

Unit 1 Language and Communication

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1.1 Introduction

Communication is an integral part of a human being's existence. According to some estimates, communication takes up nearly three-fourths of an active human being's life. When compared to all other professions, it is assumed that in possessing the skills of communication, a journalist is at the apex. Not only to succeed in this field, but even to survive, a journalist should be an expert communicator. In this unit, you will be introduced to the concept of communication and its process. You will also study the different barriers that you normally face while communicating.

Objectives:

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the definition and purpose of communication.
- describe the process of communication
- identify and overcome the barriers of communication
- discuss the importance of verbal and non-verbal communication

1.2 Concept of Communication

The term 'communication' is often heard in any field that you come across. It covers about any interaction between two persons.

1.2.1 Definitions of communication

Given below are the definitions of the concept, 'communication' that would help you understand its meaning and purpose.

- Newman and Summer define communication as, "an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons."
- Bellows Gilson and Odirone define communication as, "a communion by words, letters, symbols, or messages, and as a way that one organization member shares meaning with the other."
- Anderson suggests that, "Communication is the process by which we understand others and in turn endeavor to be understood by them. It is dynamic, constantly changing and shifting in response to the total situation."
- Berelson and Steiner define communication as, "the transmission of information, idea, emotion, skills, etc., by the use of symbols – words, pictures, figures, graphs, etc. It is the act or process of transmission that is usually called communication."
- According to Clevenger, "Communication is a term used to refer to any dynamic, information-sharing process."
- Fotheringham defines communication as, "a process involving the selection, production, and transmission of signs in such a way as to help a receiver perceive a meaning similar to that in the mind of the communicator."
- Bradley calls communication "a process, a series of progressive and interdependent steps leading to the attainment of an end, in speech the end being the communication of some specific meaning from one person to another."

1.2.2 Function and purpose of communication

Chester I Barnard studied the communication process in organizations. He held the view that **Communication linked people together in an organization to achieve a common purpose.** In other words, communication aims to make people work together for the common good of the organization. You may say that communication links people together to

strengthen relationships. You may also say that communication links people, who believe in a common cause. For example: A reporter doing a documentary on lifestyle or problems faced by the tribes need not know their language. Communication at that time will unite them towards one cause; the reporter to report and the tribal people to say their story.

Communication serves the following purposes in organizations:

- Helps establish and disseminate the goals of an organization.
- Facilitates the development of plans for the achievement of goals.
- Helps supervisors utilize manpower and other resources in the most effective and efficient way.
- Helps in selection, development, and appraisal of members of the organization.
- Helps higher officials lead, direct, motivate and create a climate in which people are willing to contribute.
- Facilitates control and evaluation of performance.

In a work-place, effective communication not only helps the higher officials discharge their duties, but also builds a bridge between them and the external environment of the organization. The external environment consists mainly of clients, suppliers, stockholders, government, community and others that affect the success of the enterprise. By means of an effective communication network, an official can understand the needs of victims, the demands of the clients, and the expectations of the community, and be aware of the presence of quality suppliers and relevant government regulations. An organization can function as an open system only by communicating effectively with the environment.

When we discuss the function of effective communication between people, we have to also note the purpose of such communication. Why do we communicate the way we do? What happens when you receive a letter from the editor of the press where you are working, to cover a certain news item, what do you understand from it?

You may come to know some new facts about the news that you have to write about. You may also know about some common concern between the two of you; which neither you nor he, as your head, knew before receiving the letter. We can say that the information in the letter had an effect on his understanding of you and changed it.

For example, if you replied to the letter that you would be interested in covering the news that has been planned, the editor may be happy for you. He might understand that you have agreed to do the assignment which in turn would help you to have a better chance of upgrading your knowledge in your work area. Before receiving your consent, he thought of you as an employee who has basic knowledge of the job that is assigned to you. Now he knows that you are interested not only in upgrading your knowledge but are also interested in involving yourself to see the growth of the company you are working in. Such change in his understanding is the result of your letter. He may also send you a message of congratulation!

Therefore, we can say that the primary goal or purpose of communication is to 'effect change' or to bring about change. Communication also leads to some 'new action'. In this example you acted as sending your consent and the editor acted by sending a message of congratulation.

