

INSTRUCTIONS FOR AECC SEM 1, MIL COMMUNICATION (ENGLISH). ARTS, FINE ARTS, VISUAL ARTS.

1. Students plz follow the page numbers of the notes sent for your UG Sem 1, AECC Exams.

2. The topics given in the notes are:

A. Importance of communicating in English/ Basics of communication (page 4-8)

B. Modes of Communication- Formal and Informal. Oral and Written. Verbal and Non verbal. (Pages 16-18)

C. Proxemics and Chronemics (with subdivision)(pages 22-27)

D. What is Noise. Classification of Barriers. (Pages 31-33)

E. Intrapersonal Barriers (pages 35-37)

F. Organisational Barriers. (Pages 39 -41).

The above topics should be studied as notes for your exams which has been also uploaded in the portal.

People often hesitate in conversation because they allow their emotions to take control. These emotions stem from reasons like feeling threatened by someone's stature, being conscious of one's regional accent or shortcomings, worrying about not having prepared adequately, etc. Being humans, it is impossible to keep our emotions at bay, but it is possible to overcome them. When we are presenting to an audience for the first time, we may be overwhelmed by the fear of being on stage. The only way we can overcome it is by practice. If we allow that fear to get the better of us the first time, we will forever have to live with the ghosts of this failure.

Emotions are nothing but strong feelings. ✓

In professional interactions it is quite important to control our emotions in order to achieve the given objective. To successfully communicate, you must respect the point of view of other people, especially those who are easily overpowered by emotions, during the conversation. On the other hand, if one is too emotional, it is very important to learn how to control emotions and not let them interfere in rational decision-making. See also the section on emotional outburst under 'Interpersonal Barriers' in Chapter 2.

BASICS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication comes naturally to human beings, and therefore does not require an extra effort to learn. However, many problems crop up because of *ineffective* communication. Communication can become ineffective if the timing is wrong, if the place is inappropriate, or if the receiver is not in the proper frame of reference.

Whether it is oral or written communication, it is always better to structure the contents of your message. For example, if it is a presentation, structure it with an appropriate introduction, a main body, and a conclusion. If it is a letter, structure it according to the type of letter it is. Whenever there is a message to be conveyed, choose clear and consistent words and sentences.

(For the correct interpretation of a message, it is very important to choose the correct medium of communication.) Consider the example of a face-to-face communication with one's superior versus passing on the same information through a piece of paper. In this context, the note bears a wrong connotation because the medium itself is wrong. It would be interpreted as an attempt to slight one's boss by not passing on the information in person. Such mistakes have a fair chance of infuriating the intended recipient. | → good example

These factors are greatly dependent on the audience or the receiver with whom you are communicating. Therefore, formulate your message according to the audience and purpose of communication.

PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

Before we start communicating, we should ask ourselves: 'Why am I communicating?' For all forms of communication, such as meetings, presentations, speeches, conversations, letters, reports, proposals, etc., it is important that we ask this question. We should understand whether we need to inform, to persuade, to entertain, to train, or to sell. If the objective is not clear in our minds, it cannot be clear to our audience. [A statement of purpose not only describes what we want to accomplish, but also helps us know at the end of the communication whether it has been achieved. The purpose can be classified into two broad categories:



general and specific. The general purpose can be further divided into three subcategories: to inform, to persuade, and to entertain.

While preparing a specific purpose statement, we need to specify *whom* we want to influence, *what* we want them to think or do, and *when* and *where* we want them to do it. For example, if you want your boss to accept the proposal presented by you at the discussion at the end of your presentation, you should formulate your specific purpose statement with the four 'wh's—*who*, *what*, *when*, and *where*. Your purpose statement should clearly specify the desired outcome of your presentation. Another example could be a training programme, when you are given the task of explaining the features of Microsoft Excel to a group

of new employees. Here your purpose statement would be 'I want everyone in this group to show me that he or she can use all the features of Microsoft Excel with efficiency after my presentation.' We should be as specific and as realistic as possible in our purpose because by setting clear goals, we will be better positioned to judge the probability of success of our communication.

