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COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS



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CHAPTER ONE

The Concept of Communication

Ojebuyi, B.R. and Amusa, A.K.

Man is a social being who lives in a socially organized society where interdependence of existence and activities is inevitable. He shares his feelings and ideas with the significant others as he also receives information from them. This process of mutual exchange of ideas, feeling or information is communication. Communication is not peculiar to man alone. Lower animals also communicate. However, human communication is complex and elevated because it involves the use of verbal and non-verbal forms. Man symbolically manipulates language to create messages, ascribe meanings to messages and interpret such messages, which are mutually understood within his social context. This natural ability to use language symbolically sets man above lower animals.

For the purpose of clarity, let us consider the etymology of the word "Communication". The word has its root from the Latin word *Communicare* meaning to make common or to share. Logically, communication, which is derived from *Communicare* is the art of sharing feelings or ideas; a process of mutual exchange of information in a social context. Thus, when we communicate, we are attempting to share or have something in common with fellow human beings (Bergin, cited by Adeosun, 2005).

It is rather cumbersome attempting to give one acceptable and all-embracing definition to communication because of its pervasiveness and

complexity. Various scholars have, nevertheless, attempted a number of definitions for communication. Sambe (2005:2) defines communication as “the process of exchanging, transmitting, transferring, expressing or imparting ideas, sentiments, attitudes, feelings, meanings, information or opinion between individuals, groups or organizations”. Berko, Wolvin and Wolvin (1989:4) define human communication as “a conscious or unconscious, intentional or unintentional process in which feelings and ideas are expressed in verbal and non-verbal messages,” while Chapel and Read (1984:1) describe it as “any means by which thought is transferred from one person to another”. Udall and Udall (1979:5) emphasise the mutuality of meaning sharing in communication when they define the term as “the process by which one person (or a group) shares and imparts information to another person (or group) so that both people (or groups) clearly understand one another.”

From the few definitions we have considered above, it is apparent that communication lies in the very heart of human activities. In almost everything we do, we communicate, either consciously, or unconsciously, deliberately or unintentionally. We need to share information, feelings, ideas or emotion and interact with our fellow humans if we must truly survive. Even when we decide not to “communicate” with others, communication process continues. In our silence we both communicate within ourselves and pass some strong messages, however, non-verbally, to others around us.

Contexts of Communication

Communication comes in different contexts. It can be intrapersonal, interpersonal or public communication. When one communicates within oneself, it is intrapersonal communication. It takes place in such activities as message encoding or initiating process, personal decision making, planning etc. It is the core of all other forms of human communication (Bittner, 2005). Interpersonal communication is face-to-face communication where two parties exchange ideas, feelings or information. It may be conversations, arguments, interviews etc. It may also involve a very small group discussion where feedbacks are immediate. With the emergency of modern communication technology,

interpersonal communication can come via telephone conversations or chatting through the internet. Public communication occurs where there is a source (a speaker) sending information to a set of audience. The number of participants involved in public communication is larger than that of interpersonal communication. However, it may involve a face-to-face communication encounter where feedbacks are not delayed, or the use of mass-mediated means (print and electronic media such as television, radio, newspapers, memos etc.). Large group communication, cultural communication, and mass communication are subsets of public communication. All the contexts of communication are interrelated as one lower hierarchy leads to the next higher hierarchy or is subsumed in the next higher hierarchy. As communicators, we must avoid ambiguity or unintelligibility of meaning by ensuring that the symbolic means through which we communicate is mutually understood by both the message encoder (sender) and the message decoder (receiver). This is very important in the contexts of interpersonal and public communication where there is interchange of ideas, feeling and information between the sender and the receiver(s).

Characteristics of Human Communication

Human Communication has some inherent attributes that distinguish it from animal communication. Various scholars (e.g. Burgoon and Ruffner, 1978; Folarin 1998) have discussed the attributes of human communication. Some of these characteristics are briefly highlighted below.

Human Communication Is Interactive or Transactional: Our actions and speech affect others. This prompts reactions from others, as we also react to others' actions and utterances. By this chain of action and reaction process through communication, we interact with others in the social context.

Human Communication Is Dynamic: As communicators, our attitudes, feelings, emotion and other components of symbolic behaviour are not static. They always change. As any of these variables changes, we are bound to change our process of communication and even the message.

