

**Unit 1**  
**LISTEN AND RESPOND 1**

**Structure**

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**1.3 Listening For The Details, The Key Words, And For Specific Meaning**

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**1.5 Listening For Inner Meaning (Inferencing)**

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**1.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Dear Student,

Let's start from the beginning. The beginning of how we learnt English..., and the beginning of this course! When you learnt English, it probably started with reading, reading the English letters, words and texts. Then, you'd have moved to writing in the same order. You practiced reading and writing in English with very little listening and speaking on your part. So, you learnt English from reading and writing with very little listening and speaking.

If you think about learning your mother tongue, (henceforth, MT), you'd realise you learnt it in a quite a different manner. From your birth, you started listening to the language from your parents and elders in the family. You listened to your MT for about nine to ten months, and learnt enough about the language before you started to speak in broken words, then two-three words, and finally in sentences. By the time you were three, you could speak in your MT with absolute fluency and perfection. You began to read in your MT when you were four or five year old. Imagine the number of hours you have listened to the MT and spoken in the MT before you started reading. Finally, you started to write in the language. All children learn their MT in the same manner all over the world starting with a very long period of listening, then speaking, reading and writing. That is the natural way to learn and use any language effectively.

Since English is not learnt in the natural manner in our schools, we may not learn it properly as our MT.

We'll start this course in English proficiency with listening for two reasons. First is obviously because listening is the first language skill that we all use to develop our understanding and proficiency in a language. That's why we need to listen a lot in English.

The second reason is a little more complex, and I'll explain it here. Although, we believe, maybe unconsciously, that we are good listeners, in reality, it may not be so. That's why we have to learn to listen, particularly in English. Also, English being our second language (henceforth, ESL), we may find it hard to understand when we listen to standard English spoken by efficient speakers or by native speakers. We need to train our ears to understand spoken English so that we can respond in English with ease and confidence.

We also need to train our brains to listen with attention to important points and facts. First of all, we have to realize that listening and hearing are two different things. We hear through our ears but we may not listen to what we heard because listening happens in our brain.

Take this example. When you wake up in the morning, a number of noises reach your ears, e.g. cleaning of utensils, chanting of prayers, music from the radio, people talking, vendors yelling, your cell phone ringing and so on. You do not necessarily listen to everything.

You'd probably listen to the ringtone. The rest of the sounds will remain at the level of noise. In listening, we don't pay attention to or process all the noises that reach our ears. Our brain ignores all the noise and focuses only on those that we take to be important.

### **Activity 1.1.1**

Now, describe the difference between listening and hearing.

Listening happens when we pay attention to, and try to understand certain sounds that our ears receive. Hearing is when we don't pay attention nor try to understand the sounds that come to our ears.

Are you aware that we listen in different ways in different situations and for different purposes? Read the following and think of your answers, and you'd understand what I said.

### **Activity 1.1.2**

Imagine yourself in the following situations:

- In a railway platform waiting for a train and listening to announcements
- In a class listening to an uninteresting but important lecture
- In a political meeting listening to a popular leader
- Chatting with friends

Do you listen in the same manner in each of these different situations and to all the different speakers?

You'd now realise that we listen differently for different purposes.

Since this course is to help you in becoming efficient listeners for different purposes, particularly to help you get a job, we'll focus on academic and professional listening requirements.

The following are the major listening requirements for academic and professional purposes:

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## **1.2. LISTENING TO UNDERSTAND THE GIST OR MAIN IDEAS AND RESPOND**

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When we listen for the gist, we listen to the general idea regarding what the topic is about. We don't listen for every detail. It is only getting the main idea or the main point about the topic/text.

How do we get this general idea from listening? We focus on important words and expressions in order to get the general idea.

Do the following fun activity to understand the point.

### **Activity 1.2.1**

You hear your friends talking but you can't hear all the details. You just managed to listen to these words and expressions: food, all our friends, fun, by bus, next Sunday. What are your friends discussing?

You'd certainly have understood they are talking about a picnic. Without listening to or understanding every word or sentence, you can easily understand the main idea/s or points of a discussion or conversation.

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### 1.3 LISTENING FOR DETAILS AND KEY WORDS TO UNDERSTAND SPECIFIC MEANING

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This kind of listening is more specific and requires attention for relevant information in detail. We try to understand what, who, when, where, how or why from the context. The purpose of listening here is different from that of the previous section.

