: 12 NOON – 6 00 P .M.

Resumption is two weeks after the school vacation.

Contact us now to register your child in order to secure a space for him/her. You
will be glad you did.

(Signature)

Dr Zenebu V. Eboh

SAE: Read the Zenebu Vacation Centre letter carefully. Is the tone friendly? Is the
letter persuasive enough? Give reasons for your answer.

4.2.3.4 Memorandum (Memoranda)

A memorandum (memo) is the primary means of internal written communication.

It is used to communicate with any of the officers within the establishment.

It could be used to write a short report, a proposal, instructions or requests, etc.

Like every other formal document, it should be characterized by clarity and brevity
of language.

A memo does not require *salutation*, *complimentary close* and *address*. Usually,
the organization has a formal printed sheet used for memos and it contains the
following:

- The name and address of the organization;
- To...(receiver's name or status);
- From...(writer's name or status);
- Date..., and
- Subject...

Sample:

C U M C O M P A N Y L I M I T E D
P . O . B O X 1218 A F A S H I O
E D O S T A T E .

From: The Managing Director

Ref:.....

To: All Departmental Heads

Date: 12 August, 2005

Subject: Indiscipline Among Junior Staff

My attention has been drawn to the undisciplined behaviour among the junior staff in recent times. Many junior staff come to the office late; some are seen idling their time away, while some sleep during work hours.

The management wonders why there should be so much laxity. This behaviour gives the impression that we are over-staffed and that this abnormality might be tackled by downsizing the work force of the firm. This management will not tolerate any act of indiscipline or laziness from any staff. Please, call your workers to order.

For the interest of the staff and firm, ensure that henceforth official hours

are not wasted but utilized effectively.

(Signature)

Engr. Stephens Uwas

4.2.3.5 E-mail Messages

E-mails correspondence is an essential tool in communication with individuals or firms. It is very fast because it reaches its audiences very quickly, indeed instantaneously, and most audiences read and reply their mail quickly also.

E-mails can be used as informal and formal correspondence. However, you must be careful and discreet because your mail can be downloaded by another user.

Format for E-mail

There is always a subject line in the mail. The computer usually asks the writer some questions which will enable the computer to fill in some information on your behalf. The computer will fill in the date and e-mail address automatically. There is no need for a closing remark like 'yours sincerely or faithfully'. Simply write your name after the message.

Avoid writing your entire message in capital letters or upper-case notes. This is as impolite as shouting. Use capital letters only when you need to emphasize a word or idea. As with other written documents, use polite and clear language and be brief.

4.3 Conclusion

The content of any written document can be positive, negative or persuasive, depending on what you write and how you write it. Whatever it is, ensure that you use a friendly tone and avoid angry messages because written matter, like

letter is a permanent document. If you have a misunderstanding with someone, discuss it face-to-face, not through writing.

4.4 Summary

In this unit, you have been exposed to the communication function of correspondence, and its types and to ways of constructing effective correspondence. Both formal and informal letters are important aspects of interpersonal communication. Formal correspondence employs official and non-conversational language, while informal correspondence makes use of social and conversational language. However, the tone of both forms should be friendly, polite and natural.

4.5 Tutor-marked Assignment

- 1) Discuss the strategies you will use to achieve effective correspondence.
- 2) Explain the different parts of a formal letter.
- 3) You went on an official journey to a major city in Nigeria and incurred expenses that were more than the approved amount. Write a letter to your boss asking for reimbursement.
- 4) Write a sales letter .

4.6 References

Dumond, Raymond A. & Lannon, John M. (1985): *Business Communication*.

Boston: Little, Brown & Company.

Locker, Kitty O.(2000): *Business and Administrative Communication*. Boston:

McGraw–Hill Higher Education.

Modigie, Clara U. B.(2000) **Developing Writing Skills**. Lagos: Concept

Publications.

MODULE 3, UNIT 5: REPORT WRITING**5.0 Introduction**

In Module 2, Unit 2, you were introduced to the term 'report'. In this unit, you will be dealing with report writing. Sometimes, there may be a need to set up a group of persons to investigate, plan, analyze and recommend solutions to a specific issue or problem. Such a group, technically called a committee, meets from time to time to discuss, argue and arrive at a conclusion. The work of the committee is documented as *a report*. A committee could be made up of a two man-group or have more people. Their finding is usually recommendations or a proposal or proposals in a report.

