

ECS-02-Vocal Skills

Listening

- Listening is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process.
- Listening is key to all effective communication. Without the ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood.
- As a result, communication breaks down and the sender of the message can easily become frustrated or irritated.
- Listening is receiving language through the ears.
- Listening involves identifying the sounds of speech and processing them into words and sentences.
- When we listen, we use our ears to receive individual sounds (letters, stress, rhythm and pauses) and we use our brain to convert these into messages that mean something to us.
- Listening in any language requires focus and attention.
- It is a skill that some people need to work at harder than others.
- People who have difficulty concentrating are typically poor listeners.
- Listening in a second language requires even greater focus.
- Listening is so important that many top employers provide listening skills training for their employees. This is not surprising when you consider that good listening skills can lead to better customer satisfaction, greater productivity with fewer mistakes, and increased sharing of information that in turn can lead to more creative and innovative work.

Barriers to Listening

Physiological Barriers:

- Some people may have genuine hearing problems or deficiencies that prevent them from listening properly. It can be treated.
- Some people may have problem in processing information or retaining information in the memory. For example Lack of concentration/interest.

Physical Barriers:

- These referred to distraction in the environment such as the sound of an air conditioner, cigarette smoke, or an overheated room. It can interfere the Listening process.
- They could also be in the form of information overload.
- For example, if you are in meeting with your manager and the phone rings and your mobile beeps at the same time to let u know that you have the message. It is very hard to listen carefully to what is being said. Arriving late for a speech, presentation or lecture.
- Therefore unavailability of listeners, Speaker or listener being distracted by disturbances will also be coming into physical barrier category.

Attitudinal Barriers:

- Pre occupation with personal or work related problems can make it difficult to focus one's attention completely on what speaker is saying, even what is being said is of very importance.
- Another common attitudinal barrier is egocentrism, or the belief that the person has more knowledgeable than the speaker, or that there is nothing new to learn from the speaker's ideas.
- People with this kind of close minded attitude are very poor listeners.

Wrong Assumptions:

- The success of communication depend on the both the sender and receiver.
- It is wrong to assume that communication is the sole responsibility of the sender or the speaker and those listeners have no role to play. Such an assumption can be big barrier to listening.
- For example, a brilliant speech or presentation, however well delivered, is wasted if the receiver is not listening at the other end.
- Listeners have as much responsibility as speakers to make the communication successful. The process should be made successful by paying attention seeking clarifications and giving feedback.
- Another example: Assuming that the speaker is going to give some unimportant information or Pre-judgments about the speaker.

Cultural Barriers:

- Accents can be barriers to listening, since they interfere with the ability to understand the meaning of words that are pronounced differently.
- The problem of different accents arises not only between cultures, but also within a culture.
- For example, in a country like India where there is enormous cultural diversity, accents may differ even between regions states.

Gender Barriers:

- Communication research has shown that gender can be barrier to listening.
- Studies have revealed that men and women listen very differently and for different purposes.
- Women are more likely to listen for the emotion behind a speaker's words, when men listen more for the facts and the content.

Lack of Training:

- Listening is not an inborn skill. People are not born good listeners. It is developed through practice and training.
- Lack of training in listing skills is an important barrier.
- In lack of training people do avoid listening to difficult, boring or complex information and selectively listen only to what is considered interesting.

Bad Listening Habits:

- Most people are very average listeners who have developed poor listening habits that are hard to say and that act as barriers to listening.
- For example, some people have the habits of “faking” attention, or trying to look like a listeners, in order to impress the speaker and to assure him that they are paying attention.
- Others may tend to listen to each and every fact and, as a result, miss out the main point. For example judging the speaker by his/her mannerisms, voice, appearance, accent, etc

Emotional barriers:

- Emotional barriers are emotional factors that get in the way of effective listening.
- These include both positive and negative emotions, such as being excited, angry, upset, or distracted.
- It's difficult to focus on something else when emotions come in the way of concentration.
- For example, if you're upset about something that happened earlier in the day, it will be challenging to focus on what the person in front of you is saying. If you're angry with someone, you're less likely to be very receptive to things they have to say. And if you're distracted by something exciting going on in your life, you won't be able to focus on the speaker very well.

Language Barriers:

- In our global society, a language barrier is probably one of the most common obstacles to effective listening.
- It can exist when there is a language difference between the two individuals talking or when one person has a poor understanding of the spoken language.
- It is important to note that a language barrier does not have to be an issue of nationality or ethnicity. It could simply be a difference in dialect.
- For example, someone from the south of England may not understand someone from the north of England because they speak with a different accent or even use other expressions.

Information overload:

- When there is too much information coming at someone, it can be challenging to focus on one thing.
- This often happens in business meetings when people are presenting either new or complex information.
- It can also occur during conversations when the person you are talking to gives you too much information at once.
- In either case, the listener will not focus on what is being said and will probably miss important details.
- An example of information overload can be found in a business meeting. Imagine you are in a meeting where the speaker presents information that does not seem relevant to your job or tasks.
- This can cause you to become distracted and lose focus.
- As a result, you will miss important details that could affect your work performance.

