



Elements of Spoken Language Useful for Developing Speaking Skills

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Abstract: Effective communication requires a good knowledge of different significant and important elements of spoken language. These elements are of immense value in developing speaking skills. We know there are different cognitive processes involved in the process of speaking. Spoken language is said to possess some distinguishing features. We must know the different ways spoken language is used, different genres of speech used and how to develop fluency, and the factors affecting fluency, what to utter in different social situations and communicative strategies.

Key Words: interaction, transaction, fluency, speaking genres, communication skills.

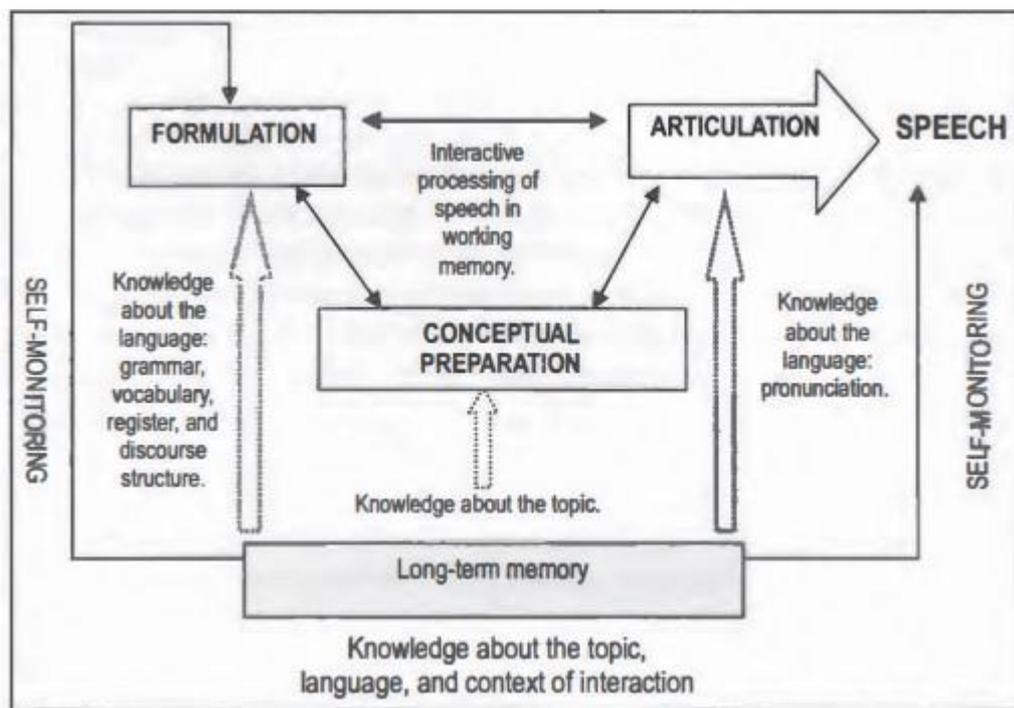
Introduction: Effective verbal communication is the hallmark of our modern civilization. its importance in our society is immense and significant. Communication is nothing but the transfer of ideas, thoughts, etc. from one person to another. By speaking well, we can communicate our ideas, desires, thoughts, feelings, etc. to others. Speaking is one major modality of communication. From dawn to night we remain engaged in various communicative activities. If there is any misunderstanding between the speaker and the listener or the audience, the speaker fails to communicate with them effectively. This misunderstanding would result in bad consequences of various kind such as scoring low marks in the examination, snapping of friendship, etc. In order to communicate effectively, we must develop our speaking skills and adopt effective communication strategies. In India, English is employed as a second language in most cases. Especially in the arena of employment, speaking English is almost mandatory. Hence there is no denying the fact that we must develop the skill of speaking English.

Cognitive Processes involved in Speaking: According to Levelt, the model of speech production involves four interrelated stages:

1. **Conceptual Preparation:** It refers to the selection of the topic or information which the speaker wants to express. If the speaker has already selected the topic, she/he still has to choose the relevant ideas as to the topic from her/his long-term memory. The speaker must think what she/he will say/utter.
2. **Formulation:** It is the process by which the ideas or thoughts in the speaker's mind are mapped on to the appropriate words.
3. **Articulation:** It refers to the production of speech sounds with the speech organs. Then the message is carried to the listener in the form of sound waves.
4. **Self-monitoring:** It is the key metacognitive process by which the speaker must check her/his speech for accuracy and acceptability.