5.1 Objectives

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

- 1) define the term 'report';
- 11) identify the characteristics of a report;
- 111) explain the format of writing reports, and
- 1V) produce a good report and the proposals accompanying it, if the latter are called for. .

5.2 Content**5.2.1 Report**

There are different types of report such as medical, police, progress, accident, business reports, etc. Whatever type it is , they have something in common - the purpose is to convey impartial, objective and reasoned facts or information to a specific audience for decision-marking or problem-solving.

Therefore, a report can be defined as an orderly and objective account of what has been said, seen or done and written for a limited audience for the purpose of planning and of solving problems

5.2.2 Types of Report

Several written documents are referred to as *report* provided such documents contain:

- information only(examples: weekly, monthly or annual reports, progress reports, etc.);
- information and analysis (examples: audit reports, financial reports, etc.) or
- information, analysis and recommendations (examples: problem solving reports, feasibility reports, situational progress reports, etc.).

On the basis of the content and structure, reports can be classified into the following categories:

- 1) Routine reports: These are periodic in nature and are written at regular intervals specified by the receiver or organization. Examples: educational progress reports, monthly sales reports, annual company reports, etc.
- 11) Special reports: These are written on special and complex issues which have been investigated and analyzed by a committee. Such reports usually contain terms of reference, mode of investigation, detailed evidence, findings, recommendations, etc.

5.2.3 The Report Format

The report format depends on the nature of the report. Basically, the format is one of either a short piece of writing or a detailed piece of writing.

The Short report format can be written in the form of a letter, a memo, or a proposal. Reports written in this form usually deal with simple and

straightforward issues. The purpose may be to pass on information and/or to

bring to the limelight some matters needing the attention of the receiver. They

contain the following:

- a statement of purpose or objective;
- identification of the problem;
- recommended solutions to the problems identified (if requested), and
- identification of benefits.

The detailed report is the produced by a committee which has investigated and researched into issues that are complex and complicated. This type of report contains:

- title page;
- table of contents;
- abstract or synopsis, and
- body of the report, which is subdivided into:
 - Terms of reference;
 - Investigation procedure;
 - Findings;
 - Conclusion(s);
 - Recommendation(s);
 - Acknowledgements;
 - Appendices (if any), and
 - Date and signature

The title page: The title of the report is written on the front cover of the report.

the title is a descriptive phrase which identifies the subject investigated. For example:

**A REPORT ON THE INVESTIGATION OF CONSTANT NNPC
PIPELINE VANDALISATION IN LAGOS STATE
(SUBMITTED TO THE HONOURABLE MINISTER
OF POWER AND STEEL)**

The table of contents: This is necessary when the report is lengthy and contain

many pages. The contents contain headings and sub-headings and their page numbers in the report. It is a guide to the structure of the report.

The abstract or synopsis: This is a summary of the investigating procedures, findings and recommendations. It gives an overview of the report.

The body of the report: This contains the actual work carried out by the Committee, as well as its conclusions and recommendation(s). It contains the following parts:

The introduction: This explains and defines the problem of the investigation and provides necessary background to understanding it. It also includes the sources of data, intended audience and the scope of the investigation the last of which is technically called *terms of reference*.

The investigating procedure: This explains the activities of the committee in collecting or gathering the materials used as data for the investigation. The procedure could consist of a visit to the site of the incident, interviews of those who knew about the incident, and use of questionnaires, etc. Whichever method that is used, the source must be authoritative and objective, so that the data gathered are accurate and reliable.

The findings: This part describes what was observed or discovered from the data collected. The way in which the findings were arrived at must be carefully explained in detail. When evaluating and interpreting the data collected, ensure that it is free from any form of bias, and specious reasoning. When writing the findings, use mostly passive constructions to prevent wrong interpretations by the readers. For instance(examples of rational expression of

It was discovered that most NNPC pipes all over the country were not adequately manned by security agents.

Positive expressions

1. The committee is of the opinion that most of the pipes have out lived their usefulness and are either weak or have expired. Hence, they are easily destroyed by vandals.
2. The root cause of vandalism in Lagos as well as all over the country is extreme poverty

Negative expressions:

1. We *feel* that most NNPC pipelines are not adequately manned by security agent.
2. It *seems that* the pipelines are vandalized because the mass are poor and jobless.

The conclusion: This is based on the data or evidence gathered, studied and analyzed. It is a statement of an objective assessment by the committee of its findings and opinions. A definite conclusion should be arrived at and stated with assurance and authority. When writing the conclusion, be direct and avoid non-committal and ambiguous statements.