Self Assessment Questions

1. _____ linked people together in an organization to achieve a common purpose.
2. Communication facilitates _____ and _____ of performance.
3. Say whether True or False:
 - a) Communication helps officials to motivate the employees.
 - b) An organization cannot function as an open system by communicating effectively with the environment.
 - c) Communication links people together to strengthen relationships.

1.3 Process of Communication

Normally, the communication is meant for Interpersonal purpose. This is also known as interpersonal communication, where the information or message is transferred from one person to the other(s). The person who transfers the message is called the sender or transmitter. The person (s) receiving the message is the receiver. The transmitter is expected to send the information in a format that the receiver(s) will understand. The information that has to be sent is converted into a format that the receiver will understand, which is known as Encoding.

Messages can be encoded into a variety of formats oral, written or visual. Once the message is encoded in a desired format, it is transferred through a

medium called 'channel.' A channel connects the sender to the receiver. Channels for communication may include a letter, memorandum, a computer, a telephone, a fax, a telegram or a television. The choice of the correct channel depends on the situation of the communication. For e.g., when you have to communicate extremely confidential information, direct face-to-face or a sealed letter is better than a telephonic conversation.

The information, which is transferred, has to be interpreted by the receiver. This process of interpretation is known as decoding. In order to decode the message, the receiver should be ready to receive the message. He should not be preoccupied with other thoughts that would distract him.

Finally, the receiver will send a message back to the transmitter. It may be a reply to the query made by the sender or any apt response to the message delivered by the sender. This reply confirms whether the information sent has been understood or not. This back check is known as feedback.

You have just learnt how the communication takes place. This can be illustrated in the diagram given below.

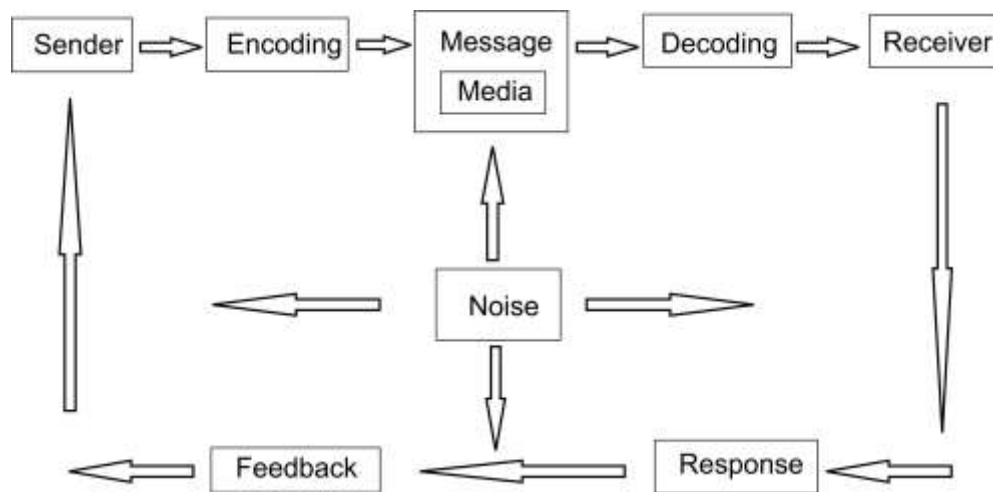


Fig. 1.1: Communication Process

Self Assessment Questions

4. In normal circumstances, when the message is transferred from one person to another, it is called as _____ .
5. The person who sends the information is called _____ or _____ .
6. A telephone is an example of _____ in a communication.
7. Match the following:

i) Transmitter	a) interpretation of the received message
ii) Encoding	b) person (s) receiving the message
iii) Decoding	c) person who transfers the message
iv) Receiver	d) reply that confirms whether the information sent has been understood or not.
v) Feedback	e) conversion of the message into a format that a receiver can understand.