The listeners or readers of communication play a very important role in the communication process because they influence the message and the medium of communication. Whatever the occasion, communication must always be targeted at the audience. Audiences know what they want to listen to/read and speakers/writers know what they need to convey. Hence, as a communicator, knowing the *positions*, *personal preferences*, *significant demographic characteristics*, *size of the group*, *aim*, *knowledge and attitudes of our audiences* would greatly help in tailoring messages correctly. To make an impact on the audience, one must also know its *composition*—internal or external or a combination of both.

CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

This age of globalization and information technology has entirely changed the face of governments, businesses, and organizations. People are not confined to the geographical walls of their own nations anymore, but have become part of an international network. Communication being the backbone of inter- and intra-organizational coordination, it is essential for people to comprehend the linguistic and cultural differences among organizations to get the desired results at the workplace.

It is not simple to define culture in concrete terms. Culture is a complex concept, with a variety of definitions. The dictionary meaning of the word 'culture' is a group or community with which we share common experiences that shape the way we understand the world. It consists of groups that we are born into, such as gender, race, or national origin, etc. It also includes groups we join or become part of, or the new habits we acquire as we interact with different people throughout our lives. Culture consists of various elements such

'Preservation of one's own culture does not require contempt or disrespect for other cultures.'

—Cesar Chavez



as language, religion, politics, etc. Let us now discuss each element individually.

Language

Language forms the basis of all communication. It includes spoken, written, and body language. As mentioned, we are no longer restricted to one state or country during the course of our profession, relations, etc. As such, we often have to deal with people who speak different languages. We will learn more about language as a tool of communication later in this chapter.

Religion and beliefs

Another important element of culture is religion. An individual's religious beliefs and norms, sacred objects, philosophical systems, prayers, and rituals are all parts of culture. Religion and belief affect the communication process. For example in India, some religious rites have become integral to our culture and have been adopted by people from other religions. Before starting any important project, it is a norm in India to follow certain religious rites and offer prayers. In conferences, it is observed that before starting the deliberation, prayers are offered and lamps are lit.

Values and attitudes

Different values and attitudes of individuals towards time management, decision-making, achievement, work, change, etc. are also important parts of culture. These attributes affect communication between people with differing values to a great extent. It becomes important for people of different cultures to respect and appreciate each other's values to be able to communicate effectively without adversely affecting their sensitivities. In the Indian culture, e.g., little importance is attached to the personal space and privacy of an individual. For example, when you meet someone and think of striking up a conversation, you can ask questions about that person's marital status or where he or she works or lives. Some South American and Mediterranean countries also allow this liberty. On the other hand, in Western countries, such unnecessary questions will be treated with a lot of apprehension and be considered highly inappropriate. In India, people do not place much importance on punctuality. It is fashionable to walk into a party late, or acceptable to dial into a teleconference five minutes later. Our Western counterparts may look at these as signs of disrespect. Gradually, in the global workplace, people of various cultures are learning to accept and respect each other better than they could a decade earlier. Knowing these basic differences and shaping our reactions accordingly are essential for overall successful communication.

Politics and law

The political system of a nation consists of national intents, power, ideologies, political risks, sovereignty, law of the country in which the organization works, rules and regulations imposed by the government, etc.

MODES OF COMMUNICATION

Formal and Informal

(Communication can be both formal and informal. The formality or informality of communication depends on one's relationship with the sender or receiver.) When we meet a person socially for the first time, we are very formal—the way we address him/her, the words we use, the tone, etc. Gradually, as we become friendly, we start getting familiar, use slangs, address each other informally, and do not really bother about the tone. So it can be deduced that one is more alert during formal communication but relatively carefree during informal or casual communication.

The same is applicable to communication within an organization. When working directly for the goal of the organization, formal communication is used. When discussing business strategies with employees, again, the communication will be formal. It will be formal when you ask your boss for leave. However, if you are with your colleagues and are sharing impressions of the latest film you have seen, you will be informal in your approach.