When listening for details, you are interested in a specific kind of information – perhaps a number, name or object. You can ignore anything that does not sound relevant. In this way, you are able to narrow down your attention to get the details you need. For example, when you are waiting for a particular train, you'll get the announcements for different trains but you'll listen only to the details regarding your train of all the announcements;

**E.G.** when it will arrive, and in which platform. Take another example. You may listen to the schedule of all the cricket matches for the IPL season but pay attention to only those matches that are of interest to you.

When listening for specific details, don't try to listen to all the words. Only focus on those pieces of information that you need.

Listening for details is required when you need to extract the majority of information from a text. There are realistic purposes in such listening, e.g. if you are listening to a cookery programme to know how to cook a particular dish, you'd have to remember each step of the task. You have to listen very carefully for such details.

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### 1.4 LISTENING TO AND RESPONDING TO SIMPLE CONVERSATIONS IN EVERYDAY CONTEXTS

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Every day, we listen to questions and requests to provide/share/exchange information with others. Three types of questions are generally used in conversations/discussions.

- a. Some questions mostly start with a wh-word, what, where, when, how, which and why. In informal conversations, these question words may not occur.
- b. Sometimes, when the answer to a question is simply yes/no, such questions generally start with is/am/are/was/ were/do/don't/will/can etc.
- c. In informal situations, statements with a question tone are used to ask questions. In such questions, question words are not used.

A number of shortened forms of words are used in a conversation, e.g. what's, how's, we're, you'd.

Examples:

**a. Questions with wh-words**

- ☐ What's your name?
- ☐ Where are you from?
- ☐ Which direction is the university?
- ☐ When's your exam?

☐ Why do you look so serious?

**b. Questions with is/am/are/was/ were/do/don't/will/can/may etc**

☐ Is that your book?

☐ Can I borrow it for a day?

☐ Did you go to the music programme?

☐ Will you be home this evening?

☐ May I take a day's leave tomorrow?

**c. Questions without question words (informal)**

☐ Your sister is coming this Saturday?

☐ You don't like coffee?

☐ She's a friend?

☐ That's your office?

**English people follow a culture in which they always use polite forms to make requests.**

**Requests in English are of two types.**

a. Question forms used to request: may/can/could/will/would etc. Such requests are more formal.

b. Request word please used to make requests. These requests are both formal and informal.

**Examples**

a. Question forms used to request

☐ May I use your laptop?

☐ Can you please fill in this form for me?

☐ Could you make some time to help me complete my project?

b. Please used to make requests

☐ Please open the window for me.

☐ Please sit down.

☐ Come here, please.

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**1.5. Inferencing**

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This is the most complex listening skill that we use to understand the underlying meaning of what is said. This is because people can't always talk in a straight forward manner. That would sound rude.

Most of the time when we listen to people, we try to deduce the meaning from the situation. For example, if you are in the bath, and your phone rings, you just shout, "I'm in the bath" but your meaning is for someone to pick up the phone as you can't do that. Or, if it is too windy and the windows are open, you may say, "It's too windy inside". You actually mean the windows to be closed. People listening to you generally understand what you mean. So do you when you listen to such things in conversations.

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## Unit 2

### Listen and Respond 2

#### Structure

2.1 Listening to accuracy in language use: stress, intonation and problem sounds

2.2 Intonation

2.3 Problem sounds of English for our pronunciation

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#### 2.1 LISTENING TO ACCURACY IN LANGUAGE USE: STRESS, INTONATION AND PROBLEM SOUNDS

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Every language has its stress pattern in words and in sentences. In some languages like Odia, Hindi or French, the word stress occurs more or less on fixed syllables. Most Odia and Hindi words are stressed on the second syllable; and French words on the last.

In English, the word stress is quite complex and has many different patterns. Some words are stressed on the first syllable, as in **wa**-ter; some on the second, as in be-**ha**-viour; some on the third, as in in-ter-**na**-tion-al; some on the fourth, as in res-pon-si-**bi**-li-ty. That is because words are formed in English following a large number of different rules.

When we speak, we don't use single, isolated words. We use a continuous stretch of related words to create meaning. Meaning is created only in a situation; also called a context. For example, the word *yes* in isolation has very limited meaning but when used in context, it can have a variety of meanings.

##### **Activity 2.1.1**

Look at this sample:

Boy watching TV for hours when the exam continues

Parent: Yes, go on, keep watching TV. You'll get the best of results in your exam.

In this situation, *yes* certainly doesn't mean positive as its narrow meaning. It means disapproval.

Whatever pieces of language are used in a context are called 'utterances'.

