

# **Module 21**

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## **Speech**

### **Communication skills and techniques**

Communication is the process by which people exchange information or express their thoughts and feelings. Speech is the commonest and fastest method of communication between people.

The spoken word can however be tricky because if you do not present your information or message with appropriate stress and intonation, you will probably be communicating the wrong message and you could be misunderstood.

It is important therefore that you learn some of the skills and techniques that would be useful to you in oral communication. In essence, you will be expected in the subsequent sections of our lessons to put into practice what you have learned so far including speech sounds, syllable, stress and intonation.

Listen to this conversation between two students:

Tunde: It is time for games.  
Jumai: Do you really think so?  
Tunde: Yes. Don't you?  
Jumai: No, I think we are here to read our books and pass our exams.  
Tunde: Remember, ↗ all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.  
Jumai: I'm surprised ↗ to hear you say so.  
Tunde: Why are you surprised?  
Jumai: Have you not been working in the school farm since morning? ↗ Is that not enough exercise?  
Tunde: No, I don't think so.  
Jumai: Why?  
Tunde: I need the type of exercise that will give me fun.

## **Practice**

Your teacher will read the above conversation, while you pay attention to the way he places the stress and intonation patterns. Now sit in pairs, take your turns and read the above dialogue imitating your teacher.

## **Structure: Types of Phrases**

### **Adverb phrases**

Like adverbs, adverbial phrases tell us more about verbs. Adverbials

answer the questions how, where, to what extent, why and when. Read the following sentences carefully:

- a. My cousin reads **with great diligence**. (How he reads.)
- b. She speaks **before a large audience**. (Where she speaks.)
- c. Tom cooks **for weeks**. (Duration of action.)
- d. We work hard **for our own good**. (Why we work.)
- e. He cooks **at night**. (When he cooks.)

The differences between adverbs and adverb phrases can be discovered in the table below.

| Adverbs  | Adverbial Phrases                                     |
|--|---|
| 1. He spoke <b>angrily</b> .                   | He spoke <b>with great anger</b> .                    |
| 2. Rita acted <b>beautifully</b> .             | She acted <b>with great beauty</b> .                  |
| 3. The child cried <b>quietly</b> .            | The child cried <b>in a quiet manner</b> .            |
| 4. The First Lady walked in <b>elegantly</b> . | The First Lady walked in <b>with great elegance</b> . |
| 5. She smokes <b>often</b> .                   | She smokes <b>from time to time</b> .                 |

### Adjectival phrases

Adjectival phrases, like adjectives, tell us more about nouns.

Study the following table to understand the differences between adjectives and adjective phrases.

| Adjectives                    | Adjective Phrases                                   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| The man in <b>green</b> shirt | The man in <b>green coloured</b> shirt.             |
| A <b>big</b> pot              | A <b>big, earthen cooking</b> pot.                  |
| A <b>cheerful</b> smile       | He wears a <b>hearty, cheerful, charming</b> smile. |

Read the following sentences carefully:

- i. The woman, **tying a red wrapper**, is my grandmother.  
The words, “tying a red wrapper”, help us to identify the woman. Therefore, **tying a red wrapper** is an adjectival phrase. Other examples are:
  - ii. That school, **founded in 1970**, belonged to the missionaries.
  - iii. My friend, **with a beautiful skin**, lost her husband.
  - iv. Nigeria, **in good or bad times**, must survive.
  - v. The man, **in blue jeans**, is my brother.

## Prepositional Phrases

A preposition is often followed by a noun. Such a noun is the object of the preposition. The preposition and its object together form a prepositional phrase. Prepositional phrases show the position between two things in a sentence. Study the following to get the difference between prepositions and prepositional phrases:

| Prepositions | Prepositional Phrases  |
|--------------|------------------------|
| 1. inside    | inside the lorry       |
| 2. between   | between Peter and Paul |
| 3. over      | over the net           |
| 4. on        | on the table           |
| 5. under     | under the stool        |
| 6. in        | in the house           |
| 7. among     | among the trees        |



Prepositional phrases play the role of adverbs and adjectives. They answer questions **when**, **why**, and **which**. For example:

- The women **inside the lorry** are hungry. (Adverbial)
- The flowers **on the table** must be removed. (Adjectival)
- The old man **in the house** is ill. (Adjectival)
- The bird **among the trees** are new. (Adjectival)

## Exercise

- Use the following phrases to write 10 sentences. Five should contain adverbial phrases and five adjectival phrases.
  - with great arrogance
  - for her own good
  - without copying
  - to failure
  - in a haste
- Underline the adverb phrases in the following sentences. State the word that they modify.
  - After the drama, everybody praised Helen for her superb performance.
  - When she was rushing to work, she forgot to take her car keys.
  - If he succeeds, he will leave the country.
  - Everybody runs after money, since it is essential.