Both formal and informal communication modes are equally important, and the mode used is decided by the relationship, purpose, and occasion. Whenever there is uncertainty in deciding between formal or informal communication, formal communication should be preferred, as it does not involve the risk of offending the opponent. For example, when you meet colleagues in the relatively informal atmosphere of a cafeteria, and have to strike up a polite conversation, being formal is the best approach till you are more comfortable. (Sometimes it is assumed that written communication is always formal, which is not true. For example, if you are writing a complaint letter to the electricity board about frequent power cuts in your neighbourhood, you will be formal. However, if you leave a note for your spouse saying that you may be late for some reason, you will be informal.)

(Informal communication within any set-up is known as the *grapevine*, referring to rumour. When people involve themselves in the grapevine, they must be conscious that it can be both useful and harmful for the growth of the organization as well as the individual. You will learn more about communication networks in Chapter 3.)

Oral and Written

(Any communication can be divided into two equally important categories: oral and written. The written mode has several advantages over the oral mode, as it is very convenient to send lengthy messages with a lot of information that cannot be shared orally. Second, in written

Handwritten notes:
- 2 kinds of written communication
- 1. Formal
- 2. Informal

communication, the response can be well prepared because the medium gives ample time to the receiver to analyse the message and its implications. Written messages can also be supplemented with visual aids such as charts and tables. We will learn more about visual aids in Chapter 3.

Written communication has some disadvantages as well. It takes longer to draft and convey a written reply, so it will not work in places where time is of vital importance, e.g., when discussing an urgent business deal. Second, in a negotiation-like interaction, which requires a lot of exchanges between two parties, written communication can take a long time.

The other disadvantage is that it cannot be supplemented with non-verbal gestures and postures, which are sometimes essential for a message to be properly interpreted. Without personal touch, written communication can seem very curt and straight, sometimes making a simple request sound like an order.

Some forms of oral and written communication in an organization are listed in Table 1.1. It is not necessary that all these forms of communication should exist in an organization. If the organization is very large, for example, a university with various affiliated institutions or a business enterprise with branches across the nation and abroad, it may have all these forms of communication, whereas a smaller educational institution or business may not require all of them.

TABLE 1.1 Forms of oral and written communication

Oral forms	Written forms
Face-to-face conversations	Memos
Telephone conversations	Letters
Meetings	Emails
Seminars	Faxes
Conferences	Notices
Dictation	Circulars
Presentations	Newsletters
Group discussions	Reports
Interviews (employment, press)	Proposals
Video conferences	Research papers
	Bulletins
	Brochures
	Manuals
	In-house journals

Internal and External

Communication within an organization is known as *internal communication*, which is usually formal. The interactions take place through preset formats, and are usually not ad hoc or unplanned. Internal communication helps in achieving an organization's goals by informing the members of the general and specific objectives of the organization, either at the macro or at the micro level. Usually, superiors take decisions and convey them to their subordinates. It is only through internal communication that this information is disseminated to various departments and employees within the organization. Letters, reports, instructions, seminars, etc. are methods of transmitting information.

To expand the boundaries of business, a good relationship with other external organizations is a must. This requires a sound communication strategy. All official, technical, or professional communication with people outside the organization is known as *external communication*. This mode is equally important, as it helps in achieving an organization's goals by coordinating with external agencies. External communication refers to interaction with shareholders, regulators, vendors, service companies, customers, and the general public, e.g., the process of auditing.

Verbal and Non-verbal Communication

Verbal communication includes both oral and written communication. We will study the verbal forms of communication in the chapters on speaking and writing. This section discusses non-verbal communication.



Crossed at the ankle



Crossed at the knees



Open crossed with one ankle on the other thigh



Uncrossed and straight closed together



Uncrossed and straight far apart

While verbal communication is organized by language, non-verbal communication is not. Non-verbal communication refers to all communication that occurs without the use of words, spoken or written. Non-verbal communication is concerned with body movements (kinesics), space (proxemics), and vocal (paralinguistic) features. It includes all unwritten and unspoken messages, both intentional and unintentional. Non-verbal cues, however, speak louder than words, as even though speech can be made up, bodily expressions can rarely be masked well enough to hide one's true feelings and emotions.