Examples of positive conclusions:

The NNPC pipes were not laid deep enough; hence they

are easy for vandals to break.

Not: It *seems as if* the pipes are not laid deep enough

OR: It *would seem* that unemployment (which has brought about poverty and hunger) makes some individuals vandalize the pipes to scoop fuel.

Recommendation(s): This contains possible solutions to the problems identified and described under findings. It must be based on facts and be free from prejudices and personal emotions of the committee members. The recommendation(s) must be consistent with the objectives or purpose of the investigation, the evidence adduced, the data presented and the analysis carried out. The recommendations should be logically presented.

Examples:

- 1) NNPC should overhaul its pipeline network so as to fortify them against possible vandalism.
- 2) Collective actions of NNPC and security agents should be intensified to man the pipeline network in Lagos and the country in general.
- 3) NNPC should apprise members of the communities of where the pipelines are located to avert the dangers of pipeline destruction.
- 4) We suggest/recommend that adequate security and safety measures be put around the pipeline network nationwide to save the country from further pipeline carnage.

Acknowledgement(s): This contains words of appreciation directed to those who have assisted the committee in its investigations.

Sometimes, this appreciation may extend to the initiator of the committee. The acknowledgements can come before the body of the report or immediately after the recommendations.

Date and signature: The report must be signed and dated by the members of the committee after they have read the final copy and are in agreement with the contents of the report.

Appendix(es): There are materials used as evidence, which should be attached to the report to give real proof to the readers. The materials could be photographs of the scenes, video clips, letters, etc.

5.2.4 Proposals

A *proposal* is a form of a written recommendation to someone in a higher position. The essence of a proposal is logically to present information about an issue or issues. A proposal may be internal (that is, within an organization) or external (i.e., by an outsider to an organization). It is possible that the proposal is *competitive* or *non- competitive*.

A competitive proposal implies that there are many proposals which only one will be accepted. Such a proposal is usually external and it is highly formal. When writing a competitive proposal, you must have a clear view of the issues involved and must logically present your information and argument and the benefits envisaged. You have to demonstrate why your proposal should be accepted and others rejected.

It may be a proposal to handle a project, to provide services or for a research grant (in the latter case of which there is monetary element). Here, you should provide information on your expenses, such as cost of materials, transport, salaries and overhead costs. You should also identify the duration of the project or research and the benefit to be derived by the receiver, community or the grantor.

Below is a sample non-competitive proposal

U W A S C O N S T R U C T I O N L I M I T E D

10 / 12 U M U H U L A Y O U T

B A R U W A, F C T, A B U J A

Ref: UCL/IRW/O1/06

Date: 18 November, 2006

TO: Executive Director (Services)

FROM: Industrial Relations &

Welfare Officer

SUBJECT: Proposal for the Establishment of Staff Canteen

INTRODUCTION

Owing to lack of canteens within reach, most staff spends a lot of time during the break time, looking for food. The essence of this proposal is to suggest ways of reducing the length of the break time, so that staff can utilize more hours in working effectively.

Identification of Problem

Most staff leave the office at noon for their lunch and come back to the office between 3.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. Thus, some staff spend up to three hours as lunch time. This has drastically affected the productivity of staff and it also has a negative effect on the financial prospect of the company. The reasons for this elongated break time according to the Worker's Union include the following:

- Lack of good a canteen, offering well prepared and affordable meals near the office vicinity. Thus, members of staff have to travel a long distance for lunch.
- When some staff members come back to the office early, they have to spend sometime to relax because they are tired and need rest. This relaxation takes about 30 minutes after the staff have arrived at the office around 3.30 p.m. As a result, little or nothing is achieved within the remaining one hour or thereabout before closure. The effect of this long lunch break on the company's productivity level is glaring because most staff work effectively for only about five hours daily instead of for eight hours. An average of three hours is wasted daily by about 30 % of the work force.

Recommended Solutions

To prevent the taking of an elongated break hour by many members of staff, it has become necessary to establish a staff canteen within the premises of the company. Thus, staff can have their lunch as well as relax within a short period before going back to their work.

Meals in the staff canteen should be subsidized as part of the staff welfare package and as a humanitarian gesture, which is a characteristic of the management of this noble organization. Moreover, the staff will have no reason to complain of expensive meals or go out in search of less expensive meals thereby wasting the official time.

