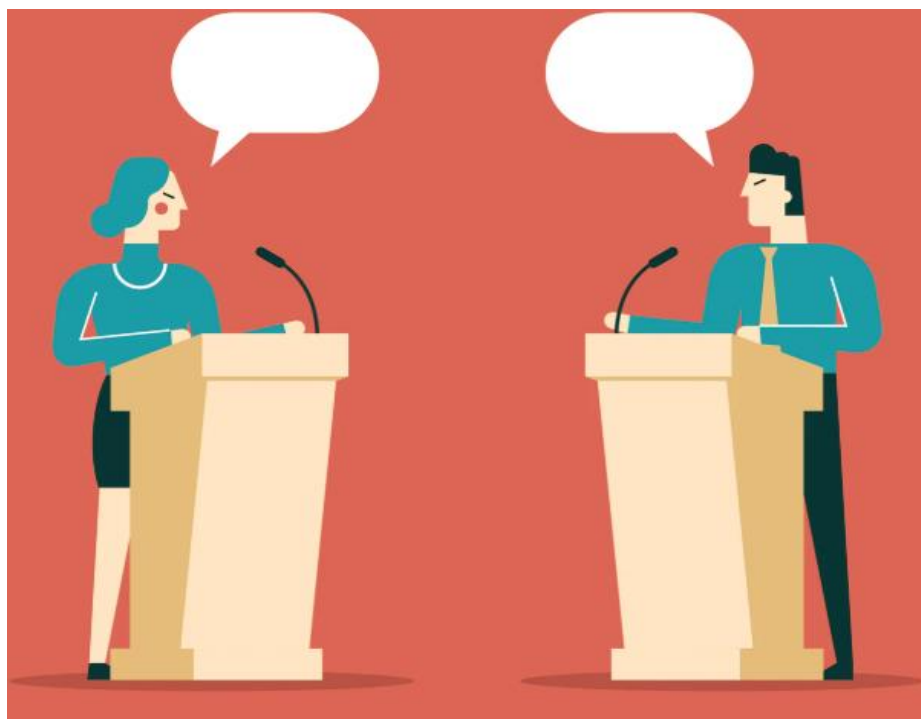


UNIT 6 SPEAKING: LANGUAGE FORMS AND FUNCTIONS



LEARNING OUTCOME:

At the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

1. learn the academic language forms and function
2. use appropriate language for synthesizing, evaluating, expressing opinion and expressing agreement/disagreement

6.1 INTRODUCTION

A language function is a reason why we communicate. Every time we speak or write, we do so for a purpose or a function.

In oral language some common functions may include:

- giving instructions
- making requests
- defending an argument

In academic context we use a range of specific functions in order to communicate ideas clearly. These include:

- synthesizing and evaluating information
- expressing opinions
- expressing opinions agreement/disagreement

6.2 SYNTHESIZING

Synthesizing involves putting different pieces of information together. We make use of information from different speakers/sources and our own prior knowledge to create a new piece of information. When we put thoughts and ideas together, we are in fact synthesizing information. Synthesizing draws upon your ability to make connections, question, infer and determine importance.

The expressions below may be used to acknowledge other speaker's ideas before presenting our own ideas.

My idea is similar to/related to _____'s idea.

I agree/disagree with _____ that ...

My idea builds upon _____'s idea.

As ____ already mentioned...

Use the expressions below when synthesizing information.

The main point(s) is/ are...

The point that _____ makes is related to _____ in that...

The significance of _____ is...

From my perspective, _____ means...

The concept of _____ can be expressed as...

Our conclusion is a synthesis of ____ and ____.

I feel that ____ and ____'s viewpoints are related in that...

My visual represents a synthesis of ____ and ____ because...

While creating ____, I built upon ...

6.3 EVALUATING

We are evaluating when we assess and verify the worth of an object, idea or decision. This involves identifying criteria, explaining priorities, indicating reason for judgement and confirming the truth.

The language of evaluating is as below:

Based on ... I determined that...

____'s judgment of ... was ... because ...

The critique of ____ was favourable/unfavourable because ...

We/They judge ____ to be ____ because ...

We/I evaluated ____ on the following criteria ...

I assess that...

After inspecting...

I have determined...

After carefully scrutinizing____ I believe that ...

My interpretation of____ is...

When ranking its importance, I feel that... because...

6.4 EXPRESSING OPINION

We can use the following to show that we are giving an opinion, and not a fact.

I think ...

I believe ...

I feel ...

Personally, I (think, believe, feel) ...

I tend to + (think, feel, believe) that ...

In my opinion, ...

In my view, ...

I've always + (thought/believed/felt) that ...

I maintain that ...

I've always maintained that ...

It seems to me that ...

I'm convinced that ...

As far as I'm concerned, ...

My view is that ...

From my point of view, ...

To my mind, ...

The way I see it, ...

As I see it, ...

6.5 EXPRESSING AGREEMENT/ DISAGREEMENT

In a discussion, you have to respond to what is being discussed. You can usually respond by saying something to agree or disagree with what the other speaker has said. If you agree, then you can support the point of view by giving more examples or statistics or even explanations. If you disagree, you will need to learn how to voice our disagreement in a polite manner. Always support the stand that you have taken by giving valid reasons. You may also provide alternatives.

These expressions can be used to show agreement:

Good idea/point.

Yes, I totally agree.

You have a good point there.

I couldn't agree more.

That's interesting. I think that ...

Interesting point. I would add that ...

It's an excellent idea.

It's exactly what I was thinking of too.

You're absolutely right.

I'm glad that you said that.

I'm of the same opinion.

Some of the ways to express disagreement are listed below:

I beg to differ on this.

I disagree. I think ...

Sorry. I don't agree with you ...

You have a good point, but ...

That's not such a good idea.

I don't think that's a good idea.

I'm sorry but I totally disagree.

I understand ..., but ...

I would rather not ...

Your suggestion is not feasible/practical ...

I don't think so.

I think it would be better ...

Practice 1

Pair Work

The pantry at the office is underused due to lack of facilities. You are discussing with a colleague at work about getting the pantry furnished with electrical appliances so that staff could use the facilities during their break. Consider the options below and decide on the most useful appliance to be purchased for the pantry.

Coffee maker

Microwave Oven



What is the most useful appliance
for the office pantry?

Water Dispenser

Rice Cooker

Practice 2

Group work

In this free giving opinions activity, you are to participate in a debate to practice expressions for giving opinions and disagreeing. Get into groups of three to four students and choose the topic from the table below. Two groups must choose the same topic, one arguing for and one arguing against.

Topics:

1. Social media sites should be blocked at work.
2. Men should be given more time off for paternity leave
3. Employees that work from home are more productive.

You may refer to the worksheet on the next page to proceed with this task.

Debate Topic: _____

1. In your group, prepare your FOR or AGAINST argument by making notes below. Each group member must contribute to the debate.
2. Now, present your argument to the opposing group.
3. After you have heard your opponent's argument, disagree and give a counter-argument. The class will then vote for the winner of the debate.

Use the following expressions to give opinions and disagree with your opponent's ideas.

Giving your opinion

In my opinion ...	I (don't) think that ...	I honestly feel that ...
The way I see it, ...	There's no doubt that ...	You can't deny that ...
I strongly believe that ...	As far as I'm concerned, ...	I'm convinced that ...

Disagreeing

I totally disagree that ...	It may be true that ... , but ...	I beg to differ.
I'm afraid I don't agree that ...	I see your point on ... , but ...	I don't think so.

FOR

AGAINST