Human Communication Is Irreversible: Any act of communication—verbal or non-verbal—an instantaneously sends some stimuli that will produce some effect on the receiver. Once this message(s) is sent out, either consciously or unconsciously, it is not possible to reverse such a message. An attempt to undo (reverse) a message once sent is another act of communication, and this continues in a continuous chain of action, reaction and interaction between the sender and the receiver(s).

Human Communication Is Continuous: Human communication has no specific beginning and no end. It never terminates. All our actions communicate. Any time we are speaking or we are silent, we are still communicating. Even when we sleep, apart from the fact that our posture in bed communicates a lot about us, we still engage in intrapersonal communication process through our dreams or imagination.

Human Communication Is Instrumental: Communication is a potent tool of social control and manipulation. We use communication to achieve our objectives. We manipulate our environment and effect some behavioural change in others through effective communication.

Human Communication Is Context-Specific: The mode of communication that participants employ in a given communication encounter is determined by the context of such communication acts. The moment the context changes, the mode also changes. Certain significant symbols that are mutually understood by participants in a given social context may create ambiguity of meaning in another social context. Some expressions that are appropriate in formal contexts may not be acceptable in informal settings, or may even suggest different meanings as the contexts change.

FORMS OF COMMUNICATION

Human communication messages are expressed in codes whose meanings are mutually understood by the communication participants. These codes come in two forms. They can be verbal or non-verbal.

(1) Verbal Communication:

This is the form of human communication that employs words to

send messages. The words can be expressed orally through articulation of the human speech organs. The words can also be conveyed in written symbols or letters. Thus, verbal communication can be sub-divided into oral and written forms.

(a) Oral Communication:

When we decide to speak or sing, we are using oral communication. In this form of communication, we engage our speech organs in the articulation of speech sounds that are combined in meaningful patterns to convey messages. We use oral communication in intrapersonal, interpersonal and public communication.

Prompt feedback, message clarification, message reinforcement through non-verbal clues, and proximate interpersonal interaction are the advantages of oral communication. However, with the use of mass-mediated channel, or telephone, some of these attributes of oral communication may be absent.

(b) Written Communication:

In written communication we use alphabetic symbols (letters) to convey messages. These symbols are arranged in structured patterns that communicate meanings. Unlike the oral communication skills which are naturally acquired, written communication skills demand formal and conscious training. Written communication can come as memos, circulars, letters, books, bulletins, newspapers, etc. It is frequently employed in formal communication setting. In written communication, message distortion is minimal, message can be kept and be reproduced, and complex message or information can be clarified and analyzed with the aid of symbols. However, written communication encourages delayed feedbacks; it can be used as evidence or exhibit against the source, and it does not permit the warmth of face-to-face interaction that exists in oral communication.

(2) Non-Verbal Communication

At times, we may decide to communicate without writing, or speaking. We may just move our hands, shake our heads, wink, grunt, cry, or position our bodies in certain postures or distance. If any of these

happens, then we have employed non-verbal form of communication. Non-verbal communication is the use of other means than written or spoken words to express our feelings, emotion, ideas or information. Non-verbal communication is a powerful tool of message reinforcement in face-to-face communication. Non-verbal clues convey deeper messages that the source may not even intend to express. They carry powerful messages.

Non-verbal communication can be grouped under three categories. These include the body language (Kinetics), which can manifest as gestures, body shape or facial expression such as wink, frowning, or smile. It can also be para-language (vocalics). This is the manner in which the message is conveyed without using words. Actions such as yawning, groaning, yelling, sighing, belching, grunting, or whispering are variants of paralanguage. Also, the pitch or speed of our voice communicates messages. The third category of non-verbal communication is distance. Distance between two persons, or groups of people, sitting arrangement in a hall or room, space, design of a structure position of objects etc. are all indicators of non-verbal communication. Distance as a non-verbal communication is used in both formal and informal settings. The diagram below summarises the forms of communication (verbal and non-verbal) as discussed above.

UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH AFRICA

FORMS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication

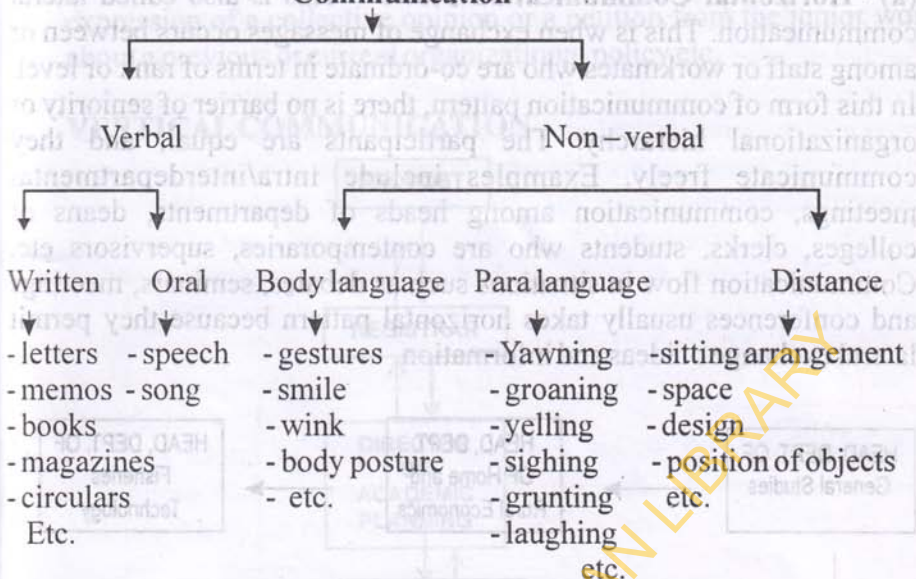


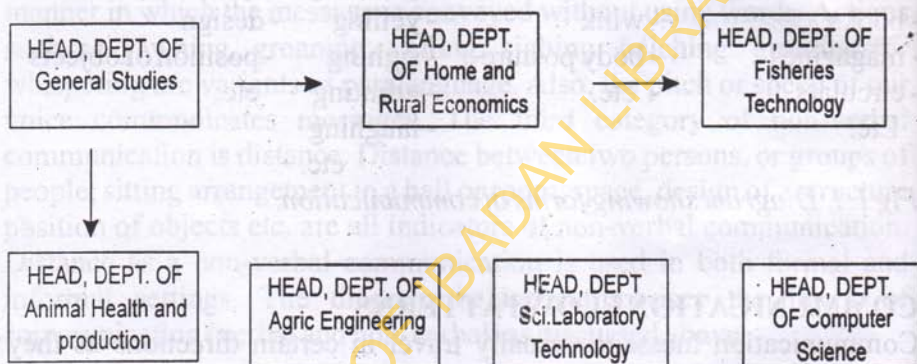
Fig 1.1 Diagram showing forms of communication.

COMMUNICATION FLOW PATTERNS

Communication messages usually travel in certain directions as they move from the source to the receiver or as responses from the receiver to the source. The pattern or nature of message flow depends on the context and formality or laxness of the communication act. That is, whether a communication encounter is formal or informal dictates the pattern of such communication flow. In organizations, for instance, informal communication may come as rumour or grapevine while formal communication (e.g. meetings, giving instructions, notice, and interviews) may employ oral or written medium such as letters, memos, circulars face-to-face discussions, presentations, and reports (Sambe 2005; James, Ode and Soola 2006).

Formal Communication in organizational Settings can flow horizontally, vertically or even semi-vertically. Because of limited space, these flow patterns shall be concisely explained.

(a) **Horizontal Communication Flow:** This is also called lateral communication. This is when exchange of messages occurs between or among staff or workmates who are co-ordinate in terms of rank or level. In this form of communication pattern, there is no barrier of seniority or organizational hierarchy. The participants are equal, and they communicate freely. Examples include intra/interdepartmental meetings, communication among heads of departments, deans of colleges, clerks, students who are contemporaries, supervisors etc. Communication flow in situations such as debates, seminars, meetings and conferences usually takes horizontal pattern because they permit lateral exchange of ideas and information.

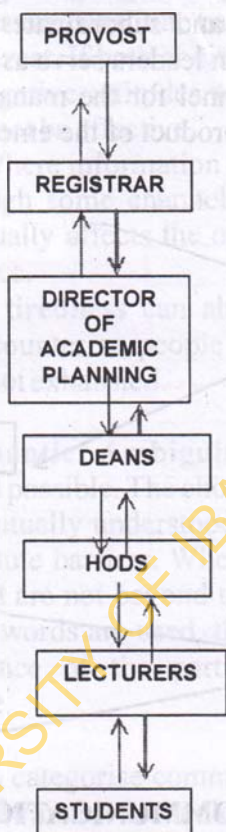


(b) **Vertical Communication:**

Here, Communication flows either downward or upward. The downward flow occurs when information or messages come from the highest hierarchy probably through the middle strata, to the lowest rung of organizational structure. It may be from the vice chancellor, through the registrar, to the deans, to the heads of departments and to the students. It may also be from the Managing Director or the Chief Executive Officer, through the General Manager and so on, to the clerical officers. The downward communication flow often carries messages of authority, order, directives, instructions or information from the senior officers to the junior officers. On the other hand, the upward communication flow takes messages or information from the lower rung to the higher rung of an organization. Often, the upward communication comes as feedbacks