The staff canteen should be contracted out to a good caterer who will be paid quarterly and be under the supervision of the Industrial Relation and Welfare Unit.

Benefits

The organization will derive substantial benefits if a staff canteen is established and the meals subsidized. Some of these benefits include the following:

Increase in productivity level of staff: This is possible because staff will be able to

put in more effective hours – about eight hours per day instead of the previous five hours put in when they had to go outside the premises for lunch. Thus, the income of the company will increase by about 30 percent.

Commitment of staff:

Subsidized meals will be appreciated by the staff who will henceforth work more efficiently in their various assignments so as to justify the welfare package.

Cost-effectiveness:

Contracting the canteen out will be cost effective for the company in that the problems associated with catering will be taken off the management's shoulders.

Conclusion

The establishment of a staff canteen, with subsidized, meals will go a long way to improve the productivity level of the staff. This will eventually amount to an increase in the company's income.

SAE:

Assume that the organization has accepted the proposal for a staff canteen, write a competitive proposal a caterer to run the staff canteen.

5.3 Conclusion

Report writing is one of the major writing activities you will perform as a communicator, therefore it is important that you are conversant with the formats and types of reports

5.4 Summary

A report is meant to pass on information and sometimes recommendations that will be used to make decisions in organizations. Therefore, every report, whether in letter, memo or detailed forms, should be characterized by objectivity and factual information.

5.5 Tutor-marked Assignment

- (1) Explain the term 'report'.
- (2) Describe the different types of report that you know.
- (3) There are various formats for writing reports. Discuss.
- (4) Write a progress report on a project of your choice.

5.6 References

Dumont, Raymond A. & Lannon, John M. (1985): *Business Communications*.

Boston; Little Brown & Company

Locker, Kitty O. (2000): *Business and Administrative Communication*.

Boston: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

Modigie, Clara U.B. (2000): *Developing Writing Skills*. Lagos: Concept Publications.

MODULE 3, UNIT 6: WRITING MINUTES, SUMMARIES AND PARAPHRASES**6.0 Introduction**

In the previous unit, you were exposed to report writing, definition of report and the different formats for writing reports.

Minutes writing is closely related to report writing in the sense that the writer of minutes reports what happened at an official or social gathering. In other words, it is a partial report, not a full report because it lacks researching, analyzing and recommending.

When writing minutes, as well as other written documents, you may have to summarize or/and paraphrase what you have heard or read. Therefore, writing summaries and paraphrases is an important aspect of minutes-writing, which is itself part of communication.

6.1 Objectives

At the end of this unit you should be to:

- 1) explain the terms “summarizing”, “paraphrasing” and “minutes”;
- 11) identify steps to be taken when writing summaries and paraphrases;
- 111) explain the format for writing minutes;
- 1V) write good minutes, and
- V) write good summaries and paraphrase.

6.2 Content

6.2.1 Summary

The act of summary-writing is not new to you. A summary is the shorter version of a large piece of information which you have read or heard. In other words, when you summarize, you compress a large amount of information into a smaller one.

Thus, an original piece of information made up of two pages, when summarized, may be reduced to about one page. A good summary should not be more than 1/3 of the original text.

When you summarize, you pick out only the major points and their directly supporting points. Details, illustrations and explanations are usually omitted when one is writing a summary. However, in the process of summarizing, you must ensure that the meaning or the message in the original version is not destroyed, distorted or deleted. The key words in the original text should be retained or their synonyms or antonyms should be used in your summary.

To write an effective summary, ensure that you:

- read the passage carefully or listen attentively to the speaker;
- understand the message properly (otherwise, re-read the passage or ask the speaker to repeat what he / she said);
- identify the key words and the central message, and
- avoid repetitions and redundant descriptive words.
- Then, rewrite the information without distorting or misinterpreting the central message, that is, you must not change the meaning of the original version.

Below is a sample:

ORIGINAL PASSAGE

Natural language is only one out of many possible semiotic (or signaling) systems, and as we have seen above, it can be either verbal or non- verbal. Linguistics is only interested in verbal communication. Occasional attention is ,it is true, paid to some of the paralinguistic features of communication which are non- verbal, but this is usually regarded as being peripheral to the linguist's main interest. There is, indeed, a certain lack of agreement as to what constitutes the paralinguistic features of language. While some linguists would regard such features as being non-vocal, restricting them to such things as ' eye- movements, head- nods, facial expressions, gestures, body posture etc' (LYONS, 1977: 64), others would include such vocal but non- prosodic phenomena as variations of pitch, loudness, duration, etc. The important point is that while natural language is generally defined as being vocal and verbal, communication involves much else. (Umoh, 1987).