Salient Features of spoken Language: Spoken language has to be distinguished from written; language. The re are some distinguishing features of Spoken Language. Spoken language is monologic or dialogic. It may be co-constructed spontaneously by more than one speaker. It is context-embedded in the sense that it is close to action

in time and space It is impermanent in the sense that it is produced for real time. In spoken language, informal language is used. Here clauses are linked by conjunctions such as *and, but, so*, etc. We usually use a lower number of function words and a higher number of content words. Personal pronouns are used much. We find inexplicit references to the surrounding context e.g. *over there, it*, etc. Spoken language relies more on verbs to convey meanings. Here non-verbal gestures are used. Gap-fillers (e.g. *you know...er.*) are used by the speaker to prevent communication breakdown. Incomplete sentences are produced.



PICTURES of the MODEL

Purpose of Spoken Language: The purposes of spoken language or talk are of three types, in the context of speaking .

1. **Talk as Interaction:** When our talk serves a primarily social function, it is called talk as interaction. When we meet one another, we greet one another, we recount our recent experiences, etc. Thus, we use talk as interaction. Here focus is more on presenting oneself rather than on the message. According to Brown and Yule (1983), the main features of talk as interaction are:

- Has a primarily social function
- Reflects role relationship
- Reflects speaker's identity
- May be formal or casual
- Uses conversational conventions
- Reflects degree of politeness
- Employs many generic words
- Uses conversational register
- Is jointly constructed (two or more than two persons)

The skills involved in talk as interaction are opening and closing conversation, choosing topics, making small talk, joking recounting personal incidents and experiences, turn-taking, interrupting, reacting to others, and using appropriate style of speaking.

2. **Talk as transaction:** When our talk involves the conveying of messages, the talk is used as transaction. Here focus is more on the conveying of messages than on the speaker. In such transactions "...talk is associated with other activities. For example, students may be engaged in hands-on activities (e.g. in a science lesson) to explore concepts associated with floating and sinking. In this type of spoken language students and teachers usually focus on meaning or on talking their way to understanding." (Jones, 1996)

Classroom group discussions and problem-solving activities are classic examples of talk or spoken language as transaction. Besides, buying something in a shop, ordering food in a restaurant, making a phone call to obtain information, etc. are also instances of talk as transaction. According to Burns (1998), there are two types of talk as transaction. In Type 1, the focus is on giving and receiving information and the participants primarily stresses what is said or achieved. In Type 2, focus is on obtaining goods or services e.g. checking into a hotel, ordering food in a hotel or restaurant. The skills involved in talk as transaction are agreeing and disagreeing, asking for clarification, and asking questions, clarifying understanding, confirming information, describing something, explaining a need or intention, justifying an opinion and making comparisons and suggestion, etc.

3. **Talk as Performance:** When talk is used to transmit information before an audience, this talk is referred to as talk as performance. It is monologic in nature and has a recognized format e.g. a speech of welcome. Its importance lies in its impact on the listener. Examples include class debate, a speech of welcome, public announcement, and speeches, lectures, sales representations, etc.

Spoken Interactions: 1. *Conversations* (interactional-interpersonal): a) Casual (equal power) -- polite and confirming, and b) formal (unequal power).

2. *Encounters* (transactional-pragmatic): a) factual (information), and b) transactional (goods and services)

Speaking genres: Speech events may be classified into some specific genres: *purpose* (transactional and interactional,) *participation* (interactive, partly-interactive and non-interactive), and *planning* (planned and unplanned). Speech genres may be planned or unplanned Planned speech genres are those which are prepared in advance or planned in advance e.g. railway announcements as to the arrival and departure of trains, etc. unplanned speech genres are those which are not planned in advance e.g. informal conversations between friends, etc. Partly planned genres are those some parts of which are planned e.g. joke telling, job interviews, etc. In the case of interactive genres, there is spoken interaction between the participants as found in job interviews, casual conversations, etc. In the case of non-interactive genres, only one participant is present e.g. railway announcements, sports commentaries, leaving a voice message, etc. In the case of partly interactive speech, the participants partly interact with each other as found in joke-telling, etc.