In English utterances, there are stresses. These stresses are used according to the meaning the speaker wants to create. Meaning is also created by the use of intonation. Intonation expresses the emotions and attitudes of a speaker. For example, a single word *coffee* used in conversation can be said with many different intonations depending on the situation and the speaker's mood. Imagine how you'd say *coffee* in these situations: if you don't like coffee at all; if you love coffee; if you already had three cups and someone offers you a fourth cup; if it is cold and you get an unexpected cup of coffee. Your intonation will be different in each situation.

Intonation and utterance stresses are used together by speakers to produce the kind of meaning they want to in conversations. We have to be good listeners of these two to capture meaning.

Since English word stress is difficult to capture for us in natural English speech, a lot of careful listening is required to grasp how words are produced with proper stress. Natural English conversation is a combination of words with their English stress patterns. So, many times we fail to understand what is said as the words are spoken unlike in Odia or Hindi. We have to listen to natural English a lot in order to grasp the stress patterns used. Good listeners are good speakers so if you listen well and enough, it is likely that you can listen and understand English spoken in a natural manner.

Here is some listening practice for word stress. These will be followed by listening practice for utterance stress. Every production will be repeated, first in a slow manner, syllable by syllable, and then in the natural way. During the repetitions, you'll be asked to say the words and the utterances.

As you listen very carefully,

First, **get in your mind** how the words and the utterances are produced, and **do not speak** until you are asked to speak.

### Activity 2.1.2

#### English word stress

##### Stress on the first syllable

Many thousands of words in English are stressed on the first syllable. You'll listen and produce a few to get an understanding of how such words are said naturally in English.

Only listen. DO NOT produce. As you listen, notice how the stressed fist syllables are produced stronger and longer, and how all the unstressed syllables are produced quickly without any emphasis.

a-ble ab-sent (adj.) ab-stract ac-ci-dent ba-by ba-che-lor bag-gage ba-lance  
bank-er cof-fee coun-try dai-ly da-ma-ge dan-ge-rous ef-fort  
en-gine ex-it ex-pert ex-port fa-cto-ry fail-ure fa-mi-ly fa-mous fa-  
ther garb-age gar-den gen-der gen-e-ral gent-le-man hea-ven  
his-to-ry  
husb-band hap-pen hard-ware ill-ness im-i-tate im-pact (n.) im-port  
(n.) ja-cket jeal-ous jour-ney jour-nal judg-ment kind-ness  
king-dom  
ki-tchen know-ledge la-bour lead-er la-dy lang-uage laught-ter  
lev-el mor-ning ma-gic ma-jor man-ag-er ma-ny mar-gin nar-row  
na-tion  
na-tion-al na-tu-ral neighb-our num-ber of-fice peo-ple prob-lem re-cord  
(noun) res-cue se-cond sen-tence sys-tem tea-cher time-ly Tues-day to-tal  
un-der vi-si-ble vi-o-lent voice-less wa-ter wait-er wan-der warn-ing win-  
dow yell-ow  
yes-ter-day young-er ze-bra ze-ro

Listen again. After listening to each word, produce it two times. Remember to produce the stressed fist syllables stronger and longer, all the unstressed syllables quickly without any emphasis.

You may repeat listening and production as many times as you want.

### **Activity 2.1.3**

#### **Stress on the second syllable**

**Only listen.** DO NOT produce.

As you listen, **notice** how the stressed fist syllables are produced stronger and longer, and how all the unstressed syllables are produced quickly without any emphasis.

a-bout a-gain a-round a-mong ap-pear be-fore be-gin be-hind be-tween com-plete

com-pu-ter con-tain cor-rect de-cide de-li-ver de-ve-lop di-rect e-nough ex-am-ple im-por-tant for-get ma-chine per-haps re-mem-ber to-ge-ther un-til

Listen again. After listening to eachword, produce it two times. Remember to produce the stressed fist syllables stronger and longer, all the unstressed syllables quickly without any emphasis.

You may repeat listening and production as many times as you want.

#### **Stress according to prefixes**

Some parts can be added to words at the beginning to create new/longer words. These additions are called prefixes. Some prefixes affect word stress; some do not. Some words with common prefixes have been given here for listening practice and production.

#### **Set 1**

These prefixes, when they are from Latin, do not affect word stress:

a-: about, along, amount

be-: before, between, below

com/con/col/cor-: compare, compound/ conduct, control/ collect, collide/ correct, corrupt / collaborate, collapse

de-: decide, device, demolish

dis-: discuss, disturb, dismiss, disinfect

en-: endanger, engage

ex-: example, expand

in-: include, inside,

re-: refer, regret

mis-: mistake, misguide

sub-: subject, subdue

## Set 2

Words with such prefixes as below are stressed on the prefix when they function as nouns.

ex- : expert

fore- : forecast

out- : outcry

over- : overlook

pre- : preface

under- : underdog

up- : update

Listen to the words in both the sets (recording of the two sets to be used) remembering how the stress is produced in each.