from the junior staff/members to the senior staff. It may also be an expression of a collective opinion or a petition from the junior workers about a previous or current organizational policy etc.

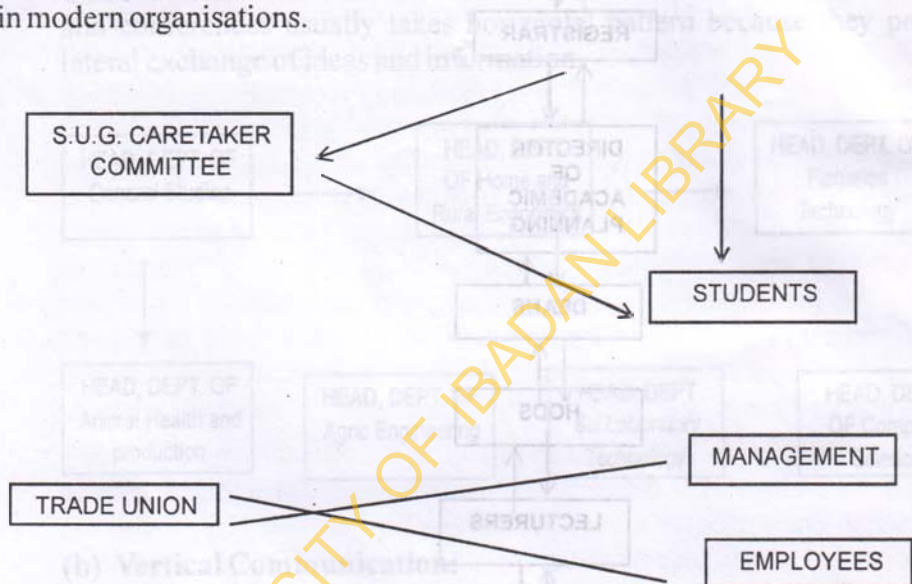
VERTICAL COMMUNICATION



(C) Semi-Vertical Communication:

This is the latest of the Communication flow patterns. It is a new variant of the Vertical Communication. Here, information or messages travel from the junior members of an organization via their union leaders to the management, bypassing all the middle links peculiar to the vertical communication. For example, students can convey messages to or receive messages from the Vice Chancellor through their Students Union

leaders without going through the deans of faculties and heads of departments. Like the Vertical Communication where information can travel either upward or downward, the semi-vertical communication also has two directions (upward and downward). The major difference is that the union leaders serve as the link between the management and the staff or between the senior authorities and subordinates in downward and upward communication. The Union leaders serve as the mouthpiece for staff members, and feedback channel for the management. The semi-vertical communication flow is a product of the emergence of unionism in modern organisations.



BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

A Communication encounter is considered to be effective where there is a remarkable degree of mutual understanding between the parties involved in the communication process. This can manifest when the receiver demonstrates the desired behavioural action as anticipated by the source, or when the source in turn correctly decodes the symbolic behaviour the receiver exhibits as response. This mutual understanding ignites progressive interaction between the source and the receiver.

However, effective communication may not be possible in some situations where certain intervening variables are not properly controlled.

These variables are technically termed “communication barriers.” They include the following:

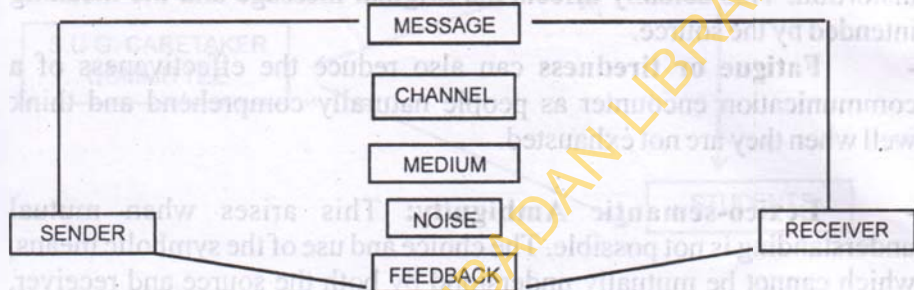
- **Noise:** This may be grammatical, physical, psychological, or mechanical/technical.
- **Low level of language competence** on the part of either the source or the receiver can constitute barrier
- **Lack of interest.** If both or either of the participants (source and receiver) shows negative attitudes to the communication encounter, communication cannot be effective.
- **Distance:** Where information or messages have to travel a fairly long distance through some channels, there is likely to be a serious distortion. This actually affects the original message and the meaning intended by the source.
- **Fatigue or tiredness** can also reduce the effectiveness of a communication encounter as people naturally comprehend and think well when they are not exhausted.
- **Lexico-semantic Ambiguity:** This arises when mutual understanding is not possible. The choice and use of the symbolic means, which cannot be mutually understood by both the source and receiver, will actually constitute barriers. When non-verbal clues are used, they should be those that are not beyond the social – cultural context of the participants. When words are used, they should be within the scope of linguistic competence of the participants; otherwise, problem of ambiguity may arise.

James et al. (2006), categorise communication barriers in organisation as, structural constraints, technological constraints, departmental barriers and human barriers. They sub-divide the human barriers into information overload; gate keeping, rumour, human attitudes and semantic barriers. Be it human, structural or technological constraints, communication participants must be highly sensitive. They should be able to detect and control these variables in order to have an effective communication encounter.

The word “communication” is not easy to put down as a particular

stereotyped definition. It refers to the act of message passing. Communication is a process of transmitting a message so that the recipient understand it. Communication is considered effective when it achieves the desired reaction or response from the recipient. Simply stated, communication is a two-way process of exchanging ideas. Evans (1978) defines it as the process involving the sharing of idea; facts, opinions, attitudes and beliefs between people through the use of symbols understandable to all parties involved in the communication processes.

COMMUNICATION PROCESS MODEL



COMMUNICATION VARIABLES/ELEMENTS

For proper understanding of the communication process, let us attempt to describe the basic elements in communication processes as we have summarised in the foregoing section.

The stimulus: This is what initiates and triggers the communication process. It stirs up the idea within the sender. It engineers communication activities. It is a form of emotion that starts the process.

The source or sender of the message: The source is also regarded as the initiator, the sender or encoder in the communication process. He selects mutually understandable codes, symbols or language to pass across his message.

The message: This can be described as the idea, emotion, thought or feeling, passed from the sender to the receiver. Messages can be sent by

sounds in a spoken conversation or through, printed materials or symbols in written communication. It is the translation of ideas into a symbolic code, such as language or gestures.

The medium: This simply means the form in which the message is shared. It could be verbal or non-verbal; it could be written or spoken form of exchange. It could be face-to-face interpersonal or group communication, radio, television broadcast, telephone, letters, memo, query, circulars, pamphlets, books, notice boards, text messages which are commonly used by the literate people. It could also be through gesture or other forms of para-linguistic and symbolic acts (non-verbal form).

The channel: This is referred to as the pathway through which the message travels between the sender and the receiver. The channel helps not only in transmitting information but in linking the sender with the receiver. This can be through mechanical or non-mechanical means of sending information. For example, the telephone, a television set, a computer system, a telegram, a memorandum, a letter, a drawing, a painting, and a sculpture are all examples of channel. They could be natural or man-made.

It is important to note that medium and channel are not synonymous. While medium is a way of making the message available to others, the channel is any means by which a sender's message is made perceivable to a receiver (Ayodele 2010).

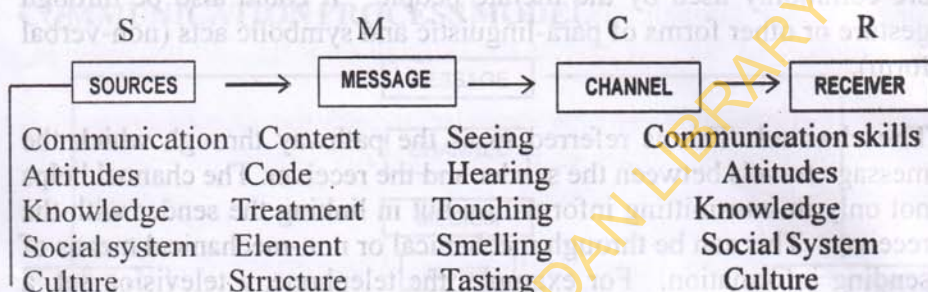
The receiver: This refers to the person for whom the message is intended in the act of communication. The receiver is also known as the decoder as he receives and converts the codes into thoughts and acts on it. However, communication could be described as effective only when the receiver and the sender attach the same meaning to symbols that make up the message. Both the sender and receiver are called "transceivers" because they are engaging in a transaction as they communicate.