SUMMARIZED VERSION

Natural language, a form of a signaling system, is verbal or non-verbal. Linguistic deals with mostly verbal communication, less attention is given to non-verbal features, which are regarded as peripheral to the linguist's major interest. There is disagree on what should be regarded as paralinguistic features of language which has been identified by some as eye-movement, head-nods, facial expression, gestures, body posture, etc. Some linguists include variation of pitch, loudness, duration, etc. Natural language is seen as being vocal and non-vocal but communication goes beyond these.

Note that, in the summarized version, many redundant words or phrases have been omitted to produce a shorter version of the original one. However, the meaning and the core information are retain.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (SAE):

Read a passage from any book of your choice, and summarize the passage. Exchange your summarized version with your study mate for reaction.

6.2.2 Paraphrase

Paraphrase is similar to summary except that a summary is usually a short form of the Original, while a paraphrase can be as long as the original text.

To paraphrase implies rewording what you have heard or read. It is employed when you do not want to quote the exact words of a speaker or writer. Like when summarizing, when paraphrasing, you should not distort or destroy or change the meaning of the original text.

Here are some guidelines for paraphrasing:

- Use synonyms or antonyms of some words in the original copy in your paraphrase.
- Try as much as possible to rewrite the passage in your own words. However, some key words from the original text can also be used in your paraphrase.
- Reconstruct the sentence patterns, for example, change active sentences into passive ones or *vice versa*. For instance:

ACTIVE: The driver knocked the old man down.

PASSIVE: The old man was knocked down (by the driver).

ACTIVE: The management decided that all junior staff should go on compulsory leave.

PASSIVE: All junior staff were sent on compulsory leave.

OR: It was decided that all junior workers should proceed on compulsory leave.

- Direct speech can be changed to indirect speech. For instance:

Direct speech: The manager insisted, "I am always in the office before 8.00 a. m."

Indirect speech: The manager insisted that he was always in the office before 8 00 a.m.'

SAMPLE PASSAGE

On vacation days, most parents come to collect their children from school very early because of the fears of "go-slow" in the Lagos metropolitan city. However,

some parents are forced to come later due to the nature of their work.

PARAPHRASED VERSION

The fear of getting home late as a result of Lagos “go-slow” makes some parents come early to pick their kids on the days of vacation but some parents still come later because of their kinds of jobs.

6.2. Minutes writing

Minutes come into play when a group of people with common goals or interest gather together to discuss some issues. This gathering (often referred to as a meeting) may be formal or informal. Whatever type of meeting it may be, the discussions and decisions at the gathering are often documented for future reference. This documentation is referred to as minutes.

Minutes are a summary of decisions taken at a gathering. The totality of the proceedings of the assembly is referred to as the minutes, while each item within the minutes is known as a minute.

6.2.3.1 Objectives of documenting meeting procedures

The main objectives of writing minutes at meetings are the following:

- The minutes serve as the authentic records of issues discussed and decisions reached.
- The minutes serve as a source of information for absent members.
- Also, they serve as a source for future reference whenever a disagreement arises.

To achieve these objectives, the writer of the minutes, usually a secretary, should ensure that the minutes are written in such a manner that members can easily comprehend the proceedings of the meeting. Not everything that is said or discussed is written down,

only the essential decisions taken are written down. Thus, the minutes are a summary of the proceedings.

To produce true minutes of a meeting, you as a secretary must endeavour not to falsify or distort the decisions of the gathering. As a secretary, you must be good in summarizing, paraphrasing and note-taking, and must write very fast. There are two ways available to you to take down notes - using long-hand or short-hand in writing or using a tape recorder. Long-hand refers to the normal way in which you write, while short-hand refers to using mostly abbreviations. Whichever style you choose, you must transcribe the notes into the official minutes book not too long after the meeting is over so as not to forget important details.

6.2.3.2 Format for Writing Minutes

Minutes have specific sequence of items, which is commonly followed, although, sometimes there may be a slight alteration of this sequence. The following items should appear in minutes. They are usually numbered.

