



B.Com Honours

Semester III

Calicut University

English for Communication

Course Code: AEC5 • Module 1 Notes

1. Fundamentals of Communication & Listening Skills

Communication is the fundamental process of transmitting information, ideas, thoughts, and feelings between individuals or groups to establish a shared understanding. In academic, social, and corporate environments, effective communication skills form the cornerstone of collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving, and professional leadership. This module covers the core elements of the communication process, primary channels of communication, barriers to effective interaction, active listening strategies, and spoken English phonetics.

The Communication Process & Channels

The communication cycle involves seven essential elements: Sender, Encoding, Message, Channel/Medium, Receiver, Decoding, and Feedback.

Verbal & Non-Verbal Communication

- **Verbal Communication:** Spoken and written language. Requires precise vocabulary, clear tone modulation, and logical sentence structure.
- **Non-Verbal Communication:** Body language, facial expressions, eye contact (oculesics), gestures (kinesics), spatial awareness (proxemics), and vocal tone (paralinguistics).
- **Visual Communication:** Diagrams, charts, slide presentations, and infographics used to visually support spoken or written arguments.

Formal vs. Informal Communication

- **Formal Communication:** Structured communication following official organizational channels (Downward, Upward, Horizontal, and Diagonal flows).
- **Informal Communication (Grapevine):** Unofficial, spontaneous communication networks driven by social relationships and informal peer connections.
- **Flow Directions:** Upward (feedback/reports), Downward (directives/policies), Lateral (departmental coordination).

Barriers to Communication & Overcoming Strategies

Communication barriers obstruct, distort, or misrepresent the sender's intended message. Identifying and systematically mitigating these barriers is vital for effective dialogue:

Barrier Type	Common Causes & Examples	Remedial & Overcoming Strategies
Physical & Environmental	Background noise, physical distance, faulty equipment, poor room seating.	Select quiet venues, use proper audio equipment, optimize seating layout.
Psychological & Emotional	Prejudice, anger, mistrust, stress, defensiveness, emotional fatigue.	Practice emotional self-regulation, empathy, open-mindedness, active self-awareness.
Semantic & Linguistic	Complex jargon, ambiguous phrasing, language barriers, idiom misuse.	Use plain language, define technical terms clearly, solicit immediate receiver feedback.
Organizational & Cultural	Rigid hierarchy, cultural misunderstandings, information overload.	Implement open-door communication policies and intercultural awareness training.

Active Listening Skills & Phonetics Basics

Listening is an active, cognitive process of receiving, interpreting, evaluating, and responding to spoken and non-verbal cues:

- Types of Listening:** Active/Empathetic Listening (understanding underlying emotions), Critical Listening (evaluating logic and evidence), Informative Listening (comprehending instructions), and Appreciative Listening (aesthetic enjoyment).
- Active Listening Techniques:** Maintaining attentive eye contact, nodding, paraphrasing key points, asking clarifying questions, and withholding premature judgment.
- Phonetics & Pronunciation:** Understanding International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) symbols, vowel and consonant sounds, word stress, sentence rhythm, and intonation patterns (rising/falling pitch) for clear, confident spoken delivery.

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