# Reading Comprehension

**First read the following points very carefully.**

- ¶ It is most likely that you have heard of the name Wole Soyinka.
- ¶ You may in addition have read some of his plays and/or poems.
- ¶ But who is this famous writer? Where was he born and where was he educated? Which creative works of his have made him famous?
- ¶ Which prizes and awards has he won?
- ¶ Can you emulate him and try to be another Nobel winner?
- ¶ Read the following first, as fast as you can, recording your reading time. Later, read it a second time, this time more carefully.



## **Wole Soyinka**

Wole (full name, Akinwande Oluwole) Soyinka was born on 13 July 1934, in Ijebu Isara, in Western Nigeria, as second of six children of Samuel Ayodele Soyinka and Grace Soyinka. His father, whom Wole Soyinka often refers to as S.A. or "Essay"™ in literary form, was a school headmaster in Abeokuta. Wole Soyinka's mother, whom he dubbed "Wild Christian"™, a shop owner, was a respected political activist within the community. He had his primary school education in Abeokuta and attended Government College, Ibadan. He then studied at the University College, Ibadan, and Leeds University, graduating in 1957 with an honours degree in English Literature. He worked as a play reader at the Royal Court Theatre in London before returning to Nigeria. Soyinka taught in the Universities of Lagos, Ibadan, and Ife, the latter which appointed him Professor of Comparative Literature in 1975.

Soyinka has been active on the Nigerian political scene. In 1967, during the Nigerian Civil War, he was put in solitary confinement by General Gowon's Government for his attempt at brokering peace between the warring parties. While in prison, he wrote a collection of poems published as *Poems from Prison*. He was released in 1969 after international attention was drawn to his imprisonment. His experiences in prison are recounted in his book, *The Man Died*.

The year 1986 is undoubtedly one of major glory and, incidentally, occurred during the rule of several violent and repressive African regimes. The Royal Swedish Academy awarded Soyinka the Nobel Prize for Literature, making him the first African to win that prize, and thus engraving his name in the history of world literature. The Nobel Lecture which Soyinka delivered on this occasion was devoted to Nelson Mandela. The speech criticised apartheid and the politics of racial segregation imposed on the people by the then racist South African government. That year also brought him the Agip Prize for Literature and later the Commander of the Federal Republic of Nigeria national honour by the military president, Ibrahim Babangida.

In 1997, Soyinka published another collection of poems entitled *Outsiders*. Another play entitled *King Baabu*, was released in 2001, a strong, political satire on African dictatorship. In 2002 a collection of his poems *Samarkand and Other Markets I Have Known* was published. In 2004 Bankole Olayebe published *WS: A Life is Full*, an illustrated biography of Wole Soyinka, spotting more than 600 photographs since 1934. In April 2006, Soyinka published his memoirs entitled *You Must Set Forth at Dawn*.

Soyinka has been an outspoken critic of many Nigerian administrations and of political tyrannies worldwide, including Mugabe's regime in Zimbabwe. A great deal of his writing has shown concern about the oppressive boot, irrespective of the colour of the foot wearing it. This activism has often exposed him to great personal risk, notably during the regime of the dictator, General Sani Abacha, who charged him for treason in 1997. **During that regime, Soyinka left Nigeria on voluntary exile and has since been living abroad mainly in the United States where he was a professor at Emory University in Atlanta.** When civilian rule returned in 1999, Soyinka accepted an emeritus post at the Obafemi Awolowo University. (517 words)

**A. Now do the following:**

- a. Write down the time taken to read through the passage.
- b. Using the usual formula, calculate your reading speed.
- c. From the analysis for scoring reading rates (appendix 1) decide the category into which your reading rate falls.

**B. Without going back to the passage, answer the following questions:**

1. From the passage, we can see that Wole Soyinka is from
  - A. an affluent, upper class family.
  - B. a poor, lower class family.
  - C. an illiterate but very rich family.
  - D. a fairly well to do, middle class family.
2. One university which served as an alma mater and place of work for Soyinka is...

