

E - MODULE

**BA/BSC./B.COM/BBA
SEMESTER - IV**

GENERAL ENGLISH

BECAUSE I COULD NOT STOP FOR DEATH

In these lines the speaker says that she could not stop for death so death stopped for her. Death is personified as a gentleman here. Death came to her very kindly and took her on a journey in a carriage which consisted of Death, the speaker and immortality.

In the next stanza the speaker says that the carriage drove very slowly as death was in no hurry. The lady was busy in the hustle bustle of life, but death (the gentleman) was so generous to her that she kept aside her work and leisure time in order to accompany death.

In these lines the speaker explains three phases of human life, i.e. childhood, youth and old age. She explains that their carriage first passed from a school where they saw children playing in the ground at recess time. Then they passed over the fields where they saw the stalks of grain that were ready to be reaped. Finally, they passed over the setting sun.

In these lines the speaker says that they didn't pass the sun rather the sun had passed them. As they had crossed the sun, it started turning cold. The lady was wearing a gown made of thin fabric. She started shivering and she could feel the chilly cold inside her gown. She was also wearing a scarf and hat.

Finally, they stopped their journey before a house that seemed to be a swelling of the ground. The roof of the house was hardly visible, one could only see the embroidery done on it. The house here is symbolic of the graveyard where the journey of life ends.

The speaker says that since that day, centuries have passed and still it seems to be shorter than a day when she had first guessed that the horses of the carriage were leading towards eternity. The speaker is long dead but still she hasn't reached her destination, that is, eternity.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

SOCIOLINGUISTIC RULES OF SPEAKING

Linguistic research has aimed its focus on linguistic competence-i.e,the rules that govern grammar,vocabulary,and pronunciation of a language.This approach has given birth to a belief about the second language learning that linguistic competence is enough to become a good communicator in the second language.Although this knowledge is required for accurate speech in second language yet,sociolinguists argue that linguistic competence doesn't guarantees successful communication.

In order to clarify what the sociolinguists mean, an example has been given. A conversation between a U.S. host and student is hypothetical, but the same kind of situation can be seen in many research works.

U.S Host: Would you like some more dessert? Do have some?

Student: No, thanku you very much.

The host thinks that the student doesn't want dessert so she changes the conversation topic and doesn't offer the dessert again. On the other hand, the student is hungry and wants to have dessert but refuses out of politeness. He might feel offended for not being offered the dessert again.

The example shows that both the host and the student were linguistically correct. But their communication seems to be a failure because the student wanted more dessert but he gave a false impression to the host by refusing the offer. The host on the other part has taken the refusal as genuine one and doesn't offers again. This makes a negative impression in the student's mind. Both the participants in conversation do not realise that there has been a misunderstanding.

In such cases of misunderstandings, the sociolinguists offer the existence of **sociolinguistic rules of speaking**. Just as the grammar, vocabulary and phonology helps us to produce linguistically correct speech. Similarly, sociolinguistic rules enable us to understand and produce socially and culturally accurate speech. These rules are acquired, usually unconsciously, by the members of a given culture.

In the example, the host is following the sociolinguist rules of her culture where an offer for food is made once, or at most, twice.

The student on his part is following the rules of his culture where an offer is never accepted at first or the second offer of more food. In his culture it is polite to wait for the host to make the third or fourth offer which he knows will come.

This data is enough to support the claim that sociolinguistic rules of speaking exist and they vary from culture to culture. There are more such examples from researchers. Christopher (1982) reports that in Japanese culture as compared to American culture, they directly refuse a request from someone.

The following examples show that different cultures have different standards for socially appropriate linguistic behaviour in similar circumstances. Thanking, apologizing, accepting, and refusing are universal activities but the rules for when and how to perform such actions may vary from culture to culture. Now the question arises that does the second language learners need to master the rules of the culture whose language they are learning?

To answer this question we again need to look at the example of the U.S host and the student. Both followed the rules of politeness of the society they belong to and both are unaware that there are other ways to show politeness. The fact is that the student has taken the host negatively. Such reactions are common where intercultural miscommunication occurs. In this case the language was understood linguistically but misinterpreted sociolinguistically.

Leaners of second language need to understand the fact that rules for polite interaction are not universal. Students should be able to recognise the situations where rules of cultures are different. They must be prepared to modify their speech in terms of sociolinguistic conventions of the society they are in. Succeeding in these two tasks is not simple, but failure may cause misunderstanding that can have negative results for those who are involved.

VOCABULARY STUDY:SYNONYMS

Find words in the article that are similar in meaning to the following.