After you have listened to each production three times, produce the words.

### Activity 2.1.4

#### Stress according to suffixes

Suffixes are word endings added to create longer words, such as: teach+ er, man+ age, scen(e)+ ery.

Words get stressed differently according to different suffixes.

Common suffixes and their effect on word stress have been given here for listening practice.

## Set 1

This set of prefixes does not affect word stress.

**Only listen.** DO NOT produce.

As you listen, **notice** how the stressed syllables are produced stronger and longer, and how all the unstressed syllables are produced quickly without any emphasis.

-ar/er/or: beg-gar, polar, scholar, lead-er, teach-er, au-thor, doc-tor

-able: capable, countable, durable, liveable, readable, sociable, wearable

-age: manage, marriage, carriage

-dom: kingdom, serfdom, (seldom)

-ed: ended, listed, shouted

-er/est: poorer, poorest; taller, tallest; smaller, smallest

-ish: selfish, childish, bluish

-less: pointless, limitless, wordless

-like: childlike, moon-like

-ly: likely, readily, surely

-ment: agreement, amusement, statement

-ness: fairness, kindness, selfless

-ship: friendship, leadership, scholarship

-y: funny, sunny, rainy

Listen again. After listening to each word, produce it two times. Remember to



produce the stressed syllables stronger and longer, all the unstressed syllables quickly without any emphasis.

You may repeat listening and production as many times as you want.

## Set 2

These suffixes affect stress. They cause the syllable before them to be stressed.

**Only listen.** DO NOT produce.

As you listen, **notice** how the stressed syllables are produced stronger and longer, and how all the unstressed syllables are produced quickly without any emphasis.

-ic/ ics: ba-sic, lo-gic, cha-rac-ter-i-stic/s, psy-chic, pae-di-a-trics (exceptions: politics, turmeric)

-ical/ -ically: -lec-tri-cal, practical, biological, politically, philosophically

ial/ -ially: social, financial, differential/ artificially, essentially, partially,

-ian/-ion: In-dian, mu-si-cian, li-bra-rian, physician/clas-si-fi-ca-tion, ex-a-mi-na-tion, po-si-tion

-ient: in-gre-dient, pa-tient, an-cient

-ious: my-ster-ious, re-li-gious, var-ious

-ity: bre-vi-ty, lon-ge-vi-ty, scar-ci-ty, ne-ces-si-ty

Listen again. After listening to each word, produce it two times. Remember to produce the stressed syllables stronger and longer, all the unstressed syllables

quickly without any emphasis.

You may repeat listening and production as many times as you want.

## Set 3

There are more suffixes that cause the syllable before them to be stressed. These are all two syllable suffixes and with meaning.

**Only listen.** DO NOT produce.

As you listen, **notice** how the stressed syllables are produced stronger and longer,

and how all the unstressed syllables are produced quickly without any emphasis. -archy: anarchy, hierarchy, monarchy, patriarchy

-cracy: aristocracy, autocracy, bureaucracy, democracy

-graphy: geography, photography, angiography

-logy: astrology, geology, zoology

-metry: geometry, trigonometry, symmetry

-nomy: astronomy, autonomy, economy

-pathy: allopathy, homoeopathy, telepathy, naturopathy

-scopy: arthroscopy, endoscopy, laparoscopy,

-sophy: philosophy, theosophy

Listen again. After listening to each word, produce it two times. Remember to produce the stressed syllables stronger and longer, and all the unstressed

syllables quickly without any emphasis.

You may repeat listening and production as many times as you want.

#### **Set 4**

These suffixes are so strong that they receive the stress in the words.

**Only listen.** DO NOT produce.

As you listen, **notice** how the stressed first syllables are produced stronger and longer, and how all the unstressed syllables are produced quickly without any emphasis.

-ade: blockade, brigade, cascade, crusade, parade,

-aire: millionaire, questionnaire, solitaire

-ee: absentee, addressee, referee, trustee

-een: thirteen - nineteen

-eer: engineer, volunteer, mountaineer

-ese: Chinese, Japanese, journalese

-ette: cassette, gazette, etiquette

-oo: bamboo, kangaroo, shampoo, tattoo

-que: antique, opaque, picturesque, unique

-sce: acquiesce, convalesce, reminisce

-self/selves: myself, yourself, her/himself/ ourselves, yourselves, themselves

-oon: afternoon, balloon, cartoon, saloon, lagoon, monsoon

Listen again. After listening to each word, produce it two times. Remember to produce the stressed first syllables stronger and longer, all the unstressed syllables quickly without any emphasis.

