

National Institute of Technology, Hamirpur

Mid-Term Examination, January 2021

Communication Skills (Course code: HS 101)

B. Tech. (First Semester)

Max. Marks: 30

Time: 90 Minutes

Note: All questions are compulsory. Word limit for Questions 1-4 is around 70-80 words.

1. What is communication? Explain the process of communication indicating the role of each element. 5
2. What are the different barriers in effective communication? 5
3. Comment in brief on verbal and non-verbal communication. 5
4. What are the different strategies of reading? How does reading contribute to the overall language competence? 5

OR

Discuss in brief the theories of learning English as Second language. 5

5. Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow. 10

Martina worked for a multinational company as a successful project manager in Brazil and was transferred to manage a team in Sweden. She was excited about her new role but soon realized that managing her new team would be a challenge. Despite their friendliness, Martina did not feel respected as a leader. Her new staff would question her proposals openly in meetings, and when she gave them instructions on how to carry out a task, they would often go about it in their own way without checking with her. When she announced her decisions on the project, they would continue giving their opinions as if it was still up for discussion. After weeks of frustration, Martina emailed her Swedish manager about the issues she was facing with her team. Her manager simply asked her if she felt her team was still performing, and what she thought would help her better collaborate with her team members. Martina found her manager vague and did not feel as if he was managing the situation satisfactorily. What Martina was experiencing was a cultural clash in expectations. She was used to a more hierarchical framework where the team leader and manager took control and gave specific instructions on how things were to be done. This more directive management style worked well for her and her team in Brazil but did not transfer well to her new team in Sweden, who were more used to a flatter hierarchy where decision making was more democratic. When Martina took the issue to her Swedish manager, rather than stepping in with

directions about what to do, her manager took on the role of coach and focused on getting her to come up with her own solutions instead. Dutch social psychologist Geert Hofstede uses the concept of ‘power distance’ to describe how power is distributed and how hierarchy is perceived in different cultures. In her previous work environment, Martina was used to a high-power distance culture where power and authority are respected, and everyone has their rightful place. In such a culture, leaders make the big decisions and are not often challenged. Her Swedish team, however, were used to working in a low-power distance culture where subordinates often work together with their bosses to find solutions and make decisions. Here, leaders act as coaches or mentors who encourage independent thought and expect to be challenged. When Martina became aware of the cultural differences between her and her team, she took the initiative to have an open conversation with them about their feelings about her leadership. Pleased to be asked for their thoughts, Martina’s team openly expressed that they were not used to being told what to do. They enjoyed having more room for initiative and creative freedom. When she told her team exactly what she needed them to do, they felt that she did not trust them to do their job well. They realized that Martina was taking it personally when they tried to challenge or make changes to her decisions and were able to explain that it was how they had always worked. With a better understanding of the underlying reasons behind each other’s behavior, Martina and her team were able to adapt their way of working. Martina was then able to make adjustments to her management style so as to better fit the expectations of her team and more effectively motivate her team to achieve their goals.

- 1) Why did Martina find it difficult to work with her new team in Spain? **02**
- 2) As discussed in the text, how would you distinguish between high-power distance culture and low-power distance culture? **02**
- 3) Summarize the text in about 70 words and give it an appropriate title. **06**

Mid-Semester Examination

B-Tech-1st Year

Section-H,J

Total Marks: 30

Time: 1.5 hours

All questions are compulsory.

1. What does 'O' in KOPPACT stands for and do you think it's the most neglected aspect in non verbal communication? (5)
2. Explain the process of communication with diagram. (5)
3. Effective communication involves a balance of verbal and non verbal language. Explain. (5)
4. True or False: (5)
 - a. Encoder interprets the message and sends a feedback.
 - b. Proxemics is the study of touch.
 - c. Don't judge a book by its cover is an example of artifact.
 - d. Channel is the medium through which message travels from the sender to the receiver.
 - e. Communication is not possible without words.
 - f. "I don't like her because she looks arrogant" is an example of overload of data.
 - g. Language is a tool of communication.
 - h. Communication is one of the important soft skills.
 - i. Hard skills are more important than soft skills.
 - j. Hard skills are also called people skills.
5. Read the passage and answer the questions: (10)

Unusual animal behavior preceding earthquakes has been noted for centuries. Scientists believe that animals can perceive environmental

changes several hours or even days before the mishap. Animals are noted as being restless for several weeks before a Tashkent, Uzbekistan earthquake. An hour before the disaster, domestic animals refused to go indoors and dogs howled and barked furiously. Survivors recall that stray animals including cattle were seen screaming out of town before the earthquake.

- a. What prediction may be made by observing animal behavior?
- b. What do survivors recall about animals' behavior?
- c. If scientists believe that animals start behaving strangely before a natural disaster, can this be declared a fact?
- d. What is meant by the phrase: 'barked furiously'?
- e. What should be the title of this passage?