The feedback: This is the reaction of the receiver to the message decoded. It is the response to a given message which reflects proper

understanding of the message. No doubt, the effectiveness of the message is judged by the feedback, an indicator which reveals whether individual or organisational change has taken place as a result of a communication encounter.

Fig. 1.2: DAVID BERLOS' MODEL

David Berlos' model otherwise referred to as SMCR model breaks down the elements of communication into different variables.



The noise: Noise is anything that tends to undermine the effectiveness of the communication efforts. It hinders communication and manifests at the physical, psychological and linguistic levels. Noise could manifest as a result of:

- An uncondusive environment;
- The use of ambiguous symbols;
- Interruption in the channel as always experienced in telephone exchange or radio/TV transmission;
- Inaccurate reception due to lack of attention by the receiver;
- Attainment of wrong meaning to words or symbols especially when the sender and the receiver do not share proximate experiences;
- Prejudices;
- The fear of possible consequences of the change; and
- Wrong gestures, odd postures or inappropriate non-verbal acts.

Forms of Noise

Noise comes in various forms. They are identified and discussed as follows:

(1) **Physical Noise:-** This refers to unwanted physical interference which disrupts the transmission of the message from the sender to the receiver. i.e. between the source and the destination. These include noise emanating from electrical or mechanical devices i.e. metal workshop, generating set, the reckless horn of the vehicles on the road, noise from beating drums or hard objects etc.

(2) **Psychological Noise:-** This is the intense emotional disposition or state of the mind as a form of noise that could disrupt effective communication. The personal feeling of discomfort of the receiver tells a lot on the effectiveness of the communication between the encoder and the decoder in a communication encounter. Such emotional disturbance strays the mind of the sender or the receiver from the communication encounter. These may include pains, psychological or mental disorder, anger, or hunger. All these will constitute psychological noise to the sender or receiver, thereby creating a state of communication disorder.

(3) **Linguistic Noise:-** Linguistics is the scientific study of languages. Therefore, linguistic noise refers to such noise that is related to the use of language. It has negative effects on the use of language. Linguistic noise is divided into three parts namely:-

(i) **Syntactic/Grammatical Noise:** This is a kind of hindrance or interference which destroys the communication experience through unconscious or deliberate violation of the rules of concord, incorrect tense formation etc. These constitute noise in communication. e.g. i. John swim in the stream daily (John swims in the stream daily.)

ii. One of the new teachers bully the students

(One of the new teachers bullies the student.)

iii. You was there yesterday (You were there yesterday.)

(ii) **Semantic Noise:-** This deals with noise which impedes the meaning in a communication event. It is usually emanated out of inappropriate or careless use of words. For

examples, some speakers engage in using jaw-breaking words for social recognition or to show off. Semantic noise can also occur if the speaker or sender uses ambiguous words or expressions to pass across his message. The meaning will be impaired since different interpretations and meanings will be given to the words. Inappropriate use of certain words in some contexts may also generate semantic noise.

(iii) Phonological Noise:- This is the kind of noise that arises as a result of pronunciation problems. It is important to state that wrong pronunciation of words always constitutes impediment to effective communication.

In view of the foregoing explanations, it can be said that noise and communication appear inseparable and the former has continued to create a barrier and serves as a threat to the latter.

Therefore, as we communicate, we must be conscious of the noise a core variable in the communication process. This consciousness would always enable us to control the noise and have an effective communication encounter.

In order to alleviate or reduce to the barest minimum the problems associated with noise in communication, the communicator is advised to be aware of his word selection, mannerisms, postures or gestures in their communication encounter.