(Personal appearances, facial expressions, postures, gestures, eye contact, voice, proximity, and touch are all non-verbal signals that influence the way in which a message is interpreted and understood.) Though they have a profound impact on the receivers, it is difficult to analyse them accurately. This is because the interpretation of non-verbal cues is a very subjective concept, varying based on people's varied backgrounds (refer to cross-cultural communication). Nevertheless, they must not be ignored, but recognized and understood as correctly as possible. The following sections elaborate on this aspect of communication. See the PowerPoint presentation on body language in the CD. See also the GD and interview video situations on body language.

Kinesics

(Kinesics is the study of the body's physical movements. It is the way the body communicates without words, i.e., through the various movements of its parts)

Some kinesic behaviours are deliberate. For example, you nod your head to indicate acceptance. While speaking, listening, reading, or writing, we consciously use words to receive or send ideas. Why do we use words? Because they are the primary symbolic forms that convey our thoughts. On paper, words remain static; however, punctuation marks

'You cannot not communicate. You communicate just by being. Nodding your head, blinking your eyes, shrugging shoulders, waving hands, and other such physical activities are all forms of communication.'

-Watzlawick and associates

3 categories

PowerPoint





Fear

Anger

Sadness

Proxemics

Proxemics is the study of physical space in interpersonal relations. Space is related to behavioural norms. The way people use space says a lot about them. In a professional setting, space is used to signal power and status. For instance, the head of a company has a larger office than junior employees.)

Gestures should be in accordance with the space available. When there is plenty of space to manoeuvre, one should move more boldly and expand one's gestures. When seated at a table, one should use milder gestures. One can even subtly reach out over the table to extend one's space. This expresses control and authority.

It is possible to learn a great deal about how to manipulate space by watching dynamic and influential speakers. Interestingly, like kinesics, proxemics also has cultural variations. A

Latin American or French person is likely to stand closer to another person when conversing than an Anglo-Saxon would in the same situation. Americans, addressed from a close distance, may feel offended or become aggressive. Studies show that Americans, unlike many other nationals, avoid close contact with one another in public places. Indians decide the distance based on the relationship. They prefer to maintain distance with elders and a superior person. However, with a friend they may maintain less distance. Edward T. Hall (1966) divides space into four distinct zones (see Figure 1.1).

Intimate This zone starts with personal touch and extends just to 18 inches (one and a half feet). Members of the family, lovers, spouses, relatives, and parents fall under this zone. The best relationship that describes it is the mother-child relationship. This zone does not need active conversation. One can whisper or make unintelligible sounds but still be able to communicate. Other individuals come close for a very brief period and only under special circumstances—when they want to congratulate, sympathize, or console. A handshake, a pat on the back, or a hug, all come into this zone.

Personal This zone stretches from 18 inches (one and a half feet) to 4 feet. Close friends, colleagues, peers, etc. fall in this zone. Instead of whispering sounds or utter silence, there can be normal conversation in this zone. Though this zone is personal, it is quite a relaxed and casual place. It permits spontaneous and unplanned communication. Sitting or standing so close brings one closer to the listener and gives the impression of friendliness and warmth.

Social Social events take place in the radius of 4 feet to 12 feet. In this zone, relationships are more formal and official. People are more cautious in their movements. These situations involve less emotion and more planning. The number of people decides whether it should be a sitting-sitting or sitting-standing position. It is through experience that one decides which position to take. If the number of people is less and eye contact can be maintained, a sitting-sitting position can be used. To be authoritative with a large audience, a sitting-standing position is used.

Public This zone starts from 12 feet and may extend to 25 feet or to the range of eyesight and hearing. Events that take place in this zone are formal. Here the audience views what is happening as an impartial observer. The degree of detachment is very high. The audience is free to do whatever it feels like. Here the speaker has to raise his/her voice to communicate to others or use a microphone. Public figures like the prime minister of a country, for example, have to maintain this distance for security reasons.