You may repeat listening and production as many times as you want.

#### **Assignment 1**

Listen to the news on the BBC.

Notice how stresses are used in words.

Repeat at least five words as said by the news reader.

Repeat this activity every evening.

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## **2.2 Intonation**

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When we speak, we don't speak in monotonous tones like robots. Our pitch of tone varies according to what we want to say and in what manner. This variation in our tone is called intonation.

Intonation is used by every speaker of all languages for a range of functions. One of these functions suggests the attitudes and emotions of the speaker. Take this utterance for

Example: *I'm not hungry*. How would you say this when you are angry/sad/happy? Obviously, you'd say it differently according to how you are feeling at the moment of speaking. If you are angry, and said: *I'm not hungry*, that may express simply your anger, and may have nothing to do with your need to eat. Thus, the meaning of an utterance is not exactly what the words mean but what feelings or attitudes the speaker intends to express by using different tones.

### Activity 2.2.1

i. Discuss the following with a partner:

Which function of intonation has been mentioned in the section above?

ii. Listen to these dialogues.

**(three recorded dialogues here with different emotions and attitudes).** Tell your friend what emotions you understood for each dialogue.

iii. Think you are angry/sad/happy and say these utterances to your friend:

- a. I am speaking the truth.
- b. I don't like you.
- c. I thought you were my friend.
- d. Good morning!

Apart from expressing feelings and attitudes, there are many other functions of intonation. Intonation can signal the difference between statements and questions. It can focus attention on important elements of the spoken message. The speaker's intonation can also help the listener understand when s/he has finished speaking so that the listener can speak. Intonation here regulates the interaction process of a conversation.

### Activity 2.2.2

Listen to these dialogues.

Notice how the pitch of tone changes for each of the following:

- i. while making a statement
- ii. while asking a question: wh- and yes-no
- iii. while completing what one has to say
- iv. while the listener interrupts before the speaker has finished

**(five dialogues for i-iv; each dialogue to have all the features of i-v above)**

v. while focusing on different elements in a conversation according to the information required

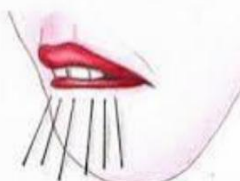

**(one sentence repeated to show utterance stresses: I saw a man in my house/ I saw a man in my house/... )**

### 2.3. Problem sounds of English for our pronunciation

Sounds of different languages are similar in some ways and different in some ways. There are certain sound of English that are not there in many Indian languages, for example, English f and v.

The following sounds of English can be problematic for Odia speakers:

**(Recordings of all the sounds, words and sentences in this section according to listening instructions)**

Spelling	Example words	Sound symbols	Position of lips/teeth and tongue
<i>f, ph, gh</i> as in	fun, graph, rough	<b>F</b>	 lower lip & upper teeth for <b>f/v</b>
<i>v</i> as in	van, even, leave	<b>v</b>	
<i>th</i> as in	think, author, breath	<b>θ</b>	<b>θ / ð</b> 
<i>th</i> as in	the, other, breathe	<b>ð</b>	
<i>sh</i> as in	ship, ashore, fish	<b>ʃ</b>	<b>(the pics for the rest of the problem sounds to be drawn)</b>
<i>z, s</i> as in	zero, his, these	<b>z</b>	
<i>j, dge</i> as in	jeep, ajar, judge, bridge	<b>dʒ</b>	
<i>-su-</i> as in	measure, pleasure	<b>ʒ</b>	

**Activity 2.3.1**

Listen to the words with the sounds *f/v*. Notice how these sounds are pronounced.

Fan	van	fine	vine	fail	veil
ferry	very	half	halve	fear	veer
leaf	leave	life	live (adjective)	feel	veal
off	of	proof	prove	fender	vendor
fast	vast	safe	save	grief	grieve
fat	vat	belief	believe	staff	starve
fee	V			surf	serve

Listen again. Produce after each word has been said.

**Activity 2.3.2****i. Listen to the words and the expressions with the [θ] sound.**

thin, toothbrush, marathon, healthy, truthful, wealthy, athlete, cloth, moth, math, tooth, fifth, beneath, path, month

Thanks for coming!

Just think about your health.

The truth is I came third in the writing exam.. It was a breath of fresh air.

I thought to become an author.

