

FIELDS OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

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Module-3

MA ENGLISH, SEM-III

PAPER–XV (i): COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Time: 3 Hours

Max. Marks: 80

Part–A: Eight (8) short questions (two from each unit) will be set. Students will be required to answer six (6) of them. The short questions are aimed at examining the first hand reading of prescribed texts. These shall relate to particular ideas, literary / linguistic significance of selected passages etc. The narrower the question, the better it is. The students shall answer these questions within 150 words each. Each question will carry 4 marks. **(4x6=24)**

Part–B: Four (4) questions (one from each Unit) will be set. The students will be required to attempt all. Each question will have internal choice. One of the two choices should preferably deal with literary and social background of the author / text. If required, the examiner may also have sub-parts of a question. The students shall answer these questions in not more than 800 words. Each question will carry 14 marks. **(14x4=56)**

UNIT–I

Fields of Communication

Models of Communication

Methods of Communication Research

UNIT–II

Language and Rhetoric

Semiotics and Narrative

UNIT–III

Professional Communication

Audience Analysis and Mass Communication

UNIT–IV

Film Analysis

Mass Media Analysis

Books Recommended:

1. Sky Marsen, *Communication Studies*. Palgrave-Macmillan Indian Print.
2. John Fiske, *Introduction to Communication Studies*. Routledge. Distributed by Heritage Publishers, Darya Ganj, New Delhi.

FIELDS OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

What is communication: ?

The term 'communication' means a human relationship involving two or more persons who come together to share, to dialogue, and to commune. Thus, communication is not just an act or a process but also a social and cultural togetherness. Some scholars define communication as 'social interaction through messages' (Fiske 1990: 2); 'a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding' (Rogers 1995: 35); 'a process whereby people in groups, using the tools provided by their culture, create collective representations of reality' (Price 1997: 31); 'a process in which there is some predictable relation between the message transmitted and the message received' (Graber 2003: 2).

What is communication studies ?

Communication Studies is the study of communication in relationships. These relationships can range anywhere from interpersonal communication to organizational, i.e. business or mass communication.

Fields of communication studies :

Communication studies is divided into different fields, depending on the contexts and participants involved. Following are the major fields of communication studies, going from the personal to the impersonal :

1) Interpersonal communication :

Interpersonal communication occurs when two individuals or a small group of individuals exchange messages in a context of interaction. Most often, this interaction is done face-to-face; but it also includes telephone conversation, text messaging, WhatsApp chat, e-mail message exchange, etc. In interpersonal communication, there is an opportunity for feedback also, i.e. the ability to adapt and respond to other participant. The element of privacy also plays a crucial role in interpersonal communication. Factors at play in interpersonal communication include :

- **Assumptions² about each other** – Participants in the exchange of messages make assumptions about each other. The more they know about each other, the more they

¹ **communication** - exchanging messages.

² **assumptions** - suppositions; postulations; guesses; ideas.

predict³ about each other's behaviour. The effectiveness of the communication depends on whether these assumptions are really shared by the participants or whether they (the assumptions) are one-sided. If the assumptions are one-sided, the chances of misunderstanding increase.

- **Paralinguistic⁴ codes** – To a large extent, interpersonal communication relies on⁵ the exchange of words. However, non-verbal interpersonal communication is equally important. It includes paralinguistic codes, i.e. tone of the message (intonation), gestures, dress, body language, facial expressions, etc.
- **Personal identity** – Interpersonal communication is the primary means through which we address certain issues of personal identity, like age, gender, ethnic or cultural background, etc.

2) Group communication :

It is debatable whether any communication is group communication or interpersonal communication. But some scholars limit interpersonal communication to two, drawing (making) distinction between interpersonal and group communication. In many ways, there is rarely a communicative act exclusively between two individuals. Even in cases where two people are having a conversation, 'the implied others' are also there who need to be taken into account if the interaction is to be understood. Even in group communication, there is a use of interpersonal factors, such as paralinguistic codes and shared knowledge and values.

Still if we wish to draw (make) a distinction between interpersonal and group communication, a key element to use would be 'belonging'. The term 'belonging' means to belong to a social group, to a society, to a culture, to a category, to a class, etc. This sense of belonging makes interaction easier with one another in a group. Keeping this in mind, the factors at play in group communication include :

- **Common identity** – Participants in a group communication have a perception of a common identity. This common identity is shared by all the members of the group.
- **A distinction between insiders and outsiders** – This includes the roles and behaviours that qualify one as an insider or an outsider, an ally⁶ or an enemy. It is important here not to confuse the common identity or definition that the group accepts for themselves, and those imposed on them by outsiders.

³ **predict** – foretell; expect; forecast.

⁴ **paralinguistic codes** – non-verbal communication that may add meaning to language as it is used in context, e.g. tone of voice, expressions on your face, your actions, etc.

⁵ **rely on** – depend (up)on.

⁶ **ally** – friend; supporter; associate.

- **A shared set of goals and values** – This includes such factors as group insignia⁷ (tattoos, flags; shared logos), and collectively accepted rules.