Quality of Speech: There are four qualities of speech: fluency, accuracy, appropriateness, and complexity:

1. **Fluency:** Fluency can be defined as “the ability to communicate ideas effectively with few pauses and hesitations, causing minimal comprehension difficulties for the listener.” (Goh, 2012) It may refer to the ability to produce continuous speech without causing a breakdown of communication. The most important components of fluency are speech rate (number of syllables uttered per minute), repetitions, false-starts, self-corrections, and pauses (occurring at meaningful transition). In the case of fluency focus is on meaning and it is message-oriented.
2. **Accuracy:** It refers to “the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences but may not include the ability to speak or write fluently” (Goh) One’s linguistic competence is exhibited through one’s accuracy. Accuracy is contrasted with fluency.
3. **Complexity:** it refers to “the speech where the message is communicated precisely and appropriately to the context and partners in communication, using more advanced grammatical forms and differentiated lexis.” (Surkamp & Viebrock, 2018) Here we find the use of more complex grammatical forms “such as subordination and clausal embeddings which are appropriate for speech in relation to the social and cultural context as well as the roles of, and relationships with interlocutors.” (Goh & Burns) Here the focus is on meaning and form.
4. **Appropriateness:** It refers to “the extent to which a use of language matches the linguistic and sociolinguistic expectations and practices of native speakers of the language. When producing an utterance, a speaker needs to know that it is grammatical, and also that it is suitable for the particular situation.” For example, the utterance ‘Give me a glass of water!’ is grammatical, but it would not be appropriate if the speaker wanted to be polite. A request such as ‘May I have a glass of water, please?’ would be more appropriate.

Factors Affecting Fluency: There are five factors which affect fluency of a speaker:

1. **Cognitive factor:** It involves mental processing. Cognitive factors include familiarity with the topic, with the genre, with the interlocutors and processing demands. If a speech event requires complex mental processing, it would be difficult for the speaker to perform the task. It is easier for the speaker to talk about the familiar subject.
2. **Affective /Emotional Factors:** These factors include feelings towards the topic and/or the participants' self-consciousness. It is easier for the speaker to perform the speaking task if she/he is well disposed to the topic. If the speaker knows that she/he is being evaluated this would have a negative effect on her/his performance.
3. **Performance Factors :** These factors include mode, degree of collaboration, discourse control, planning and rehearsal time, timer pressure, environmental conditions. If the speaker speaks face to face to the interlocutor, she/he can speak fluently because she/he can monitor the interlocutor's responses, understand her/his gestures and eye-contact. If the speaker can control the direction of events, she/he can speak fluently. If the speech genre is planned, the speaker can talk about it fluently. If the speaker performs a speech event a second time she/he can speak fluently. Environmental factors such as high-pitched music, shrill noise, etc. in the classroom hinder the fluency of the speaker.
4. **Personality factors:** These factors include introversion and extroversion. An introvert speaker cannot speak fluently. But an extrovert speaker can speak fluently. The speaker who suffers from anxiety cannot speak fluently.
5. **Physiological Factors:** These factors include tiredness, fatigue, etc. These can hinder the fluency of the speaker.

Characteristics of Spoken Language: Spoken language has some distinguishing features:

1. **Spoken Grammar:** In spoken grammar, the clause is the basic unit of syntactic construction. Clauses are usually added by coordination. Spoken grammar is marked by 'Head+Body+tail' construction. Direct speech is usually used in most cases. Spoken grammar is characterized by vagueness, a lot of ellipsis, a large number of content words, a higher number of function words, tag questions, performance effects which include hesitation, repeats, incompleteness and syntactic blends. Inexplicit references to the surrounding context (e.g. over there, it, etc.) are found in spoken grammar. In spoken language emphasis is laid on different interpersonal relationships.
2. **Spoken Text Production:** Spoken language is both monologic and dialogic or interactional. It may be marked by the shared knowledge of context. It can be co-constructed by more than one speaker. It may be planned or unplanned or negotiated. It is permanent. In other words, it is produced for real time. It is context-embedded. In other words, it is close to action in time and space. Here informal or colloquial language is used by the speaker.

Speaking Skills: A fluent learner must have a good command over the subskills of speaking. Speaking skills are categorized into two types: linguistic skills and communication skills with negotiation skills.

1. **Linguistic Skills:** It is imperative for a fluent speaker to be competent in linguistic skills. Skills refer to learners' knowledge language and communication that is "put into action" when in speech production. Learners must develop these skills.
 - a) **Phonological Skills:** These are also called pronunciation skills. They refer to the ability of the learners to produce segmental and suprasegmental features of the target language. They are important enabling skills for speech production because the ability to pronounce words and phrases clearly can directly influence the articulation process of speaking. The subskills or micro-skills are:
 - Producing segmental features at phoneme level, syllable level and word level—articulating the vowels and consonants and blended sounds of the language clearly,
 - Assigning stress in prominent words to convey the meaning precisely,
 - Using suprasegmental features at sentence level –stress, pitch, juncture, intonation and rhythm to convey grammatical and attitudinal meaning and to communicate new and old information,
 - b) **Grammatical Skills:** Under these skills, the following subskills are grouped:
 - Using appropriate lexical items (Morphology),