Chronemics *what is*

Chronemics is the study of how human beings communicate through their use of time. How do we communicate with others? What does time mean to us? In order to use time as an effective communication tool, we should understand its impact on the various aspects of our lives and act accordingly. We must attempt to use time as effectively as possible.

In the professional world, time is a valuable resource. (When we are late for an appointment, people react negatively. If we arrive early, we are considered either over-eager or aggressive. So, we should always be *on time*. By valuing someone else's time, we communicate our professionalism or seriousness both subtly and explicitly.)

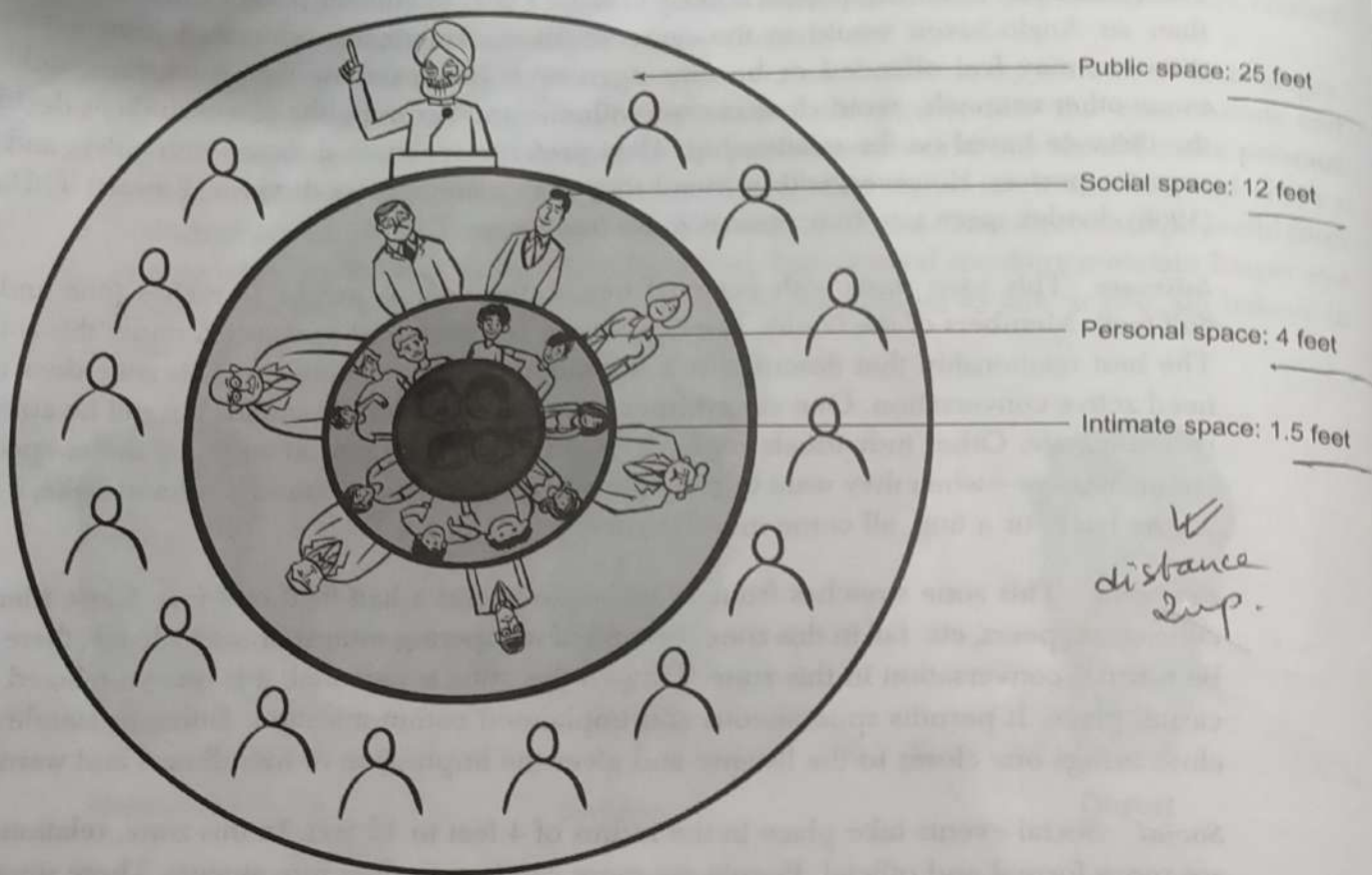


Figure 1.1 The four distinct space zones

People have their own *time language*. To one person who wakes up at 8:00 a.m., 6:30 a.m. may be early; to another, 8:00 a.m. may be late if he/she wakes up at 5:00 a.m. every day!

Time language also varies from culture to culture. In Latin countries, meetings usually begin well after their appointed time. Everyone knows this. It is customary, and no one is offended by the delay. (In Scandinavia or Germany, on the other hand, strict punctuality is the rule, and tardiness is frowned upon. In India, time language varies according to the occasion. Punctuality is expected for a professional meeting, but it is not insisted upon for a party. People in India are generally liberal with time.)

Correlating verbal and non-verbal communication

Imagine you are giving a presentation in front of your professor and friends. They all seem to be listening to you, but their non-verbal behaviour indicates boredom and restlessness. Somewhat puzzled and unsure of yourself, you seek their agreement and several of them concur verbally through verbal expressions such as 'Great!', 'Wow!', 'Perfect!', etc. Nevertheless, their non-verbal language conveys the impression that they are far from confident about the presentation. What would you do in such a situation? You should try to understand the non-verbal cues and pause the presentation to ask a few questions. Questions usually get people involved and make a presentation more interactive and meaningful.

are unaware of the rest of the information rather than being
communicators should:

- Be non-judgemental ✓
 - Be empathetic ✓
 - Not assume anything ✓