3) Intercultural communication :

In contexts where more than one culture⁸ is present, the individuals (or participants) are influenced by the cultural conventions in their communication. This type of communication is called intercultural communication. The intercultural communication tends to describe the relations between members of different ethnic groups and languages, interacting in an international context, such as in an international meet of the leaders of various countries; sometimes this interaction happens in a context where one culture is dominant, such as in societies with immigrants from foreign countries. Intercultural communication is in many ways similar to group communication, but the role of groups is taken by ethnic⁹ cultures. The term 'culture' encompasses¹⁰ not only nations but also shared knowledge and ideology (e.g. academic culture), corporations (e.g. 'corporate culture'), and conventions¹¹ of groups (e.g. 'gang culture'). Factors at play in intercultural communication include :

- **Uses of a common language** – Often in intercultural communicative act, participants use a language, commonly English, that is not their native language. In such cases, problems in translation of terms may occur leading to misunderstanding or limited communication.
- **Degrees of formality and politeness** – Different cultures have their own ways of communicating respect and politeness. Verbal expressions (i.e. linguistic expressions), as well as non-verbal expressions (i.e. paralinguistic codes, such as tone of the message, gestures, dress, body language, facial expressions, etc), have different meanings for different cultures.
- **Different values** – Cultures attribute¹² different values to objects and modes of behaviour. For example, some cultures may grant more value to material success and possessions, while others may emphasize spiritual factors or family ties. The values and world-views of a cultural group affect the ways of their communication.

4) Professional or business communication :

Professional or business communication examines the principles and organizational rules (i.e. 'corporate culture') of companies and organizations. Business communication examines the ways in which members of an organization interact with each other, how the organization

⁷ **insignia** – emblem; symbol; logo.

⁸ **culture** – human activity as against natural activity. The opposite of 'culture' is 'nature'.

⁹ **ethnic** – connected with or belonging to a nation, race, or religion; cultural tradition people share; common ideology shared by a group of people.

¹⁰ **encompasses** – includes; covers; involves; incorporates; embodies.

¹¹ **conventions** – agreements; bonds; resolutions.

¹² **attribute (sth) to** – assign to; attach to.

interacts with its clients and the general public, and how organizations interact with each other in the global arena. In this respect, business communication forms a bridge between interpersonal and mass communication. In business communication, a model of communication is highly recommended in order to understand the input and output of individuals working in an organization. The use of a model helps in studying and calculating the effectiveness of their communication in achieving the specific goals. Factors at play in business communication include :

- **The hierarchy¹³ and role allocation¹⁴** – This includes such factors as who reports to whom in a company, and who is held accountable for specific outcomes.
- **The uses of linguistic and paralinguistic codes in corporate contexts** – This includes a variety of factors, including how employees are expected to dress, the style and tone expected of them in formal communication, such as report writing, minutes¹⁵ of the meeting, etc.
- **Leadership and managerial attributes¹⁶** – This describes what makes an efficient leader and team manager, and how this efficiency is reflected in communication styles.
- **The image that the company presents to the outside world** – This includes public relations techniques, company logos, company websites, product-branding (i.e. names given to products, through which the company comes to be identified). All this is communicated through advertising and various CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) ventures¹⁷, such as initiatives to deduce pollution, projects to plant trees, campaign for public awareness of ‘Clean India Mission’, etc.

5) Mass communication :

Mass communication means communication of the few to the many. It involves the technological aspects of information transmission (since communicating to large audiences, who are not physically present, needs some technological help). The media organizations that transmit the messages generally own the technological equipment and the specialists who know how to achieve their goal. ‘Impact’ is the keyword in mass communication studies, because the aim of mass communication (such as broadcasting or printing) is to attract a large audience and have an effect on them, often internationally. The development of technology in the twenty-first century has made mass communication the most modern type which encompasses all other types of communication. For example, television serials are an excellent way to study interpersonal communication; documentaries and multicultural television programmes provide a window to intercultural issues; and many mass media corporations

¹³ **hierarchy** – order of importance; rank.

¹⁴ **allocation** – allotment.

¹⁵ **minutes (of the meeting)** – proceedings; follow-up; notes.

¹⁶ **attributes** – qualities; characteristics; traits; features; aspects.

¹⁷ **ventures** – undertakings; projects; schemes; missions.

typify¹⁸ big business organizations and business communication practice. Factors at play in the study of mass communication include :

- **Interrelationship between various factors** – There is an interrelationship between ownership, technology, regulation, and media content
- **Audience analysis** – There are some devices and techniques to analyse the audiences. There are some audience measurement techniques and procedures also, for example the TRP (Television Rating Points) of Indian television programmes.
- **The merging of different sectors** – There is the merging or ‘synergy¹⁹’ of different sectors of the media industry, such serials based on as comic books, etc.

¹⁸ **typify** - exemplify; symbolize; characterize; represent.

¹⁹ **synergy** - working together of two things to produce greater effect.