- Using appropriate sentence patterns of the target language—S +V+O + others (syntax),
 - Using the lexical items and sentence patterns to convey the intended meaning, avoiding ambiguities (semantics)
- c) **Pragmatic and sociolinguistic Skills:** Under these skills we find the following subskills:
- Performing communicative functions or speech acts precisely and appropriately---Requesting /asking for permission, help, etc.; expressing gratitude, agreement, approval, regret, good wishes, complaints, tentativeness; explaining procedures /methods, reasons, purposes, processes, cause and effect, etc.; giving instructions, directions, orders, opinions, etc.
 - Acquiring knowledge about discourse types e.g. lectures, talks, debates, conversations, interviews, etc.
 - Expressing relationships between parts of a spoken utterance through cohesive devices/discourse markers
 - Using discourse markers in spoken utterances, particularly in introducing a topic/ideal conversation, developing the same transition to another ideas, topic, etc. concluding ideas, topics, etc. emphasizing a point to focus on it.
 - Using linguistic conventions to structure spoken texts for various communicative purposes e.g. recounts and narratives.
 - Establishing coherence and cohesion in extended discourse through lexical and grammatical choices.
 - Creating extended discourse, according to socio-culturally appropriate conventions of the language.
2. **Communication Skills:** Negotiation skills and interaction management skills are subsumed under communication skills. They are:
- Employing communication strategies
 - Making decisions and implementing smoothly
 - Responding appropriately
 - Exploring for phrases

Interaction -management Skills: Initiating, maintaining, and ending conversations; Offering turns; Directing conversation; Clarifying meaning ;Changing topics ; Using and recognizing verbal and non-verbal cues.

Negotiation skills: Adjusting to the situation, adapting and improvising; checking specific meanings; being able to alter wordings; correcting mistaken interpretation; having ready vocabulary; producing alternate expressions; adjusting conversations; helping each other to express ideas; indicating that they understand or do not understand, or that they want the conversation to continue; indicating comprehension.; adapting to points made by the interlocutor.

Acquisition of Knowledge for Speaking Well: A competent learner who wants to speak fluently and well she/he must acquire must acquire four kinds of knowledge:

1. **Grammatical Knowledge:** A speaker must know the rules of syntax of the language (syntactic knowledge—how the words are combined or arranged to form a grammatical sentence), the rules of morphology (morphological knowledge). Any face-to-face verbal interaction requires the speaker to parse the utterances to make responses after listening to them.
2. **Phonological Knowledge:** The speaker must have a good command over the phonology of the target language. The speaker must know how the sounds of the target language –vowels (pure vowels and diphthongs) and consonants—are pronounced. The speaker must acquire phonological knowledge as to the three levels of language production: *word*, *utterance* and *discourse*. The knowledge of the pronunciation of speech sounds is a must at the word level. The speaker must know suprasegmental features or macro features (stress, intonation, pitch, rhythm, juncture, etc.) at utterance level. The speaker must know those communicative and discourse functions served by prominence and tones— chunking sounds to provide meaning at discourse level.
3. **Lexical Knowledge:** The speaker desiring to communicate well and effectively must acquire lexical knowledge—know a good number of words/lexical items and their appropriate meanings. Her/his active or productive vocabulary must be increased and her/his passive or receptive vocabulary is necessary for recognizing or understanding utterances. The speaker must acquire semantic knowledge—denotative and connotative meanings of lexical items. The speaker must know

formulaic speech and idiomatic expressions for signaling discourse organization (e.g. *let me begin by*, etc.), expressing vagueness (e.g. *this, that and the other*) and modality. By the term modality is meant an expression of a person's stance, attitudes and level of certainty. When we write something, we use modal verbs to signal modality. But when we speak, we use lexical phrases or expressions and simple adverbs (*discourse markers*) to express modality: *I think, I suppose, definitely, apparently, to all intents and purposes*, etc.

4. **Discourse Knowledge:** There are different types of spoken texts which are used to serve different communicative purposes in different social situations. Discourse structures vary with communicative purposes. The speaker must know how to form coherent spoken texts. The speaker must acquire sound pragmatic knowledge about speech acts and norms in communication. She/he must know social appropriacy. The speaker, in order to communicate effectively, must know how to organize and structure stretches of coherent speech precisely, which must be consistent with the setting and the participants. The speaker must know how to manipulate and negotiate language –she/he constantly has to adjust to the situation, adapt and improvise. She/he has to negotiate with her/his interactant to arrive at the meaning of the utterances.