 - Stick to the subject ✓
 - Listen, and above all, paraphrase ✓
 - Remember that generalizations do not always hold good in all situations ✓
- ✓ ✓ sup points

Interpersonal Barriers

Intrapersonal barriers stem from an individual's attitudes or habits, whereas interpersonal barriers occur due to the inappropriate transaction of words between two or more people. The two broad categories into which these barriers can be classified are:

- Inefficient communication skills
- Negative aspect nurturing in the climate

The second point refers to a situation when negative tendencies nurtured by some people affect others around them. This leads to a barrier as individuals start thinking only negative.

(Interpersonal barriers creep in as a result of the limitations in the communication skills of the encoder or the decoder, or of both. In addition, they may also occur because of some disturbance in the channel or medium of communication.) If two people are involved in communication, the traits that distinguish them as individuals can be the root cause of a communication problem.

In a business environment, we neither attempt to change these traits, nor can we do it; however, we can try and understand the role of differences among individuals that lead to communication breakdowns. (The most common reasons for interpersonal barriers are:

- Limited vocabulary
 - Incompatibility (clash) of verbal and non-verbal messages
 - Emotional outburst
 - Communication selectivity
 - Cultural variations
- ✓ sup points

Importance of Communicating in English

In today's technology-driven world, it is impossible to achieve success in one's academic or professional career without adequate proficiency in English. English is now the most widely

'Aint no way Y'all should be here if ya don't speak English real good!'

'Sure! May I suggest you avoid double negatives and don't forget to use an adverb!'



used language in a large number of workplaces in India. It is also the most common language used by speakers of different languages around the world.

In India, great importance is given to English language learning in educational institutions at various levels. The increasing importance of English has led several employers to recruit people with a good

command over English for operations that involve communicating with both national and international clients.