1.4 Barriers to Effective Communication

At each stage in the process of communication – encoding, transferring, and decoding, there is the possibility of interference. This may hinder the communication process. Such interference is known as ‘noise.’ Often, a comparison is made between communication and a leaky bucket. If you carry water in a leaky bucket, you will lose water at various points in your journey from the water tap to your destination. The amount of water you lose depends upon the number of holes in the bucket, the size of the holes, the route you take to your final destination and the time you take to get to your destination. Similarly, when information is transferred from the sender to the receiver, all information may not be received by the receiver because of holes called noise. Each of the noise may affect the amount of information transferred. Just as in a leaky bucket, more holes decrease the amount of water, more noise decreases the amount of correct information received. Let us classify the different types of barriers as;

i) Language and Cultural Differences: The receiver may not completely understand the language used by the transmitter. This may occur if the transmitter’s language is foreign to the receiver. There may also be language problems (the communication process) if the message contains technical information and the receiver is not familiar with the technical terms used. Poorly chosen words, careless omissions, lack of coherence, poor organization of ideas, awkward sentence structure, inadequate vocabulary,

unnecessary jargon, accent, pronunciation and the failure to clarify implications are some of the common reasons for the poor transmission of messages. Cultural differences created by an individual's background and experience, affect their perception of the world. Such cultural differences may affect the interpretation (decoding) of the message sent.

ii) Environment: The environment in which the transmitter or receiver are present, should be compatible. If it is noisy and full of sound, the sounds may prevent the message being fully understood. Background noise often created by colleagues, vehicles, and machinery may hinder proper communication.

iii) Channel: If the channel used to transfer the information is poor, it may prevent all or some of the information being transferred. A faulty fax machine, a crackling phone, illegible handwriting or in the case of oral messages incorrect facial gestures or a bland facial expression, are some of the barriers of communication.

iv) Receiver's Attitude and Behaviour: If the receiver is not interested in the message (or unable to give his full attention to decoding) the amount of information received may be drastically reduced. It may also lead to hear the information inaccurately. Similarly the receiver may misinterpret the message by "jumping to conclusions" or reading the message in a manner that suits his own interests/objectives and distort the true meaning of the message.

v) Transmission journey: This refers to different and numerous steps in the message. If the message is complicated or there are lots of steps to be taken to transfer the message, it may affect the accuracy or interpretation. During oral communication, approximately 30 percent of the information is lost in each transmission. Thus in large organizations, you should not rely totally on oral communication. Another aspect, which is connected with the transmission journey is the poor retention of information. Studies indicate that the employees are able to retain approximately 50% of what they are told, supervisors retain around 60% of the information they receive. Hence, it is necessary to repeat the message and use more than one channel to communicate a message.

vi) Lack of Planning: Communication would be ineffective, if the person, who is communicating did not devote sufficient time to think, plan and state the purpose of the message. By providing the reasons for a particular instruction, selecting the most appropriate channel, and releasing the message at the right time, a manager can ensure his message is understood by the receivers.

vii) Faulty translations: An individual may receive many types of messages from superiors, peers and subordinates. They, in turn, must translate information meant for subordinates, peers and superiors into a language that can be easily understood by them. When a message is transmitted from a sender to a receiver, it must be accompanied with an interpretation so as to enable the receiver to understand the message. This requires the sender to have good communication and analytical skills.

viii) Semantic Distortion: The distortion in usage of words may be a serious barrier of effective communication. This distortion may be deliberate or accidental. An advertisement which declares “We sell better products” is quite ambiguous, as it raises the question “better than what?” Some words may have ambiguous meanings and may generate different responses from different people.

Self Assessment Questions

8. When Raj from India goes to Canada, he converses with the taxi driver with his broken French and is misunderstood. This is a good example of _____ barrier.
9. Workers in a factory with machines making a lot of noise, find it difficult to communicate smoothly because of _____ barrier.
10. Due to thunder and lightning, all telephones in your lab are down. This situation is a good example of _____ barrier.

1.5 Types of Communication

Can you think of some ways to communicate with your friends?

I am sure you can. You can talk to your friend or you can write letters to him. When you talk or write you are using words to communicate. This is one type of communication. But is there any other way in which we communicate with other people? Let us look at some of the ways in which we normally communicate with others and try to understand the different types of communication, their advantages and limitations.

1.5.1 Verbal communication

When an infant cries, the mother rushes to her side, to see if the baby is hurt or has soiled herself. If it is mealtime, when the baby cried, the mother feeds the baby. The cry of the baby communicated the need of the baby to her mother. Although crying is not speaking, the mother was able to understand the baby's need.

This shows that speaking alone is not communication. We already know that we can use writing to communicate. Communication through speech is called Oral communication. Communication by means of written material is called Written communication. For example, your letter to your friend is written communication.