-The Heading:

It is a descriptive phrase containing the name of the group and the venue and date of the meeting. Example:

*MINUTES OF THE THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING OF SUNTECH GROUP OF COMPANIES, HELD ON
20TH JUNE, 2005 AT ROYAL PALACE GUEST HOUSE, WUSE*

-Opening:

This item describes *when* (time) and *how* the meeting was opened and *by whom*. Example:

1.0 OPENING

The meeting was declared open by the Chairman, Board of director,
Barr. Uwas Keonye, commenced at 10. 30 a. m with an opening prayer
led by Engr C. Osiro.

-Attendance

In a large gathering, a register/usually a sheet of paper is passed round for the members present to write down their names. Otherwise, an official may call out the names of members from a register. In the minutes, the names of those present are written down or the numbers of those present are written. Absent members may send apologies or excuse and these are noted in the minutes.

In addition to present and absent members, some meetings will include observers or visitors with the caption – *In Attendance*. Observers are those members from another branch of the gathering who are attending the meeting and are not allowed to contribute to decision marking. They are visitors and have no voting right outside their own branch. It is also possible to have non-members of the group in attendance.

-Minutes of the Previous Meeting

This item refers to the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting which may have been circulated before the commencement of this present meeting or are read at this point. This action is recorded in the minutes.

-Correction / Amendments

This item identifies any corrections done on the minutes of the previous meeting. The points corrected are recorded in the day's minutes and *are set off in inverted commas*. Sometimes, a correction may comprises of a whole decision or deliberation, in such a case the correction is recorded in a long paragraph.

-Adoption

Having done the necessary corrections, the presiding official calls for adoption of the minutes read and any member who was present at the previous meeting will move the motion for the adoption and is seconded by another member who was also present at the previous meeting. This procedure is documented in the day's minutes. Thereafter, the previous minutes which were read, corrected(if necessary) and adopted are signed by the secretary and the president. The reading, amendment and adoption are documented thus:

3.0 The minutes of the previous meeting

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were read. (The president apologized to the house for not making copies available to members) .

3.2 Amendment

The following corrections were made:

Minute 5.2, sentence 4, 'of hand' to read 'off-hand'

Minute 6.1, sentence 1, '#1,000.00' to read '#10,000.00'

3.3 Adoption

There being no other correction, the president called for the adoption of the minutes. The motion for adoption was moved by Mrs M. Chibueze and was seconded by Engr. P. Chiemeziem .

-Matters Arising

This refers to some unfinished or unresolved issues or to assignments given to some members at the previous meeting. These issues are discussed at this point and written down in the minutes. Each issue discussed should be numbered and itemized accordingly. Example:

4.0 Matters Arising

4.1 Report on the children's end-of-year party:

Mrs. M. Francis reported that the party was well attended by staff children and that the children had lots of fun.

4.2 Public lecture:

The president informed the house that the public lecture had been scheduled for 20 April, 2006.

-Business of the Day

This refers to the new issues or discussed at the present meeting . The issues are discussed one after the other and the decisions arrived at are documented in the minutes. Each issue discussed is given a caption and numbered. For example:

5.0 Business of the Day**5.1 Meeting Venue:**

The president explained that there was a need to have a central permanent venue for meetings. Three suggestions were put forward. A three-man committee, headed by Dr. Stephens, was set up to investigate the proposed venues.

5.2 Launching of Almanac

The president called on the vice-president to head the committee that would prepare the almanac. Members were told to send in their opinions and suggestions on the almanac to the chairperson of the committee before the next meeting.

-Finance

In a meeting in which monetary issue are relevant the finances are discussed at this stage and noted in the minutes.

-Any Other Business /General

This consists of issues bothering members which were not discussed in the Business of the Day. Such issues are raised by individual members and are discussed and documented in the minutes.

-Adjournment

The gathering is formally ended by a motion from a member and supported by another member. The motion is usually invited by the presiding official. This procedure is written down in the minutes. Example:

9.0 Adjournment

The adjournment of the meeting was called for by the president and Dr. (Mrs.) V. Eboh moved the motion, and was seconded by Engr. P. Ibezim.

-Closing

This refers to the manner in and time at, which a meeting comes to an end. The manner and time is written in the minutes. Example:

10.0 Closing

The meeting ended with a closing prayer led by Mr. Stephens at 4.15 p. m.

-Subscription

It consists of the names and signatures of the secretary and the president. Their signatures are affixed after the minutes of a meeting are read, corrected and adopted at the next meeting. When this is done, the minutes become an official record of the meeting.