Time Pressure:

- This barrier is based on the idea that people feel they do not have enough time to listen.
- Time pressure can come from a number of different places, including from within oneself or from an external source.
- For example, if you are running late for a meeting, you will probably be less inclined to spend time listening to everyone's ideas than if you had more time available.
- Alternatively, if you feel impatient because the person speaking is taking too long, you might feel unable to focus on what they are saying.
- Because of this, it could be hard to focus on what the other person is saying, and you may stop listening and start preparing your excuse for leaving

Importance of Listening

Listening skills are a vital part of good communication. If you have good communication skills, you can start to improve relationships in the workplace as well as in society. Also, you will be able to make decisions more effectively and reach a quicker agreement with others.

Reduces Misunderstandings:

- Poor communication always results in misunderstandings. And, poor communication arises from poor listening skills.
- People end up assuming things and misunderstanding each other if they do not share their side of the stories or listen to others actively. So, it's easy to mishear something or misinterpret information.
- Such misunderstanding can gradually keep increasing if the listening skills in communication are not improved.

Builds Empathy:

- Empathy is essential to effective listening.
- Therefore, it would be best if you mirrored the emotions the speaker has.
- For example, if the speaker's face expresses sadness or joy, your facial expressions and words should also express similar emotions.
- Empathy towards the speaker takes concentration and consumes energy, allowing open communication and establishing relationships.

Limits Judgments:

- Listening limits judgments. While actively listening to someone, your total concentration stays in the conversation.
- As a result, you try your best to understand the other person or group of people and remove judgmental thoughts.
- You, therefore, listen to the speaker with an open mind because they are giving you their perspective. You may realize that the speech makes more sense as they continue the lecture.

Improves Business Relationships:

- If you are working in a customer-centric or interactive role, your communication skills play a big part in your success.

- Thus, practicing good listening skills with everyone at the workplace would benefit your success. You could also build stronger bonds with your co-workers.
- As a result, everyone will respect you more and value you

Increases Productivity:

- Whether you're at work or home, listening is essential to your success.
- Good listeners are more likely to store information and understand what's being required of them. This is a valuable skill in group projects and meetings.
- People may think they need to talk a lot to contribute, but listening is arguably more essential. If everyone listens to each other, there is less room for misunderstandings.
- This increases everyone's productivity.

Enhances Leadership Skills:

- Leaders always have good listening skills in communication.
- Active listening helps you connect with your team's ideas, hear various perspectives, and prevent miscommunications.
- In addition, a good team leader ensures everyone feels respected, which means they all feel listened to. They always listen to others and help them in every possible way.

Providing Feedback:

- Providing feedback to the speaker can only be achieved through active listening.
- The goal of feedback is to send signals to the speaker to know that you are actively listening.
- The medium of feedback can be verbal or non-verbal.
- For example, you can use "okay, or I understand it" for verbal feedback. And for non-verbal feedback, you can nod your head and other appropriate facial expressions. Writing down what the speaker is saying also shows your attentiveness.

Debate

- A debate is a form of public discourse; it can be in the form of formal direct oral contest or competition in argumentation between two or more people on a defined proposition at a specific time.
- According to the Oxford English Dictionary, debate is "*a formal discussion on a particular matter in a public meeting or legislative assembly, in which opposing arguments are put forward and which usually ends with a vote.*"
- A debate is a formal discussion on a particular matter in a public event, a legislative assembly, or simply in a formal gathering of a group of people, in which there are two sides: each side is entitled to prove their point through developing multiple arguments and refuting those of the opponent side.

Benefits of Debating

Critical Thinking:

- Critical thinking is the ability to judge whether or not an argument is persuasive.
- It also relates to how well an individual can justify their own belief.

- In a world where information is consumed passively, this is an important life skill that's all-too-often neglected by schools.
- Teaching about debates and critical thinking is a way of protecting children against things like fake news and conspiracy theories.

Public Speaking:

- Public speaking is a skill that children and adults alike so often struggle with. Like so many other things in life, with speaking in public, practice makes perfect.
- That's why, by practising debates with your class or child, you can help them to master an important life skill.
- Being a strong public speaker can also boost a child's self-confidence.

Self-Confidence:

- Debating is something that requires doing a lot of research beforehand. As well as encouraging extracurricular learning, knowing a lot about a subject can help with feelings of self-confidence.
- By exploring debating in your lessons, you can assist children that might be struggling in this area.
- Teachers and parents can use their role as a moderator to offer plenty of advice and praise to their class or child.

Teamwork:

- For a debate to succeed, children have to work together (even those on opposing teams!).
- Teamwork in debate means that each and every team member should feel supported.
- It's also important to respect the other team and give everyone the opportunity to make their point.
- Teamwork is an important skill that can be mastered through plenty of practice and encouragement, particularly when it comes to debating.