Spoken words and written material are called verbal communication because they use words as the means for communication.

1.5.2 Non-verbal communication

Non-verbal communication means the messages that do not contain words. In this type of communication, words are not used in the process of sending and receiving messages. You may wonder, "How is this possible?" It is a proven fact that most of our communication through words are laced with non verbal communication. They can be categorized as:

i) word-less communication like gesture; body language or posture; facial expression and eye gaze.

a) Gestures: The language of gesture enables us to express a variety of feelings and thoughts, from contempt and hostility to approval and affection. Most of us use gestures and body language in addition to words when we speak.

In every aspect of human life, gestures or hand signals have a predominant role to play. The art of communication does not involve only a few well framed words and phrases. More than that, it is about the usage of non-verbal gestures. These gestures are used in the following situations:

- In the studio, during broadcast gestures are used during start or end of telecast
- While reporting the emergency situations during war or strike, etc. the communication between the reporter and cameraman would be via gestures

- Reporters during press conferences, use gestures to communicate amongst themselves

By using hand signals you can be assured that the message you want to convey will be received clearly without any misunderstanding. The gestures are also used to avoid the victim or the bystanders from understanding the message being sent. These gestures may not be generally understood, but formed by the team for their internal use.

- b) Body language: It is a broad term for forms of communication using body movements instead of, or in addition to, sounds, verbal language, or other forms of communication. It forms part of the category of paralanguage, which describes all forms of human communication that are not verbal language. This includes the most subtle of movements that many people are not aware of, including winking and slight movement of the eyebrows. In addition, body language can also incorporate the use of facial expressions.

In our daily lives we encounter many forms of body language gestures like –

Self-confidence: hands behind the back, hands clasped in front

Superiority: hands clasped behind the head

Stress: shaking of legs

Defensive: crossing of arms is often considered to be a defensive, closed posture.

Aggressiveness: hands on the hips

Nervous: biting nails, slumped shoulder

- c) Facial expression: The emotional state of an individual is clearly conveyed by the expression of his face. Facial expressions are the primary means of conveying social information among humans, but also occur in most other mammals and some other animal species. Humans can adopt a facial expression as a voluntary action. However, because expressions are closely tied to emotion, they are more often involuntary.



Fig. 1.2: Facial Expressions

It can be nearly impossible to avoid expressions for certain emotions, even when it would be strongly desirable to do so. Examples of feelings such as, anger, concentration, contempt, desire, disgust, excitement, fear, happiness, puzzlement, sadness and surprise can take the expressions like, blank, frown, glare, laughter, pout, shock, smile, smirk, sneer, snarl, tongue-showing.

- d) **Eye Gazing:** Staring and eye-rolling also may serve the purpose of communication. Oculesics is the study of the role of eyes in nonverbal communication. Studies have found that people use their eyes to indicate their interest. This can be done through eye contact. For example, when a professor is giving a lecture, a student may communicate disinterest by reading a magazine instead of looking at the professor's presentation.

Rolling one's eyes can express exasperation or condescension. When one rolls or rotates the eyes upward, it may indicate contempt or boredom. Indirectly, it looks like the person hopes for some divine intervention to rescue him from boredom or frustration. Rolling eyes up with head slightly risen up, as if pointing upwards, may be the reference to people in higher hierarchy, e.g., upper management.

- e) **Nodding:** In many cultures, people nod their heads to indicate agreement. But some (in Bulgaria and Sri Lanka) also nod their head to suggest refusal or negation.
- f) **Bent head:** This is a gesture of shame, subdue, or agreement/confirmation. An interpretation depends on the way it is being performed and overall body context.