**ii. Listen to the words and the expressions with the [ð] sound.**

that, then, than, the, they, their, them, these, this, those, though, themselves  
feather, weather, together, father, mother, brother, other, either

Those babies are playing together! I can't breathe well in this weather.

Either they or their brother will come to the party. Please stop bothering them about this issue.

The feathers of these birds are more colourful than those of the other birds.

### Activity 2.3.3

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sea she	seal she'll	sin shin
seat sheet	so show	sale shale
see she	sofa chauffeur	ass ash
sock shock	sore sure	plus plush
boss bosh	sort short	puss push
save shave	son shun	crass crash
seen sheen	sun shun	crust crushed
sell shell	saw shore	mass mash
sew show	seed she'd	mess mesh
sign shine	single shingle	sack shack
sip ship	seep sheep	said shed
sop shop	seize she's	sake shake
sue shoe	sigh shy	sank shank
		scene sheen
		same shame

- i. Listen how s /s/ and sh // are pronounced differently.
- ii. Listen again and produce the words with proper sound.
- iii. Listen to each sentence two times. Notice the pronunciation of the sounds and

**also stress. Produce each sentence carefully.**

Shake hands.

She bought a shampoo.

She shared her ice cream with us. The sheep are grazing grass.

The sun gives us a good shine every day. The ships will arrive tomorrow.

He washed his shirt.

These shoes are for hiking.

I'll shop for groceries.

She washes her hair in the shower. She feels shy among strangers.

### Activity 2.3.4

- i. Listen to the words with these sounds: /dʒ/ and /z/. Notice how these sounds are different from the Odia /dz/ sound.

job		general		large
join		judge		message
age		joy		knowledge
college		jealous		huge
suggest		major		subject
religion		energy		management
age	pays	forge	fours	
cage	Ks	fridge	frizz	
siege	sees	gip	zip	
stage	stays	Jew	zoo	
wage	ways	siege	seize	
rage	raise	strange	strains	
rage	rays	tinge	tins	

ii. Listen again and produce the words with proper sound.

iii. Listen to each sentence below two times. Notice the pronunciation of the sounds and also stress. Produce each sentence carefully.

Our age is just a number.

I'll raise the standard of my speaking.

I want to be a stage actor. This music sounds strange. Sun rays are bright today.

I work two days a week in a zoo without any wage. I clean the animal cages.

Monkeys behave there in funny ways.

### Activity 2.3.5

i. Listen to the words with the sound /ʒ/. Notice how this sound is different from the Odia /dz/ sound.

Asia, beige, invasion, television, pleasure, casual, collision, treasure, leisure, garage

ii. Listen again and produce the words with proper sound.

iii. Listen to each sentence two times. Notice the pronunciation of the sounds and also stress.

iv. Produce each sentence carefully.

I'm an Asian.

Beige is my favourite colour.

I spend my leisure hours watching television. I take pleasure in cooking.

I'm not casual about friendship. I don't have a garage for my bike.

## Unit-3

### THEORIES OF COMMUNICATION

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#### 3.1 Introduction

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How and why do we communicate is still a mystery to many people. Communication has evolved and changed over time. However, in order to understand how we communicate now, it is useful to learn about how and why we communicated in the past.

For most of us, communication is such a normal part of our everyday lives that we rarely pause to examine the roots of communication and study the theories around communication. Have you ever wondered how you communicate or why you say certain things? How are you influenced (or not) to communicate? Although there are many theories of communication, let us examine some basic theories.

The first theory is called Cognitive Dissonance Theory. Let us understand some key terms. The word *cognitive* is simply what we are aware of in our conscious brains. For example, if you were talking to a friend, you might say you have “cognitive awareness,” knowledge or understanding of what subjects or topics you talked about with your friend. Maybe you talked about the movie you saw or your plans for the weekend.



The term *dissonance* means anything that is not in harmony with something. For example, imagine that your friend wants you to go the cinema with her, and you really do not want to go because you might believe that cinemas are too expensive. However, to please your friend, you say you will go with her and might even agree with her when she says she loves going to the cinema.

Basically, in this theory, what you want to do is not in harmony with your actions. Likewise, in the Cognitive Dissonance Theory, people communicate in ways that might be in opposition to how they really feel. In order to feel accepted into a group and create group peace and harmony with team members, people might change their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors (basically what they believe and how they act). As a result, people may make decisions that are in disharmony with how they really feel.





However, it is also natural for the human conscious to want to create harmony with differing beliefs. So, in a way, humans sacrifice what they really believe in in order to fit into a group. This “group” could be a friends circle, a neighborhood, a family, or even a cultural group.