- 1.to make something stronger- reinforced
- 2.incorrect- erroneous
- 3.weakness;flaw- shortcoming
- 4.failure- breakdown
- 5.real- genuine
- 6.a person taking part in an activity- participant
- 7.existing in all cultures- universal
- 8.to change- modify
- 9.to finish something successfully- accomplish
- 10.to be a part of a situation- involved

GRAMMAR

UNIT - 113

Although/though/even though/In spite of/despite

◆ After although we use subject+verb

Eg-**Although it rained** a lot,we enjoyed our holiday.

◆ After in spite of or despite,we use a noun,a pronoun (this/that/what etc) or -ing:

Eg-**In spite of the rain**,we enjoyed our holiday.

Despite is the same as in spite of. We say in spite of but despite(without of):

Eg-She wasn't well,but **despite this** she went to work.

◆ Compare although and in spite of/despite

Eg- **Although the traffic was bad,**

In spite of the traffic,we arrived on time.

◆ Sometimes though is used instead of although

Eg-I didn't get the job **though** I had the necessary qualifications.

◆ Even though (but not 'even' alone) is stronger form of although:

Eg-**Even though** I was really tired, I couldn't sleep.

(not Even I was really tired.....)

UNIT-114

In Case

◆ In case is used for possibility

Eg-Your car should have a spare wheel **in case** you have a puncture.

In case you have a puncture=because it is possible you will have a puncture.

◆ We use just in case for a smaller possibility:

Eg-I don't think it will rain, but I'll take an umbrella **just in case**. (=just in case it rains)

◆ Do not use will after in case. Use a present tense for the future

Eg- I'll leave my phone switched on **in case Jane calls.**

◆ In case is different from if. In case is used to say why somebody does (or doesn't do) something.

Compare:

In case

We'll buy some more food **in case** Tom comes.

(=Perhaps Tom will come; we'll buy some more food now, whether he comes or not; then we'll already have the food if he comes)

IF

We'll buy some more food **if** Tom comes.

(=Perhaps Tom will come;if he comes, we'll buy some more food; if he doesn't come,we won't buy any more food.)

◆ In case+past is used to say why somebody did something:

Eg-I left my phone switched on **in case Jane called.**(= because it was possible that Jane would call)

◆ In case of is not the same as in case.In case of..=if there is.. (especially on notices etc):

Eg-**In case of fire**,please leave the building as quickly as possible (= if there is a fire)

UNIT - 115

Unless As long as Provided/providing

◆ Unless= except if

Eg-I'll see you tomorrow **unless I have to work late.**(=except if I have to work late)

◆ As long as or so long as provided(that) or providing (that).

All these expressions mean 'if' or 'on condition that'

Eg- You can borrow my car{**as long as**}you have
{**so long as**}somewhere to
park.

◆ When you are talking about the future, do not use **will** after **unless/as long as/ so long as/provided/providing**. Use a present tense

Eg- I'm not going out **unless** it **stops** raining.

UNIT - 116

As (As I walked along the street.../As I was hungry..)

◆ As= at the same time as

As can be used when two things happen at the same time:

Eg-We all waved goodbye to Liz as she drove away.

◆ You can say something happened as you were doing something else(in the middle of doing something else):

Eg-Kate slipped **as she was getting off** the bus.

◆ You can use just as(=exactly at that moment)

Eg-**Just as** I sat down,the phone rang.

◆ We use as when two things happen together in a longer period of time:

Eg-**As** the day went on, the weather got worse.

◆ As= because

Eg- **As I was hungry**, I decided to find somewhere to eat.(=because I was hungry)

◆ Since can also be used this way:

Eg- **Since** we have plenty of time,let's go and have a coffee.

UNIT - 117

Like and as

◆ Like = 'similar to', 'the same as'. You cannot use as in this way.

Eg-What a beautiful house! It's **like a palace**.

◆ Sometimes like = for example:

Eg- Some sports, **like motor-racing**, can be dangerous.

◆ As=in the same way as, or in the same condition as. We use as before subject+verb:

Eg-I didn't move anything. I left everything **as it was**.

◆ Sometimes as (+subject+verb) has different meanings. For example, after do:

Eg-You can do **as you like**. (=do what you like)

◆ We also say as you know/as I said/as she expected/as I thought etc.:

Eg-**As you know**, it's Emma's birthday next week. (=you know this already)

◆ As can also be a preposition, but the meaning is different from like. Compare:

Eg-Sue Casey is the manager of a company. **As the manager**, she has to make many important decisions. (As the manager=in her position as the manager.)

Eg-Mary Stone is the assistant manager.**Like the manager**(Sue Casey),she also has to make important decisions.

(=Like the manager= similar to the manager)

◆ As(preposition)= in the position of,in the form of etc:

Eg-A few years ago I worked **as a taxi driver**.(not like a taxi driver)

Reference:

Moments In Time

Making Connections

Murphy's English Grammar (Third Edition)
By Raymond Murphy

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