Discourse markers: They are used to “make clear the connection between what we are going to say and what came before. (Swan). They are used for:

1. **connecting:** talking about, with reference to.
2. **structuring:** first, firstly, secondly, finally, to start with, moreover, in addition, similarly, on top of that, besides etc. (*divisions*); all the same, yet, and yet, on the other hand, etc. (*contrast*); thus, therefore, so, etc. (*logical consequence*); for instance, in particular, such as, apart from, and so on, and so forth, etc. (*exemplifying and excepting*); on the whole, in general, as a rule, broadly speaking, etc. (*generalizing*); I mean, that is to say, in other words, etc. (*clarifying*).
3. **dismissing:** at any rate, anyway, anyhow.
4. **change of subject:** by the way, incidentally, I say.
5. **focusing:** as regards, regarding, as far as ...concerned, as for, etc.
6. **showing attitude to other person:** after all, no doubt, I'm afraid, etc.
7. **showing attitude to what we are saying:** frankly, honestly, I think, I feel, I guess, I reckon, I suppose, I mean, so to speak, sort of, kind of, more or less, really, so to speak, etc.
8. **referring to other people's expectations:** as a matter of fact, actually, in fact, to tell the truth, well etc.

Formulaic Speech: It is also called automatic speech or vocal segregates or embolalia or formulaic expression or prefabricated patterns or formulaic sequences. According to Garvey (1977), formulaic speech consists of predictable utterance sequences that serve a single or limited role, and are restricted to particular positions or specialized functions in respect to conversation or interaction. They are grammatically irregular. Formulaic expressions are ready-made chunks of language, embodying societal knowledge. In other words, they are lexical phrases. They are reflective of ritualization of language behavior. They are regarded as unanalyzable wholes used in particular situations. They are employed in everyday communicative situations to deal with day-to-day situations. They can help the speaker produce novel sentences. They have close associations with the performance of particular language functions. They help the speaker in reducing communicative burden and maximizing communicative ability. Yorio (1980) categorizes formulaic speech into four functional types:

1. **Situational Formulas:** formulaic utterances associated with a specific situation or which are consistent with certain conversational parameters e.g. “I thought you'd never ask me”, “How are you?”, ‘Excuse me’, ‘Finished’, “very good” (self-congratulating in a game), pause fillers (like or Er or Uhm) etc.
2. **Stylistic Formulas:** formulaic utterances associated with a particular style or particular registers of language e.g., “in conclusion”, ‘by way of conclusion’ etc.
3. **Ceremonial Formulas:** formulaic expressions used in ritualistic interactions (different forms of address) and are required by certain formal settings e.g. “May I have your attention”, “Ladies and Gentlemen”, etc.

4. **Gambits:** formulaic utterances used to organize interactions or activities e.g. “what do you think? ”, “ It’s your turn. “That’s all right”, etc.

Examples of formulaic speech are as follows:

1. **Greetings:** Good morning (formal), Good evening(formal), Good afternoon(formal) , Hello(informal) , Hi (familiar) , etc.

2. **Thanks:** Thank you (very much); Thanks (very much); Many thanks; Ta (slang); Thanks a lot; Cheers (familiar), etc.

Responses to thanks: That’s OK, Don’t mention it ,You’re welcome, No problem.

3. **Introductions :** How do you do? , How are you? Glad to meet you, Hi(familiar) . [According Randolph Quirk et. Al, ‘How do you do’ is appropriate to a first meeting, but this formulaic sense, this cannot be made past and used in an indirect question e.g. * How did you do? , *I asked her how she did. Responses to Greetings cannot be in an equivalent statement form : I do very well. Response to this greeting would be the repetition ‘ How do you do?].

4. **Farewells:** Good bye, Good night, All the best, Cheers , Cheerio, See you, Bye(-bye), So long.

5. **Toasts:** Good health, Your good health, Cheers, Here’s to you, Here’s to the future, Here’s to your new job.

6. **Reaction Signals:**

a) *assent, agreement:* Yes, Yeah; All right, OK, Certainly, absolutely, Right, Exactly, Quiet, Sure.

b) *denial, disagreement:* No, Certainly not, Definitely not, Not at all, Not likely.

7. **Seasonal greetings:** Merry Christmas, Happy new Year, Happy Birthday, Many happy returns (of your birthday), Happy Anniversary.

8. **Alarm calls:** Help! Fire!

9. **Warnings :** Mind, Be careful, Careful, Watch out !, Watch it!

10. **Apologies :** Sorry, I’m sorry, Pardon, I beg your pardon, My mistake.

Responses to apologies : That’s OK, Don’t mention it, No matter, Never mind, No hard feelings.