- A. Ibadan.
  - B. Ife.
  - C. Leeds.
  - D. Lagos.
3. During the Nigerian civil war, Soyinka was arrested in the process of
    - A. writing poems against the government.
    - B. staging a play against the government.
    - C. trying to work out peace between the two sides.
    - D. working for the side fighting Nigerian government.
  4. While he was in solitary confinement, Soyinka
    - A. wrote *The Man Died*.
    - B. wrote poems published as *Poems from Prison*.
    - C. was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.
    - D. called on the international community to intervene.
  5. From this passage it is clear that Soyinka has been both
    - A. a writer and a social critic.
    - B. a dramatist and film director.
    - C. a rebel against society and playwright.
    - D. an exile and commentator.

Now, get your attempt scored, and record your score. Then, calculate your reading efficiency indices and record your attempts in the appropriate place.

**C. Read the passage again, and answer the following questions:**

6. Which aspect of Soyinka has made him very famous (between his activities on the social and political scenes and his literary creativity)? Give reasons for your answer.
7. In what way has 1986 been particularly remarkable in Soyinka's life?
8. Apart from creative writing, what has been very consistent in the life of Soyinka?
9. What is the basic difference between a political exile and a voluntary exile? Why do you think Soyinka chose to be an exile?
10. Why do you think Soyinka had to give the University at Ife a condition before he accepted an appointment as an emeritus professor?
11. *During that regime, Soyinka left Nigeria on voluntary exile and has since been living abroad mainly in the United States where he was a professor at Emory University in Atlanta.*
  - a. What type of sentence is this?
  - b. Identify the main clause(s) and the subject(s).

# **Summary Work**

- a. In one sentence, summarise Soyinka's educational career.
- b. In another sentence, summarise what his working career has been like.
- c. In a third sentence, summarise the prizes and awards he has had.

## **Vocabulary Development**

### **Words associated with family relations**

There are different kinds of family in Nigeria: the nuclear and the extended, with some combining features of both. The nuclear family consists of the father, mother and their children. The extended family, on the other hand, consists of other relatives outside the immediate nuclear family, e.g. grandparents, uncles, aunts, etc. Sometimes too, you could have a nuclear family with just one relative, e.g. a cousin, living with the members. Discussions on issues like these involve what we call family relations. So, there are certain words associated with family relations. This is what we shall be examining in this module. Now, quickly read the words in the table below:

### **Family Relations**

|                             |               |                               |                |               |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Uncle                       | Nephew        | Niece                         | Cousin         | Aunt          |
| Fiancé                      | Fiancée       | Grandfather                   | Grandmother    | Grandchildren |
| Father-in-law               | Mother-in-law | Sister-in-law                 | Brother-in-law |               |
| A close relative / relation |               | A distant relative / relation |                |               |

### **Activity I**

Look up the meanings of the words in the table above in your dictionary.

### **Activity II**

Write out the passage below, and choose words from the box to fill the blanks.

My name is Chukwuma. My father's name is Ndubusi while my mother's name is Mary. Okonkwo, my father's younger brother, is my 1 while Stella, my mother's younger sister is my 2. My Okonkwo's son who is my 3 and Stella's daughter, my 4 attend the same school in Owerri. My elder brother has a daughter. She is my 5 while his son is my 6.

I got married to Emily my former 7 while my younger sister

also married her 8 at last. My parents in law, that is, my 9 and my 10 really tried for us on our wedding day.

Both our 11 and 12 attended the wedding. My grandparents, that is, my 13 and my 14 were also in attendance. My wifeâ€™s brother (15) and her sister (my 16) travelled all the way from Canada to grace the occasion.

## Continuous Writing

### Writing a Speech 1

A speech is basically no more than the ordinary essay type, although it has its special features. Consider the following example:

*You have just returned to school after the long vacation and you have been asked to give a ten-minute talk to the members of your class about some of the interesting places you visited during the holiday. Write out the speech you would give.*

Speeches could be descriptive or expository in nature. They involve occasional reference to the audience you are addressing. Examples of this include: â€˜Fellow studentsâ€™, â€˜ladies and gentlemenâ€™. The topic given above is equally descriptive in nature.

The question says you should give a speech. If you read the speech aloud, you will finish it in about ten minutes. But in an examination, you should limit yourself to the length normally required for any other essay topic; i.e. about 400 words.

You could open this essay with a quotation mark such as: â€˜East or westâ€™, according to an adage, â€˜home is the best.â€™

You will now write a speech telling your colleagues your experience during your first year in your present school (if you are not in school now, write about your experience in your last school).