- g) Head shaking: This is the repeated turning of the head to the left and to the right, which means disapproval or negation in many cultures.
- h) Pointing by chin: This gesture is often used when one's hands are engaged in doing something else. This indicates a particular direction when the head is turned in the corresponding direction and the chin is slightly jerked up and in the pointed direction.

ii) Object communication such as clothing, hairstyles or even architecture; symbols and info-graphics. The most common form of object communication is clothing. People wear clothes that highlight their personality. However, this may lead to a form of stereotyping because in the cases of youngsters, the preference is to wear the clothes they consider attractive. A good example of clothing as object communication is the uniform.

iii) Prosodic features of speech such as intonation and stress. A segment in spoken language is an individual consonant, vowel, tone, or stress that makes up a word. An utterance is made up of both segments and supra-segmental features. These are broadly divided up into Prosody and Para-linguistics. Prosody refers to pitch, loudness, duration, intonation and tempo. Para-linguistics, which is much more difficult to measure, refers to expression of voice quality, emotion, speaking style and speech clarity. These features of the speech are responsible for the different meanings an individual can construe from a simple sentence.

iv) Other paralinguistic features of speech such as voice quality, emotion and speaking style. The study of nonverbal cues of voice is called 'Vocalic.' Things such as tone, pitch, accent, and volume can all give off nonverbal cues. We can learn about the speaker's personality, mood, and culture with the information given by his/her voice.

v) Touches also add to the non-verbal communication. 'Haptics' is the study of touching as nonverbal communication. Touches that can be defined as communication include: Handshakes, holding hands, kissing (cheek, lips, hand), back slap, "high-five", shoulder pat, brushing arm, etc. Each of these give off nonverbal messages, as to the touching person's intentions/feelings. They also cause feelings in the receiver, whether positive or negative. Moreover, they indicate the relation between the receiver and sender of the message.

Non verbal communication generally takes place as a supportive form of communication to verbal communication. This is its advantage. For example, nodding our head when we say 'yes.' In this situation, what we say is reinforced by non-verbal communication.

Non verbal communication is expected to support verbal communication. But it does not always do so. For example, a political leader in his election campaign speech addresses people promising them all help when he is elected as leader. Instead of being humble, if he pounds his fist and talks in a frenzied manner, the message that is conveyed to the public will be different. If a speaker or writer's words do not match their actions the message will be confusing. This is the disadvantage of non-verbal communication.

Thus, non-verbal communication may support or contradict verbal communication.

Self Assessment Questions

11. Continuous shaking of legs while working is an indication of _____.
a. Self-confidence b. Superiority c. Stress d. Defensive
12. _____ is the study of touches as non verbal communication.
a. Haptics b. Vocalic c. Oculistics d. Gestures
13. Clothing and hair styles are examples of ____ communication.
a. Subjective b. Objective c. para linguistics d. prosodic
14. Prosodic features of speech are _____ and _____.
a. intonation and stress b. dress and music c. touch and voice quality
d. Expression and rolling of eyes.
15. _____ is a gesture of shame or subduing.
a. Nodding b. Head shaking c. Head turning d. bent head
16. The primary means of conveying social information among the humans is _____.
a. gestures b. facial expressions c. clapping d. nodding

1.6 Summary

We have seen that Communication is a natural activity in any society. It links people together for achieving common goals. It brings about changes and leads to action. Historically, the Greek Philosopher, Aristotle is said to have developed the first model of communication.

In any communication event there is a source (thoughts or ideas or facts), which the sender wants to convey by encoding it into a message. The message is then transmitted through preferred channels. The receiver for whom the message is meant decodes and receives the message. He proceeds to understand the message and then reacts by giving a feed back. There are several barriers to good communication. These are called 'noise'. Barriers to communication could be internal -within the participants – such as emotions, poor listening, premature evaluation etc. or in the environment in which communication events occur. The external barriers could be physical, problems in transmission, location etc. A communication event takes place within its own context.

In the strict sense the term "verbal" means "of or concerned with words," and is not a synonym for oral or spoken communication. Thus, sign languages and writing are generally understood as forms of verbal communication, as both make use of words – although like speech, both may contain paralinguistic elements and often occur alongside nonverbal messages. Nonverbal communication can occur through any sensory channel – sight, sound, smell, touch or taste. Also, non-verbal communication comes in many forms at the same time. For example, a person's dress, tone of voice, attitude, and movement all contribute to the communication going on in a certain situation. The first scientific study of nonverbal communication was Charles Darwin's book *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872). He argued that all mammals show emotion reliably in their faces. While much nonverbal communication is based on arbitrary symbols, which differ from culture to culture, a large proportion is also to some extent iconic and may be universally understood. Paul Ekman's influential 1960s studies of facial expression determined that expressions of anger, disgust, fear, joy, sadness and surprise are universal. Serious studies of non-verbal communication has led to different branches of studies like- object communication, Hepatics, Oculesics, Vocalics

The performance of an individual is either enhanced or hampered depending upon the effectiveness of communication in the work place. Interpersonal trust is developed by being open and receptive towards innovative ideas of the subordinates.