11. **Congratulations:** Congratulations, Well done, Right on.

12. **Expressions of anger or dismissal:** Beat it, Get lost, Blast you, Damn you, Go to hell, Bugger off, Fuck off, Fuck you .

13. **Expletives:** My Gosh, Golly, By Golly, Heavens, Good heavens, Doggone, Darn it, Darn, Heck, Blast it, Good Lord, God, Good God, Christ almighty, Oh Hell, Damn it, Bugger it, Shit, Fuck it. [According to Quirk et. Al, there are some imprecations which are imperative in form but they do not have structural potentialities of imperatives. For we cannot negate them: *Don’t blast you, *Don’t bugger it, *Blast some persons (indefinite objects are not used)

14. **Miscellaneous Exclamations:** Shame, Encore; Hear, hear; Over my dead body, nothing doing, Big deal, Oh dear, Goal, Checkmate.

Competence and Performance: According to Chomsky, *Competence* refers to the ideal native speaker’s knowledge of her/his language. It is the system of rules which the speaker have mastered in order to understand and produce an indefinite number of sentences in the language and recognize grammatical mistakes and ambiguities. This is called linguistic competence . *Performance* refers to the specific utterances of speech . In other words, it is the actual use of the language by the native speaker. Noam Chomsky introduced the term *Competence* which is defined as rule-governed creativity. It is Dell Hymes who introduced the term *Communicative Competence* because Dell Hymes felt the term *Competence* refers to the speaker’s knowledge of the grammar of the language. According to Canale and Swain (.....) , there are four areas of skill and knowledge as part of one’s communicative competence. They are:

1. **Grammatical competence:** It is also called *formal competence*. It includes the features and the rules of language such as vocabulary and meaning (semantics), spelling (orthography), sentence formation (syntax), pronunciation (phonology), etc. Such knowledge and skill are necessary for the speaker's understanding and expressing of the literal meaning of the utterances.
 2. **Sociolinguistic Competence:** It is also called socio-cultural competence. It denotes the knowledge of the relationship between language and its non-linguistic context and how to use and respond appropriately to different types of *speech acts*. The speech acts are apologies, requests, orders, naming, invitations, etc. The speaker must be well-versed in different *address forms*. The speaker must know the nitty-gritty of role relationship—the relationship between the speakers in an act of communication. This role relationship influences the participants. One of the speakers may have a role which may have a higher status than that of the other e.g. headmaster-student, doctor-nurse, etc.
3. **Discourse Competence:** It refers to the speaker's ability to use discourse markers, open and close conversations, recognize and contextualize texts in various speech genres, use cohesive devices in reading and writing texts.

4. **Strategic Competence:** It refers to the ability to employ communication strategies which compensate for the speaker's weaknesses, which helps her/him prevent communication breakdown and which enhance the effectiveness of the communication.

Language Competence can be broadly divided into two types

1. **Organizational Competence:** It is classified into two types:
 - a) **Grammatical Competence:** Morphology, semantics, phonology, graphology and syntax are subsumed under the heading.
 - b) **Textual Competence:** cohesion, coherence and rhetorical organization.
2. **Pragmatic Competence:** It is also categorized into two:
 - a) **Sociolinguistic competence:** competence in dialects of the language or its varieties.
 - b) **Illocutionary competence:** referential functions, emotive functions, conative functions, metalingual functions, heuristic functions, manipulative functions, ideational functions. poetic functions.
 - c) **Strategic Competence:** the ability to employ strategies in order to prevent communication breakdown.

Communication Strategies: A communicative strategy is a way used to express meaning in a second language by the speaker or learner who has an insufficient knowledge of the language. "Broadly speaking, communication strategies are used for two purposes. Firstly, they are used by learners, such as Student A, to avoid having to speak too much. Strategies used for this purpose are referred to as *reduction strategies*, partly because the scope of communication is reduced. These strategies may be useful as face-saving devices, but they limit the users' opportunities to speak in the target language. The second purpose for using communication strategies is to enable speakers to convey their messages by using whatever resources they have access to. This is the case for Student B. Such strategies are called **achievement strategies**. They help learners maximize opportunities for speaking in the target language and to achieve their communication goals. Through the use of various achievement strategies, student B engages in the process of meaning negotiation and receives feedback to help modify what is said." (Goh & Burns). **Foreign talk** refers to the type of speech used by the native speaker when she/he speak to a foreigner who is not proficient in the language. Foreigner talk is slower and louder than normal speech and is often marked by exaggerated pronunciation. It is also marked by simple vocabulary and grammar—as reflected through omission of articles, functors or function words, inflections, etc. Here complex verb forms are replaced by simpler verb forms. It is characterized by the repetition of topics and fronting of the topics e.g. 'Your pen? Where you put your pen?' This type of speech is easy for the foreign speaker to understand.