The second interesting theory is Communication Accommodation Theory. According to this theory, humans have a natural exchange when they communicate. In other words, humans naturally adapt their speech when they talk to others. Think about all the times you have spoken with different people. Do you speak to people in the same way? Probably not. How you speak with your three-year-old nephew will be different from how you speak with your teacher or your friend. Further, the words you use will be different depending on the person and the relationship you have with that person and will also influence how you speak with them.

According to this theory, there are two ways humans change their speech. One way humans change their speech is through “divergence.” This simply means that when we disagree with someone, we change what we say to be different. Think of divergence as being different. When we diverge with people, we try to be different from them.



This could be for many reasons. Maybe you disagree with someone. Maybe you prefer to set yourself apart from that person because you are a different age, ethnicity, or gender. For whatever reason, divergence is a process in which what you say makes you different.

Another way humans change their speech is through “convergence.” Think of convergence as coming together or trying to be the same as someone. Have you ever wanted to be someone’s friend, but you know that you might be too different from them? Maybe the topics you like to talk about aren’t the same as what they like to talk about. So, through convergence, you might change what you say to match the other person to avoid being alone. This allows you to be accepted by that person or social group. You may change the words you use or you use the words to match that person/group.

Cultivation Analysis Theory is the third theory we are going to learn now. This theory means that the media and technology influence the way we communicate.



Can you imagine what the world might have been like before the television was invented? Before the Internet? Before cell phones? Before YouTube? It was very different. How people communicated without these tools was very different from how people communicate now. In fact, our beliefs about the world have changed so much because of the media. Media can be music, movies, television, magazines, or the radio. For example, if you see many violent Hollywood movies, you might start to believe that life in the USA is violent. Also, the topics people talk about are centered on the media: the television programs and the movies you see. For example, you might talk to your friend about the latest movie that was just released or what they thought about a certain TV program.

The fourth theory that can influence our life is called Groupthink. According to this theory, a group is the strongest factor in shaping someone’s communication. A group could be a close group of friends, a family unit, a cultural group or a country. The group is very strong in what they believe. In fact, the group can be so strong in its thoughts

that they fail to think of better choices or thoughts. Basically, group members start to think alike, in the same way. Naturally, this is a good thing, as it brings group members closer.

However, the problem with Groupthink is that different opinions and thoughts are not expressed or taken seriously because they are not a part of the dominant group. If most people are thinking the same things, different thoughts will not be accepted naturally. If you are a member of a group and you have a different opinion about a topic and all the other group members think a different way, you may not express your thoughts. For example, imagine your group is thinking about how to solve a problem. All the group members are in favor of option A but you think option B is better. In order to stay connected to the group, you might not express your opinions. Or, sometimes in Groupthink, group members might not even be thinking of other options and thoughts because their minds are linked together. In this theory, as the group gets stronger, mindsets and viewpoints also start to be similar. This is a good and a bad thing. It is good for group connection but bad for diversity.

The fifth and the last theory which we are going to discuss is the Cultural Approach to Organizations. In this theory, companies are like cultural groups. There are many different cultures. There is the Japanese culture, the Indian culture, the American culture, the Maharashtrian culture, etc. Just like cultures have specific beliefs and values, so do companies. Even the languages of specific cultures are different, just like the languages used in different companies are different.

For example, the language of a corporate business company like Tata might be different from the language people use at a primary school. The communication can change based on vocabulary, tone of voice, and style. The primary school employees and students might use educational vocabulary or words, speak in a gentle way and have a more relaxed way of speaking. On the other hand, a business employee might use more technical words, a more assertive or aggressive tone of voice and communicate quickly.

### LEARNING ACTIVITY 3.1.1

2. **Activity:** One family unit or your best friends can be defined as one group. Ask one friend or family member if he/she is influenced by Groupthink (thinking the same way as the other members of their group). Ask if Groupthink has influenced him/her in good or bad ways.
3. **Reflection:** Think about the media. Have movies or videos influenced (changed) how you view the world? Why or why not? For example, how do you view America from the Hollywood movies?
4. **Reflection:** Do you speak to your family members the same way you speak to your teacher? Why or why not?

### SELF-TEST 01

1. Which theory best states that communication is altered based on your beliefs and values?

- a. Cultural Approach to Organizations
- b. Groupthink
- c. Cultivation Analysis Theory
- d. Cognitive Dissonance Theory

2. Imagine you are with a friend and she/he says that people in America are very rich, even though she/he hasn't been to the USA. Which theory is probably shaping her/his opinion?