1.7 Terminal Questions

1. Discuss the functions of effective communication.
2. What is the purpose of communication?
3. Explain the process of communication.
4. What do you mean by the barriers of communication?

1.8 Answers

Self Assessment Questions

1. communication
2. control and evaluation
3. a) True b) False c) True
4. inter-personal communication
5. Transmitter or sender
6. channel
7. i) c ii) e iii) a iv) b v) d
8. language 9. environment 10. Channel
11. C 12. A 13. B 14. A 15. D 16. B

Terminal Questions

1. Communication, when effective, helps establish and execute the goals of an organisation. It helps the officials to be good leaders, in motivating their subordinates to perform effectively. It also facilitates control and evaluation of performance.
2. The purpose of communication is to effect change. It also leads to a new action.
3. During any communication event, there is a source which starts the process of communication. It could also be a 'sender' who encodes the message. The message, through a channel or medium, reaches the receiver, who decodes it. The receiver may react to the message by giving a 'feedback.'
4. In the process of communication, any hindrance in the stages of encoding, transferring and decoding may be called 'barrier' of communication.

REMEDIAL ENGLISH

Nouns: The word that identifies the 'who', 'where' and 'what' in a language is a noun. Nouns name persons, places, things and feelings.

Kinds of Nouns

1. **Proper Noun:** They are the names of a particular place, person or thing. They name specific or one-of-a-kind items. Proper nouns always begin with capital letters. E.g.: France, Tim, the Ganges, the Eiffel Tower
2. **Common Noun:** They are the names given to every person, place or thing of the same class. They identify the general variety. Common nouns require capitalization only if they start the sentence or are part of a title. E.g.: student, city, river, dog.
3. **Collective Noun:** They are the names given when a number of persons or things are taken together as a whole. E.g.: crowd, flock, swarm.
4. **Abstract Noun:** We cannot see them as the other nouns. They are the names given to qualities, actions and states of being that cannot be felt, seen or heard. E.g.: beauty, charity, laughter, childhood.

Exercise 1: Pick out the nouns in the following sentences:

1. The shopman hasn't opened his shop today.
2. After the rains, the grass and plants have started growing well.
3. Children are fond of toys and sweets.
4. This is silk. See how shiny and soft it is!
5. Lots of tea is grown in China.
6. Don't you think that all religions, more or less say the same thing?

Gender in Nouns

1. A noun that denotes a male is Masculine Gender.
E.g.: father, boy, hero.
2. A noun that denotes a female is Feminine Gender.
E.g.: mother, girl, heroine.
3. A noun that does not denote either male or female, but can fit into one of the two categories, is Common Gender.
E.g.: baby, parent, student, teacher.
4. A noun that denotes neither male nor female is Neuter Gender.
E.g.: tree, jewel, building, meadow.

Conversion of Masculine to Feminine Nouns:

1. Add – ess at the end of the masculine noun. E.g.: Baron-baroness ; Lion-lioness ; Duke-duchess; Prince -princess
2. Change either the first or the last word in the case of a compound noun. In other words, by adding a word indicating sex before or after the main word.
E.g.: Land lord - land lady ; sales man - sales woman ; peacock-peahen ; cock-sparrow - hen-sparrow ; tom-cat- tabby-cat
3. Add – ine, -ina, -ix, -a, at the end of the masculine noun.
E.g.: hero-heroine; Administrator-administratrix ; creator-creatix ; sultan-sultana ; czar – czarina
4. Use a completely different word. E.g.: fox –vixen ; stag –doe ; ram -ewe
marquis – marchioness ; horse -mare

Note: However, the usage of gender difference is breaking down rapidly. Hence we have a spokesperson instead of spokesman or spokeswoman. Similarly Chairperson and Salesperson is more commonly used.

Exercise 2: Change the genders of nouns and make correct sentences:

1. Father helps my sister in doing her homework.
2. The man-servant is chasing the buffalo.
3. A lion and a tiger are chasing the deer.
4. A King's son is a prince and his daughter is a princess.
5. Uncle is teaching Aunt how to cook.