We employ different communicative strategies: According to Goh, Brown, Bongaertes & Poulisse , they are:

1. **Cognitive strategies:** They can compensate for gaps in lexical knowledge and related linguistic problems.

Specific Strategies:

- a) Paraphrase: description or circumlocution of objects, events or persons to grasp the meaning a specific word.
- b) Approximation: use of an alternative term
- c) Formulaic language: using chunks of language
- d) Message frames: setting global context for what is being described before attempting to describe it.

2. **Metacognitive Strategies:** mental operations for regulating thinking and language during speaking.

Specific Strategies:

- a) Planning: preparation of contents and the form of the message.
- b) Self-monitoring: paying much attention to one's language and message during message production.
- c) Self-evaluation: paying attention to one's language and message after message production.

3. **Interactional strategies:** Social behavior for negotiating meaning (try to get or arrive at the meaning by formal discussion)

Specific Strategies:

- a) Exemplification: giving examples to clarify the point
- b) Confirmation Checks: asking the listeners whether they have understood the message.
- c) Comprehension checks: paraphrasing what is heard to confirm one's understanding.
- d) Repetition: repeating all or part of what is said to check one's own understanding.
- e) Clarification requests: asking the speaker to explain a point further.
- f) Repetition requests: asking the speaker to say something again.
- g) Exemplification requests: asking the speaker to give an example.
- h) Assistance appeal: asking the listener for help with difficult words.

4. **Avoidance Strategies:** avoiding a topic which is difficult.

Specific Strategies:

- a) Message abandonment: leaving a message unfinished because of language difficulties.
- b) Topic avoidance: Avoiding topic areas posing problems

5. **Compensatory strategies:**

Specific strategies:

- a) Circumlocution: describing or exemplifying the object or things.
- b) Approximation: using alternative terms which can express the meaning as close as possible
- c) Use of all-purpose words: extending a general empty lexical item to contexts where specific words are lacking e.g. overuse of *thing*, *stuff*, *what-do-you-call-it*, *thingie* ,etc.
- d) Word coinage: creating non-existing second language word based on a supposed rule e.g. vegetarianist for vegetarian, etc.
- e) Prefabricated patterns: use of formulaic expressions or memorized stock phrases for survival purposes
- f) Non-linguistic signals: mime, gesture, facial gestures, or sound imitation.
- g) Literal translation: Translating literally a lexical item, idiom, compound word, or structure from first language to second language.
- h) Foreignizing: using first language words by adjusting to second language phonology (with second language pronunciation) and/or morphology (adding to it a second language suffix)
- i) Code-switching: using a first language word with first language pronunciation while speaking in second language.
- j) Appeal for help: Asking for aid from the interlocutor either directly (e.g. what do you call...? or indirectly (e.g. rising intonation, pause, eye contact, puzzled expressions.).
- k) Stalling or time-gaining strategies: using fillers or hesitation devices to fill pause and to gain time to think (e.g. well, now let's see, uh, as a matter of fact, etc.)

Language Functions: There are various functions: requesting, suggesting, advising, ordering, asking for information, expressing opinions or feelings, directing, instructing, proposing, etc.

1. **Referential Function:** It is also called ideational function or informative function or cognitive function or denotative function. It is used to express meaning of one's experience of the real world. When the speaker imparts information and convey meaning, this language function is served. It is oriented towards context. For example, 'It's raining', etc.
2. **Expressive or Emotive functions:** It produces an impression of certain emotion, whether feigned or true. It is oriented towards the addresser. The emotive stratum is expressed in language by interjections e.g. 'It's very bad making nuisance here!'
3. **Conative function:** It finds its purest grammatical expression in the vocative and imperative. It is oriented towards the addressee e.g. 'Tina stop it.'
4. **Phatic function:** It establishes, prolongs or maintains or discontinues social relationships or communication. It is oriented towards the contact. For example, 'How do you do?'
5. **Metalingual function:** The metalanguage is used to talk about the object language. Our object language is English if we study the semantics of sentences of English. But if we study Sanskrit Grammar written in English, English is the metalanguage, and Sanskrit is the object language. It is oriented towards code,
6. **Poetic Function:** It is also called imaginative function. It is found when the language is used to create an environment through creative language use, as found in literature and humour. It foregrounds textual features, using poetic devices e.g. alliteration, paronomasia, metaphor, etc. It is oriented towards the message.
7. **Heuristic Function:** The term heuristic means 'involving discovery and problem-solving, using reasoning and past experience.' This is used to extend one's knowledge of the world. For example, 'Tell me why'.
8. **Manipulative Function:** It is served when the language is used to affect the world around oneself.