Several companies invest heavily in training their employees in soft skills or workplace skills, which includes the ability to listen, speak, read, and write fluently in English because they find a gap in the type of language skills they expect their recruits to possess and that being taught at universities. Of course, realizing the demand for English at workplaces, several Indian universities have included courses such as English skills, business English, technical English, or professional English in their curriculum, though the teaching technique differs from one university to another. It is important that the teachers of English and communication courses train their students in expressions that are frequently required in their everyday lives—both personal and professional—so that they feel confident in using such expressions. There are several forms of communication that are common to most workplaces—oral forms such as meetings, face-to-face and telephonic conversations, and negotiations, and written forms such as letters, memos, emails, and circulars. All these forms require the use of appropriate expressions in English so that the message is direct, precise, and clear. The same requirement arises while interacting with clients and customers, managing conflicts, delivering project presentations, briefing project teams, or drafting reports and proposals.

With the phenomenal development of the World Wide Web, the importance of English has increased manifold. For today's students and professionals, the Internet has become the most important source of information and instruction, as well as medium of communication. Again, English is the most widely used language over the Internet.

Besides enabling success in education and career, proficiency in English also influences relationships. It has been observed that people who are able to speak and write English well have an edge over others in expressing themselves clearly in a team or to their teachers or bosses, thereby earning a good reputation. In fact, some of the job profiles require more of communicative competence, discussed in the following paragraphs, than technical know-how.

✓
 'There is a great difference in knowing English and being able to speak it and listen to English and comprehending it. As India moves up the value chain and moves into the knowledge process domain, English language skill is going to be more necessary.'

—Rod Pryde, British minister for Cultural Affairs in India and Sri Lanka, in an interview to Indo Asian News Agency (IANS) in 2008

Communication Competence

Communication competence is the ability to express views in an effective manner, enabling one to achieve goals and enhance relationships. Communication competence is situational. For example, a person may be very skillful in interacting with peers but less proficient in interacting with older or younger people.

As competent behaviour varies a lot with people and situations, it is a misconception that communication competence is an inherent personal quality. A person may be very proficient in some aspects of communication and less proficient in others. However, this is a quality that can be developed.

On the other hand, merely possessing a large array of communication skills is not a guarantee of communication competence. To develop such competence, one must acquire the ability to choose the most appropriate behaviour in a given situation, because what is appropriate for one person may not be appropriate for another.

Communication competence is the ability to express views in an effective manner, enabling one to achieve goals and enhance relationships. ①

Moreover, an effective communicator must have empathy—the ability to understand an issue from another's point of view. Commitment to the relationship is an equally important factor. In fact, people who show concern about a relationship communicate better than those who do not care for maintaining relationships. ②

Communication and the Self-concept

Our self-concept is the opinion each of us hold about ourselves. It includes opinions about our physical features, talents, our likes and dislikes. Self-esteem is an important element of self-concept. People having high self-esteem communicate more openly. Now let us see the relationship between communication and development of the 'self'.

'An individual's self-concept is the core of his personality. It affects every aspect of human behaviour: the ability to learn, the capacity to grow and change. A strong, positive self-image is the best possible preparation for success in life.'

—Dr Joyce Brothers

Our identity arises from our personal experiences in dealing or communicating with the society. Gradually, this helps in developing our self-concept. A friend, a teacher, or even an acquaintance could contribute to how we view ourselves. However, it has been noticed that when we grow older, the influence of others is less effective. As we grow older, our self-concept affects the role we play in the society, based on our beliefs and perceptions. These beliefs are reflected in the way we communicate with people around us. For example, a person who has a favourable self-concept will communicate very confidently even in unfamiliar situations and with new people.

Role of Emotions in Communication

You may have observed that even people who are usually very proficient in communication seem unable to express themselves properly at times. Have you ever wondered why? It is because they allow their emotions to overpower their rational mind. When a person is overwhelmed by emotions, the part of the brain controlling higher reasoning shuts down, thus hindering the communication capabilities of the individual. Usually, when people face a tricky situation, they become defensive. In such situations, they mostly keep silent as they think they are not being respected. But silence is not always the best approach; it always pays to put forth one's views in a courteous manner.