CODE MIXING

Code-mixing is a form of language interaction that occurs in bi-lingual society. It occurs when two or more languages interact to produce a new but mixed code. From the fore-going definition, code-mixing occurs in bi-and multi lingual communities in which two or more languages in the speaker's repertoire interact to produce a new 'mixed code' characterised by distinctive formal properties and fulfilling specific functional roles. It is a situation where a speaker employs two languages alternatively in one utterance. It manifests in the lexical levels than

others in levels of syntactic and semantics. Code mixing is a social phenomenon and a manifestation of language dependency in multilingual society like Nigeria. It takes place frequently, and mostly unconsciously within a single event. e.g. *“Kinni problem yin”* (what is your problem)

Mo manage owo yen but mo si n expect assistance lati odo uncle Adewusi (I managed the money but I am still expecting assistance from Uncle Adewusi).

CODE SWITCHING

Code switching is the outcome and consequences of Bilingualism. Bilingualism is a concept in social linguistics that is used to refer to the use of two languages by an individual or a community. Akindele (1999) sees bilingualism as the native like control of two languages which occurs as a result of language contact whether directly or indirectly. Examples of country where bilingualism are being practiced or used include Canada, where members of the speech community are made to speak in English and French and Nigeria where many bilingual communities exist. eg. Hausa and Kanori.

Fatokun, (2010) describes code switching as a situation where the speaker has more than a language in his linguistic repertoire which enables the speaker to code-switch or shift from one language to another one within the same discourse situation. The term 'code switching' can be described under three perspectives. These are conversational, functional and formal perspectives.

Conversational code-switching: This happens when a bilingual person involves in a casual conversation in his bid to sustain the communication event. He employs the use two languages through syntactic and semantic relations. For example, if Yoruba and Hausa are switched in a communication event, It involves the syntactic understanding of the language to be switched to.

Situational code-switching: This involves two different languages that are assigned to two or more different situations. While the activity setting

and the participants are the same, the violation of the situational code by the user results in situational code-switching. For instance, it becomes an aberration to use his or her indigenous language for expression where majority of the participants who are students are bilingual in English and Yoruba.

In metaphorical code-switching, the two languages being used serve as a metaphor representing a different situation. This may be as a result of the change of subject or assignment of a new set of role. For example, it is interesting at times to see a politician in a political rally welcoming his political associates in English before addressing his audience- Yoruba or a Hausa man who decides to play down the use of English when he realises that the person he is interacting with comes from his tribe or clan.

Code switching occurs as a result of lack of facility in a particular language. Individual can also code switch to serve as a linguistic need of providing a lexical, phrasal or sentential filler in an utterance.

Example:

Lecturer: Did you attend the lecture last week?

Student: I attended.

Lecturer: You didn't attend the lecture last week.

Student: I attended.

Lecturer: But your name was not written in the attendance sheet.

Lecturer: *Fun anfaani ara, re yara lo re pe asoju kilaasi re wa ki n to binu*

COMMUNICATION PATTERNS

Jaiyeoba (2005) notes that there are two types of communication pattern.

These are:

- (1) Downward Communication pattern.
- (2) Upward Communication pattern.

Downward Communication pattern

This refers to a form of communication that flows from the people at the higher level in an organisation, company, institution to those at the lower

levels. This involves information that passes from the management or top officers to the junior or subordinate officers. This type of communication chart always appears to carry the weight of authority to be effective.

Downward communication in oral communication may include instructions, speeches, and the use of telephone. The written downward communication may include: queries, letters, memos, handbooks, periodicals, policy statements and bulletin boards.

The downward written communication from the superior authority to subordinates or junior staff usually emphasises the followings:

- (a) Directive for handling specific tasks;
- (b) Information for understanding the relationship of their tasks;
- (c) Procedures and enterprise practice information;
- (d) Feedback about the performance of subordinates; and
- (e) Information about enterprise goals.

Upward Communication Pattern

Upward communication refers to the flow of information from the lower rung of the ladder in an establishment, organisation, company to the higher level of authority. The upward communication is usually aimed at providing the expected feedback on issues or tasks and to feel the pulse of the members within an organisation. This communication type is always distorted with insincerity and inaccuracy as the information from the lower level may not be palatable, favourable or it may be garnered by sycophants. Upward communication can take the form of complaints, requests, information, opinions, replies to queries.

This form of communication is always practised and encouraged by democratic leaders to promote open door policies and foster a friendly relationship between the management or bosses and other subordinates within the organisation. One of the disadvantages of upward form of communication is the deceitful posture of some subordinates to please the incumbent management or manager. Both downward and upward communication patterns are sub-sets of vertical communication.

HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION

This form of communication enables information to pass within the people of equal status in an establishment. The communication type helps to speed up the mechanism of information flow and promotes corporate understanding in order to achieve the objectives of the organisation. It cuts across departments, units and sections within an organisation particularly among people of the same status.

Horizontal communication also exists where the departments are grouped with a view to performing specific tasks or projects. It works well when the morale of the staff is high and cooperative attitudes occur between departments. Horizontal communication is commonly used for conferences, committees, board meetings etc. It brings together people of the same position to discuss ideas for the progress of the organisation.

Examples of Horizontal/cross wish communication

QUASI-VERTICAL COMMUNICATION

This is otherwise referred to as semi-vertical or unionism communication. It is a kind of communication network which plays a mediatory role particularly in promoting peace between parties in the organisation. Quasi-vertical form of communication provides useful suggestions and solutions to prevailing problems that may have thwarted the efforts of the management. For instance, in Oyo State College of Agriculture or in the University of Ibadan, the kind of communication that exists between the students or their representatives and the management is Quasi-vertical. In a sense, the Students Union Caretaker Committee as constituted serves as intermediary between the students of the College or University and the management as the management prefers to deal with them on sensitive issues and the union later discusses with its members. Therefore, collective bargaining is easily attainable. The following diagram illustrates a quasi-vertical communication between the SUG caretaker committee and the college management, and between a Trade Union leadership and the management.

MERITS OF VERTICAL COMMUNICATION

1. It is usually effective because the communication flows from people at higher levels to those at the higher levels. It carries the

weight of authority and such directives and instructions are usually attended to with rapid response.

2. It promotes discipline – In vertical communication, the issues of discipline and regular official conduct s are usually emphasized and followed and these help to raise the standard of an organizations

DEMERITS OF VERTICAL COMMUNICATION

- (1) Authoritarian in nature:- It does not respect the views and opinions of the subordinates as some of their views may be sidelined. There is also and the fear of victimisation from the subordinates for dares raising objections to the management decisions or opinions.
- (2) The management, most times, fails to address or recognise the problems of the lower - cadre workers who are seen as down-trodden. They are often neglected.
- (3) It gives room for distortion: Vertical communication mostly gives room for distortion of vital information as the information flows form one unit to the other. Such information may be misinterpreted, or be modified to achieve the minority objectives.

MERITS OF HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION

- (1) It is fast: – This is so because the information flows from people of the same status who share similar attitude, experiences and goals.
- (2) It enhances efficiency:- It promotes efficiency as the information is not delayed or hindered. This helps in the long run, to achieve the corporate goals of the establishment.
- (3) It promotes cordial relationship among the concerned members of staff or heads of sections.

DEMERITS OF HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION

1. **Blockage of information:** – Any of the parties in the communication may block the flow of communication.
2. **High tendency for distortion:** – There is a high tendency for information to be distorted by any party in the communication may be through complete denial in an unfavourable situation as observed in some telephone conversation.

MERITS OF QUASI-VERTICAL COMMUNICATION

- (1) This communication helps to nip crisis in the bud in an organisation.
- (2) It promotes collective bargaining between the members represented by the union and the management as the interest and welfare of the members are freely discussed and addressed.
- (3) It promotes and celebrates democratic tenets as tensions are reduced to its barest minimum.
- (4) It helps to put the incessant work to rule or strikes of the workers on hold or check.

DEMERITS OF QUASI VERTICAL COMMUNICATION

- (1) It may promote or generate conflict between staff and management during the crisis.
- (2) The activists or union members risk termination of appointment or outright dismissal at times. There is insecurity of job for the union leaders.
- (3) It has been observed that some union members grossly abuse the power or authority vested on them as representatives.

POST TEST

- (1) What is Communication?
- (2) Identify and explain any five communication processes.
- (3) Language and Communication are two inseparable elements because of their symbolic relationship. Discuss.
- (4) Explain and differentiate between "Vertical and Horizontal Communication in an Organisation.
- (5) What is interference in Communication?
- (6) Giving ample examples, explain with the impact of interference on the following levels of communication.
 - (a) Phonological (b) Syntactic (c) Semantic
- (7) Briefly explain the terms "Code Switching" and "Code mixing" with your local examples with a view to identifying the differences in the two concepts.
- (8) The language of communication is not necessarily verbal. Discuss.

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