**COM 200: Communication Skills**

**2018 – 19 Semester (I)**

**Assignment** 1 - Solutions

Total marks: 25

*Questions 1 – 4 carry 1 mark each*:

1. What is jargon?
2. **Specific language used by a particular group of professionals**
3. Effective language
4. Language of a country
5. Non-verbal indicators
6. The sender should know the receiver well because
7. **She can encode the message correctly only then**
8. She can clarify issues that might cause confusion
9. She is sure of feedback
10. She can send messages repeatedly
11. What constitutes non-verbal communication?
12. Message sent in coded language
13. **Facial expression, posture and gestures**
14. Message sent through non-human agency
15. Instrumental music
16. What is selective listening?
17. Listening well and with concentration
18. **Listening only to parts of what is being said**
19. Listening to people you like
20. Listening to music selected by you
21. Given below are excerpts from various texts. Identify the source as one of the following: Scientific article, Children’s story, Popular science article, Newspaper. (**4 marks)**

(i) “It’s no secret [dinosaurs](https://www.popsci.com/tags/dinosaurs) possessed their own fair share of dirty habits—most bodies can get pretty gross, no matter the species. But [dandruff](https://www.popsci.com/right-balance-bacteria-on-your-scalp-could-be-key-to-fighting-dandruff)? Nobody really saw that coming.” – **Popular Science**

(ii) “[Autism spectrum disorder](https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/medicine-and-dentistry/autism-spectrum) (ASD) is a group of [neurodevelopmental conditions](https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/medicine-and-dentistry/neurodevelopmental-disorder) of unknown cause. It is highly likely that both genetic and environmental factors are associated with the onset and progress of ASD while the mechanisms underlying its [aetiology](https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/medicine-and-dentistry/etiology-medicine" \o "Learn more about Etiology (medicine)) are expected to be multifactorial.” – **Scientific article**

(iii) “Arun was forbidden to go to the forest that lay just beyond their bungalow. Yes, Arun lived near a great big forest. His father was a forest officer and they had moved in only recently”. – **Children’s story**

(iv) “The Trump administration has empowered officials to outright reject visa applications under certain circumstances. This can be done if the required ‘initial evidence’ is not submitted or if it fails to establish eligibility for the visa sought. In other words, the visa applicants—including companies sponsoring H-1B employees—are less likely to get a second chance to substantiate eligibility.”- **Newspaper report**

1. Given below is the description of an incident. Read it carefully and answer the questions given below: (**5 marks)**

In 2003 during the U.S. war in Iraq, the U.S. Army’s 101st Airborne Division was on a mission to secure the area, and entered the city of Najaf. It was an uneventful patrol. The search turned up nothing. The local population which had not supported Saddam Hussein’s rule seemed curious and friendly, and cautiously welcomed the U. S. troops. Word came from the Grand Ayatollah Sistani that he was willing to meet the American commander but he asked the American soldiers to first secure his compound.

As the troops started down the road that led to the Ayatollah’s compound, the crowd assembled on both sides mistook their intentions and thought they were progressing toward the Imam Ali shrine located in Najaf. The Imam Ali shrine is the burial site of the Prophet Muhammad’s son-in-law and considered one of the holiest sites in the world.

The once-friendly crowd became alarmed and chaos ensued. Earlier warm greetings were replaced with angry shouts and gestures as hundreds of people attempted to block the soldiers’ way.

Realizing the explosive situation at hand and unable to verbally convey his peaceful intentions, the colonel told his men to stay calm. He instructed the soldiers to smile, get down on one knee, and point their weapons to the ground. The puzzled soldiers reluctantly complied. A hush fell on the crowd. Then slowly the crowd responded in kind—relaxing, smiling, and sitting on the ground.

1. Why does the local crowd turn hostile?

(i) They think the U.S. Army is an enemy

(ii) **They misunderstand the behaviour of the Army**

(iii) They do not understand the language of the soldiers

(iv) None of the above

2.. The misunderstanding between the two sets of people is related to

(i) Gender

(ii) **Religious practices**

(iii) Appearance

(iv) Regional variations

3. Why is the American commander unable to communicate verbally?

(i) Official protocol prevents him from doing so

(ii**) He does not know the local language**

(iii) His soldiers do not want him to do so

(iv) He dislikes any contact with the local population

4. The situation is saved through

(i) The Commander’s knowledge of local customs

(ii) **Good non-verbal communication**

(iii) Desire to maintain peace

(iv) The Ayatollah’s intervention

1. What did the soldiers’ facial expression convey?
2. We are going to attack
3. **We are here as friends**
4. We surrender
5. We want help
6. As passengers were getting out of the flight, they saw the woman pilot who had flown the plane. One passenger went up to her and told her: “Please accept my compliments for such a smooth flight—I hadn’t expected this from a woman pilot.” **(4 marks**)
7. Do you think this is a compliment? – **No; it is not gender sensitive**
8. What makes the passenger pass this comment? – **Because he does not think that a woman is as capable as a man to fly a plane.**
9. One day the manager told her subordinate - “I need the complete financial report by the end of the day”.

“What am I supposed to do?” he asked.

“Oh, you know what it means,” was the reply.

The subordinate simply compiled the expenditure details and handed it over to the manager. The manager was obviously not happy. She was expecting much more from him. By financial report, she actually meant the complete financial analysis, which would include the complete details of how much the company spends in advertising, promotional activities, and other marketing activities, analysis of the inflow and outflow of expenditure patterns and so on.

1. Who is to be blamed in the failure of this communication process? Why?

**The manager. She does not clarify what she wants from the officer**.

1. Could the manager or the subordinate have done something to prevent this?

**Yes. The manager could have explained the nature of the work more carefully. The officer also could have asked for clarifications.**

**(4 marks)**

1. Given below are a few scenarios where communication breaks down due to various reasons. Identify the reason as semantic, cultural, interpersonal or physical, explaining in one sentence why you feel so. **(4 marks)**
2. “I’ll call you back later. I’m on the platform waiting for a train and I cannot hear you properly”, you tell a friend over the phone. - **Physical**
3. You are in the countryside on a hot day and feel very thirsty. You ask for a glass of water from a house and the housewife gives you a cool glass of lassi. After drinking it, you offer money and she is very offended. - **Cultural**
4. A first-year student asks you for directions to reach Core labs. You start giving directions and from the look on his face you realize that he is thoroughly confused. - **Semantic**
5. You are in a class where you do not like the instructor. Although the subject is tough, you cannot concentrate on what she is saying and instead thinks of ways of making fun of her. - **Interpersonal**