- a) Cultural Approach to Organizations
- b) Groupthink

- c) Cultivation Analysis Theory
- d) Cognitive Dissonance Theory

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Which theory of communication best describes how YOU use language? Give at least two examples.
2. Choose a different theory from the first question. Give at least one example of where and how you see that theory in your personal life.

**3.2: TYPES AND MODES OF COMMUNICATION**

Communication is a very broad term. In a general way, communication is just the transfer of information from one person to another. You can gain information from reading something or listening to someone. You can also communicate ideas from one person to another by speaking to them or writing something that someone will eventually read. So, the four basic modes of communication are: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening. Let's go through each mode of communication so that you can understand clearly. Let's start with speaking.

Humans are natural speakers. Even when we were babies, we were "speaking" in our own way by crying. As we get older and increased our vocabulary, we began to talk. Words are a quick and easy way to communicate to someone what we want. You can speak in formal and informal situations. We speak to our family members and friends in informal situations and to our colleagues, teachers, and elders in formal situations.

Speaking is considered an "active" mode of communication because we have to produce something in order to speak.



In other words, we have to open our mouths and actively do something, give something (rather than receive something). Speaking is what most people think about when they think of communication, but communication is shown in other ways.

Humans have created spoken language but have also developed tools in order to preserve those words and to communicate ideas that will last a long time

In ancient times, humans had written words on scrolls and then more recently, we have created the printing press, typewriter, computer, and now we have the text messaging. Writing conveys ideas for someone else to read. In that way, reading and writing go together.

However, one difference between reading and writing is that writing is an active way to communicate. Just like with speaking, in writing, we have to produce something in order to write. We have to "do" something, so it is active.

Many people enjoy reading and with that activity, they learn about the ideas of another person. We read written words in books, reports, in text messages, in email messages, in project proposals, and even in reading traffic signs on the road. Imagine how hard it would be to not be able to read anything. That is why reading is an essential skill taught in schools. If humans could not read, writing would have no purpose.

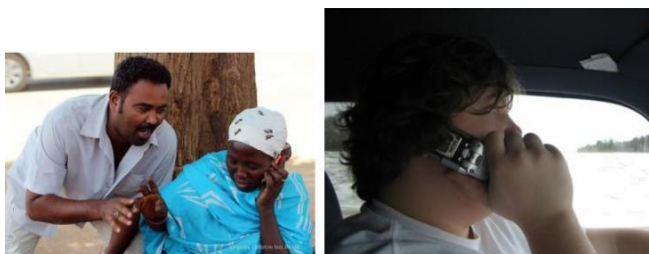


Reading is a passive communication mode because in reading, you are receiving something rather than producing something. However, do not think that “passive” means that you are lazy. It simply means that you are receiving input from somewhere.

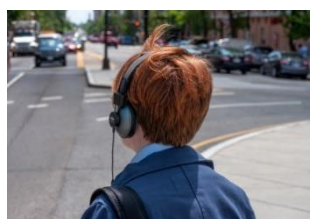
The last basic communication mode is listening, which is the hardest to attain. Just like reading and writing go together, speaking goes along with listening. When someone is speaking to you, you are listening.



The reason why listening is the hardest to attain is because people do not know how to listen actively. People are distracted and do not know how to give their full attention to their speaker. Maybe they are driving while listening to you on the cell phone. Maybe the listener is hearing other noises in the background. Whatever may be the reason, active listening is very difficult.



We need to listen to spoken words in a conversation or even when we watch the TV or listen to the radio. We could also listen to a podcast, a voice message, or a fun video on YouTube.



Listening is considered a passive language mode because when you listen, you receive something and are not required to give anything. Remember, passive does not mean you are lazy. It just means you are receiving rather than giving input.

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES 3.2

- **Reflection:** Which type/mode of communication is easier for you in your mother tongue (your first language)?
- **Reflection:** When you are learning a new language (or your second language), how do you best learn the second language? By speaking, listening, reading, or writing?

### SELF-TEST 02

- a) What are the two passive communication modes?
- a Reading & Writing
  - b Listening & Writing
  - c Listening & Reading
  - d Speaking & Listening
- b) When someone learns a language, which mode of language is likely to be the first way you learn?
- a Through speaking
  - b Through listening
  - c Through writing
  - d Through reading

### SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS 02

- b) What is the main difference between passive and active communication?
- c) Give one example of each mode of communication in your personal life. For example, what do you read? What do you write? What do you speak about? Lastly, who do you listen to and where? Use this outline to help you.

Reading:

Writing:

Speaking:

Listening:

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## **BLOCK 2 LISTENING II**