Number in nouns:

1. **Singular:** This indicates one thing. E.g.: tomato, boy, card.
2. **Plural:** This indicates more than one thing. E.g.: tomatoes, boys, cards.

The general rule is that most count nouns pluralize with '–s' and the non-count nouns do not pluralize at all. However, certain nouns in English belong to both classes: they have both a non-count and a count meaning. In such cases there is an exception to the rule.

- i) The count meaning concrete and specific. E.g.: I've had some difficulties finding a job. Here 'difficulties' refer to number of specific problems. The talks are in progress. 'Talks' refer to number of lectures or speeches.

- ii) The non-count meaning is abstract and general. E.g.: She succeeded in the examination with little difficulty. (Here, 'difficulty' refers to the general idea of the exam being difficult.). I dislike idle talk. ('Talk' refers to talking in general.)

Conversion and Usage of Singular and Plural Nouns

1. The most common way of converting a singular noun to its plural form is by adding **–s**. day-days, girl, girls.
2. Nouns ending in **–ch**, **–o**, **–sh**, **–ss**, **–x** form their plural by adding **–es**. Church – churches, hero-heroes, brush- brushes, kiss-kisses, tax-taxes
3. Nouns ending in **–y** with a preceding consonant form their plural by dropping the **–y** and adding **–ies**. E.g.: baby-babies, story-stories.
4. Twelve nouns ending in **–f** or **–fe** drop **–f/fe** and add **–ves** to form plural.
They are: calf, half, knife, leaf, life, loaf, self, sheaf, shelf, thief, wife, wolf, loaf, knife. (calves, halves, knives, leaves, lives, loaves, selves)
Exceptions: However, nouns **hoof**, **scarf** and **wharf** take either **–s** or **–ves**. hoofs or hooves, scarf or scarves, wharfs or wharves. Also, the other nouns ending in **–f/ef** add **–s** to form plural. cliff-cliffs, handkerchief – handkerchiefs.
5. Instruments having two parts are always used in plural.
E.g.: scissors, tongs, trousers, nuptials.
6. Some plural words are more commonly used in singular.
E.g.: Mathematics, Statistics (as a subject), Politics, News, Measles.
7. Normally compound nouns take the plural of the last noun.
E.g.: boyfriends, travel agents.
8. Nouns of words of foreign origin follow the rule of the original language to form plurals. E.g.: phenomenon-phenomena, radius-radii.
9. Certain nouns have different forms in their plural, depending on the context of usage. E.g.: die – dies (device that shapes materials by stamping, cutting or punching), dice (small cubes used in games) brother – brethren (members of community); brothers (siblings).
10. Abstract and Material Nouns are not used in plural, except in cases, where they are used as Common Noun. E.g.: advice-advice, courage-courage

Exercise 3: Turn the nouns into plurals wherever it is possible. Make necessary changes.

1. The man and his wife went to the place of worship.
2. The singer can play the piano.
3. A ring is made of gold.
4. A woman knows very little but understand more.
5. A dentist pulls of a tooth.

Articles: In English, articles may be classified as Indefinite and Definite.

1. **Definite article:** It is used before a noun that is specified. **'The'** is the definite article.
2. **Indefinite articles:** They are used before a noun, which is not specified. **'A'** and **'An'** are the indefinite articles.

Definite Article Usage: 'The' is used-

1. before singular and plural nouns when the noun is particular or specific. E.g.: The apple tree is full of fruits. (specific noun – singular).
2. before non-countable nouns that are made more specific. E.g.: The coffee in my cup is too hot to drink.
3. before a noun refers to something unique. E.g.: The theory of relativity.
4. before names of rivers, oceans and seas. E.g.: The Ganges, the Pacific.
5. before points on the globe. E.g.: The Equator, the North Pole.
6. before geographical areas. E.g.: The Middle East, the West
7. before deserts, forests, gulfs and peninsulas. E.g.: The Sahara, the Persian Gulf, the Black Forest, the Indian Peninsula
8. before certain well-known or sacred books. E.g.: The Mahabharata, The Bible, The Midsummer Night's Dream
9. before an adjective in the superlative degree. E.g.: Nisha is the shortest girl in the office.
10. before certain adjectives to give a plural meaning. E.g. The rich = rich people

Indefinite articles – Usage

- We use 'a' when the noun we are referring to begins with a consonant sound. E.g.: a city, a bird
- We use 'an' when the noun we are referring to begins with a vowel (a, e, i, o, u) sound. E.g.: an apple, an umbrella.