Cohesion & Coherence: *Cohesion* refers to the grammatical and/or lexical relationships between different elements of a text, between different sentences or different parts of a sentence.

Example 1. Riya : Is Piyali coming to the party ?

Tina: Yes, she is. [There is a link between Piyali and she (lexical) and between ' is...coming' and 'is' between different sentences .]

Coherence, on the other hand, refers to the relationships which link the meaning of the utterances in a discourse. Or of the sentence in a text.

Example 2. John: Could you give me a lift home?

Mary: Sorry, I'm going to market. [Here we find the exchange involving cause and effect—thematic relevance.]

Speech Acts/Functions: When a speaker utters a sentence, she/he performs an act. This act is called speech act. Speech acts can be:

- *Directives:* speakers try to get their listeners to do something, e.g. commanding, requesting.
- *Commissives:* speakers commit themselves to a future course of action e.g. promising, guaranteeing.
- *Expressive :* speakers express their feelings e.g. welcoming, apologizing, sympathizing.
- *Representatives:* speakers convey their beliefs about the truth of a proposition e.g. asserting, hypothesizing.

Aspects of Speech Acts: According to Austin, the three aspects of speech acts are locutionary, illocutionary, perlocutionary.

1. **Locutionary Act:** It refers to the mere act of saying something. If one says, 'I need a drink', one performs the locutionary act of uttering the sentence '*I need a drink*'.

2. **Illocutionary Act:** It refers to the act performed by the speaker by virtue of the utterance having been made e.g. promising, baptizing, naming, commanding, requesting, etc. The utterance ‘please shut the door’ is a request.
3. **Perlocutionary Act:** It refers to the act defined by reference to the effect it has on the hearer. For example, the wife says to her husband ‘Have you remembered to buy the food?’ The effect might be that the husband goes out and buys the food. But if the husband does not go to market and buy the food, the act would be a locutionary one.

Adjacency Pair: Speech acts often have an instrumental function and hence they typically form one part of a reciprocal exchange. These pairs are paired utterances in which the second utterance is dependent on the first one. Questions and answers are the most common forms of adjacency pairs. Greetings, requests, invitations, offers, compliments, reprimands are all exchanges that are realized means of adjacency pairs.

Example 1. Aditya: How do you do?

Kausiki: How do you do?

Example 2. Aditya: Would you mind if I turn the volume down

Priya: Not at all

Aditya: thanks.

In this case we find **IRF exchange** (**I** for initiate, **R** for respond, **F** for follow up).

Cooperative Principle: According to Grice (1975), all communications take place in a situation where the people are cooperative. Grice called this the cooperative principle. Under this principle we find four important maxims.

1. *Maxim of Quantity:* ‘Give the right amount of information, neither less nor more than what is required.’
2. *Maxim of Quality:* ‘Make your contributions such that it is true; do not say what you know is false or for which you do not have adequate evidence.’
3. *Maxim of Relation:* ‘Be relevant.’
4. *Maxim of manner:* ‘Avoid obscurity and ambiguity; be brief and orderly.’

Felicity conditions: In speech act theory, felicity conditions are the conditions which must be fulfilled for the satisfactory performance of speech acts. There are several kinds of felicity conditions:

1. *Preparatory Conditions:* These relate to whether the persons performing a speech act have the authority to do so e.g. not everyone is qualified to fine, christen, arrest, etc.
2. *Sincerity Conditions:* These relate to whether the speech act is performed sincerely e.g. the speaker is not lying.
3. *Essential Conditions:* These relate to the way the speaker is committed to a certain kind of belief or behavior e.g. accepting an object one has just requested.

Teaching Implications: In order to speak well and confidently, the speaker must acquire the elements of spoken language which are essential. The technical knowhow of formation and organization of spoken discourse must be acquired by the competent speaker. The speaker must be competent in communicating with others without any communication breakdown. Hence there would be no misunderstanding, which would satisfy the participants. This would benefit the speakers in job procurement, shining in life, etc. The speaker would develop speaking skills to a great extent and this would encourage the others to develop speaking skills.

Conclusion: Broadly speaking, the elements of spoken discourse are of wider significance in various fields of our life. In every walk of our life we feel the significance of developing speaking skills. The different elements such as language functions, aspects of speech acts, communication strategies, felicity conditions, etc. are central to our developing speaking skills.

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