6.2.3.3 The Language of Minutes-writing

The minutes contain issues and decisions which have been discussed or made in the past. Thus, the minutes should be in the past tense and in reported speech. As a minutes writer, you should know how to change direct speech to indirect or reported speech.

There are certain changes that take place when transforming direct speech or quotations to indirect speech. These are:

1) Tense change:

The tense and aspect in the direct speech is shifted back in the indirect speech:

Present tense becomes past tense like) -

likes) - liked

Simple Past and Present Perfect travelled) -

become Past Perfect has/have travelled) - had travelled

Past Perfect becomes

Past Perfect had travelled --- had travelled

Future becomes Future in the Past will travel - -- would travelled

Shall travelled --- should travelled

Present Progressive becomes

Examples:

DIRECT SPEECH:**INDIRECT SPEECH:**

1) 'I *like* rice', She said.

She said that she *liked* rice

2) 'She *went* home before 12 noon,'
the clerk said.

The clerk said that she *had gone* home
before 12 noon.

3) 'The examination *has ended* last
week', the principal said.

The principal informed the parents that
the examination *had ended* the previous
week.

4) I *will travel* next week, 'he promised.

He promised that he *would travel* next
week.

5) Mother shouted, 'The boys
had eaten the fruits already.'

Mother shouted that the boys *had eaten*
the fruits already.

6) 'She *is driving* the car to Lagos.'

She *was driving* the car to Lagos.

7) 'He *was travelling* to London
before now.'

He *had been travelling* to London before
then.

11) Pronoun change

First and Second Person Pronouns in direct speech change to Third Person or the name of the speaker in indirect speech. Examples:

I, me become *she / he / name, her / him / name*

You, name change to *I / Me / name, she / he*, depending on the context. Examples:

DIRECT SPEECH:**INDIRECT SPEECH**

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) 'I gave <i>you</i> the money,' the secretary insisted. | The secretary insisted that she gave the money to <i>Bola / me / her</i> |
| 2) 'You shall/will come early to the office tomorrow.' | The manager ordered that <i>I / she / Bola</i> should / would come early to the office the next day. |

111) **Proximate expressions** change to remote expression. Examples:

This	_____	that
Hence	_____	thence
Today	_____	that day
Tomorrow	_____	the next day
Here	_____	there
Thus	_____	so (like that)
Now	_____	then
These	_____	those
Yesterday	_____	the previous day
Last week	_____	the previous week
Last night	_____	the night before, etc.

Examples:

DIRECT SPEECH:**INDIRECT SPEECH**

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) Bola said; 'This is my brother's fiancé.' | Bola said that that was her brother's fiancé. |
| 2) 'The students travelled to France | The teacher explained that the students |

last week'; the teacher explained. had travelled to France the previous week.

1V) **Questions** in direct speech becomes statements introduced by if or

whether in indirect speech. Example:

D. SPEECH: Bola asked, 'Will you be there tomorrow or next week?'

IND. SPEECH: Bola asked if / whether I would be there the next day or the coming week.

SAE

Change the following to direct or indirect speech:

- 1) The interviewer said, 'When exactly did you leave your last job?'
- 2) The manager said that you should complete the work before you close for the day.
- 3) 'I gave the parcel back to her,' argued the massager.
- 4) The bride promised that she would send the invitation cards as soon as they are ready.

6.3 Conclusion

Both paraphrasing and summarizing are important skills which you should be conversant with and use effectively in order to be an efficient communicator. They are important aspects in meeting writing and report writing.

6.4 Summary

Minutes writing is the documentation of the proceeding at a gathering. It is a summary of the issues discussed and decisions taken. Minutes are written in past tense and in indirect speech.

Paraphrasing and summarizing are related in that both refer to the rewording of another person's speech. But summary is a shorter version of the original text while paraphrase is as long as the original text.

6.5 Tutor Marked Assignment

1a) Explain the term 'minutes writing, paraphrase and summary.'

b) Discuss the relationship between the three.

11) Explain the steps you will follow to write a good summary and paraphrase.

111) What are the importance of minutes to any assembly?

1V) As a secretary of a social club, write the minutes of the last meeting.

6.6 Reference

Banjo, Ayo 'Linguistic Perspective on the Development of Human Communication'

Tropic Issues in Communication Arts Solomon O. Unoh (Ed) Uyo: Modern

Business Press

Oshima, Alice and Ann Hogue (1981) **Writing Academic English**. Reading:

Addison- Wesley Publishing Company.