Assertiveness:

- In a debate setting, this means standing up against falsehood and inaccuracies.
- If children learn to do this in the classroom, then it's possible they might carry this over to the workplace and the wider world.
- Debates encourage children to stand up for their beliefs in a way that's both assertive and gracious.
- Being able to do so can help to sway others away from things like fake news and conspiracy theories

Planning:

- At the heart of any debate are two carefully planned arguments.
- If you're trying to teach about persuasive writing, then exploring debates might help your class or child to plan and articulate their arguments.
- Planning also means being able to guess what the other side might say about an argument and to prepare counter-arguments accordingly.
- Note-taking is an important debating skill that relates to planning.

Disagreeing:

- There's nothing wrong with a healthy disagreement.
- In fact, given that people are finding it harder to talk about things they disagree on, you might find that it's a favourable outcome.
- Learning how to disagree with another person is something that comes with age.
- Practising debating skills with your class or child is the perfect way to encourage tolerance of other viewpoints.

Presentation Skills:

- Your presentation also plays a vital role in how you are perceived as an individual by others and how you are perceived as competition.
- Speak slowly and with clear enunciation, and consider what it is you are going to say.
- This will make for a clearer understanding of what you are talking about and make for better reasoning.
- Displaying skills in presentation will earn you immediate respect both while you are debating and in other situations where you need to be in front of a group of people talking.

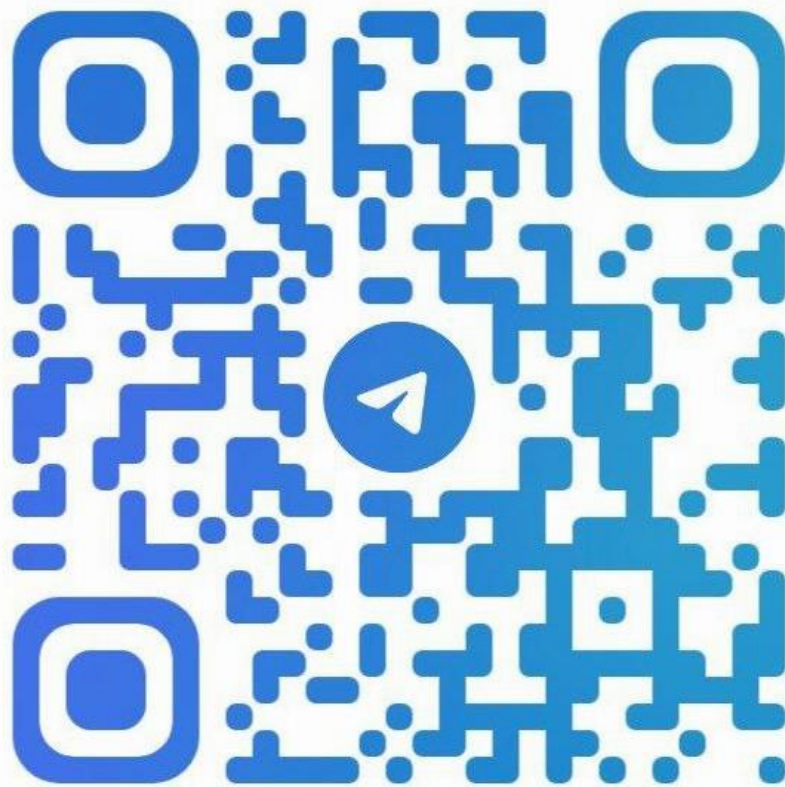
Quick-Thinking:

- Challenge your opponent, think outside the box, and be prepared to identify any gaps in their counter-arguments.
- Responding to comments and questions and thinking on your feet are essential debating skills, as hesitating could cost you precious time and points.
- Thinking quickly could prepare you for just about any situation that life presents to you when time is crucial, and a decision must be made fast.

Questions

1. What is listening skills? Discuss the Barriers to Listening skills. (MID-04M)
2. Why Listening Skill is Important in Communication? (MID-03M)
3. What is Debate?
4. What are the benefits of debate? (MID-05M)
5. What is Role Play? Discuss the Benefits of Role Play in communication.
6. Explain in your words: What is the role of Telephonic game in communication?
7. How debate helps in enhancing communicative skills list few examples?
8. "The art of conversation lies in listening". Explain (MID-05M)
9. Write the views of yourself expressing support or against the statement given below if agree then justify and if disagree then also justify it.
 1. Should social media platforms be regulated to prevent the spread of misinformation and hate speech?
 2. Is free speech absolute, or should there be limitations on what individuals can say, especially in public spaces?

3. Should college education be free for all students, regardless of their financial background?
4. Is the death penalty an effective deterrent to crime, or does it violates human rights and promotes violence?
5. Should the voting age be lowered to 16 to increase youth engagement in politics and decision-making processes?
6. Is affirmative action an effective way to promote diversity and equality in education and the workplace, or does it perpetuate discrimination



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