NOTE: If the noun begins with a consonant sound. (E.g.: university), then we use 'a'. If the noun begins with a vowel sound (E.g.: hour), then we use 'an'. We say "university" with a "y" sound at the beginning as though it were spelt "youniversity". So, "a university" IS correct. We say "hour" with a silent 'h' as though it were spelt "our". Therefore, "an hour" IS correct.

'A' or 'An' is used –

1. before nouns that introduce something or someone you have not mentioned before. E.g.: I saw an elephant this morning.
2. before singular countable nouns. E.g.: I stepped in a puddle.
3. when talking about one's profession. E.g.: I am an English teacher.
4. before Mr/Mrs/Miss + name to imply that he is a stranger to the speaker.
E.g.: A Mr Smith is outside your office.
5. before a proper noun to make it a common noun. E.g.: Amit is a Shakespeare.
6. before certain uncountable nouns preceded by nouns + of. E.g.: a drop of water, a piece of advice
7. after the words many, rather, such, quite in certain structures. E.g.: Such a show cannot be arranged now.

'A' or 'An' is not used

1. before names of meals. E.g.: Let us have lunch at 12.30 p.m.
Exception: 'a' is used before names of meals when they are preceded by adjectives. E.g.: She gave me a sumptuous dinner yesterday.

Articles are not used

1. with non countable nouns referring to something in general. E.g.: Coffee is his favourite drink.
2. before names of languages and nationalities. E.g.: English, Indian
3. before names of academic subjects. E.g.: History, Biology
4. before names of cities, towns, states. E.g.: Miami, Seoul
5. before names of streets. E.g.: M.G. Road
6. before names of lakes and bays. E.g.: Lake Titicaca
Exception: 'the' is used with group of lakes. E.g.: the Great Lakes.
7. before names of mountains. E.g.: Mount Everest
Exception: 'the' is used with mountain ranges. E.g.: the Andes
8. before names of continents. E.g.: Asia, Australia

9. before names of islands. E.g.: Easter Islands
Exception: 'the' is used with the chain of islands. E.g.: the Andamans
10. before material nouns. E.g. Gold is a precious metal
Exception: 'the' is used with an adjunct, which makes the material noun definite. E.g.: The gold we use in India is all imported.

Exercise 4: Fill in the blanks with appropriate articles (a / an / the)

And they lived happily ever after, say ____ fairy tales. Have you ever wondered if they really did? They could have in fairy tales but in reality, we are still chasing happiness and it only gets more elusive by ____ day. Mankind has been united in the conviction that happiness is ____ very desirable state. We are driven by ____ need to be happy behind everything we do. When young, we study well to get good grades so we can be happy with ____ accolades. We grow up; get jobs to earn money, security, status – all for happiness. And then inevitably get into relationships/ marriage all again for – happiness.

We chase money, health, growth, fame, power, property and relationships, not for what they are, but because we think they could lead to happiness.

Yet, you will acknowledge that this is fleeting happiness. Getting into ____ foreign university is what you always wanted, but leaving your girl friend behind, that totally kills it. Losing weight may transform your life but it means never having 'Death by chocolate' again. Promotions mean no holidays, and high-end cars mean gallons of petrol. No matter what or how much you have, nothing seems quite enough. Is there ____ irrefutable, permanent and absolute happiness? Or better, What makes people happy? ____ good bank account, ____ good cook, and ____ good digestion, said Jean Jacques Rousseau.

Answers**Exercise1:**

1. shopman; shop
2. rains; grass; plants
3. children; toys; sweets
4. silk
5. tea; China
6. religions

Exercise 2:

1. Mother helps my brother in doing his homework.
2. The maid-servant is chasing the she-buffalo.
3. A lioness and a tigress are chasing the stag.
4. A Queen's daughter is a princess and her son is a prince.
5. Aunt is teaching Uncle how to cook.

Exercise 3:

1. The men and their wives went to the places of worship.
2. The singers can play the pianos.
3. The rings are made of gold.
4. The women know very little but understand more.
5. The dentists pull off the teeth.

Exercise 4:

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