

**AEC-1**

# **Communication Skills in English -I**

**4YUG**

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For

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# Unit - 1: Consonant Sounds

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## 1.0 Introduction

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This Unit aims to explain in detail the consonant sounds in the English Language. A comprehensive overview of the classification of consonant sounds will be provided to you. Like

many other languages, English also has a wide variation in pronunciation, which marks its differences from other languages. Every language differs from each other in terms of sounds, letters and different variants, and every sound differs in every language. In English, sounds of vowels and consonants differ depending on the usage. This Unit would therefore, familiarize you with the description and classification of the consonant sounds.

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## 1.1 Objectives

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After completing this Unit, you should be able to:

- understand and identify consonant sounds and phonemes
- relate phonic sounds to their symbols
- learn to pronounce the correct consonant sound

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## 1.2 Consonant Sounds

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### 1.2.1 Articulators and the Organs of Speech:

The respiratory system provides the air movement, which is the first important mechanism for speech sounds to be articulated and expressed. The expelling air from the lungs produces sound. In the process of articulation of these sounds, organs like lungs, the wind-pipe and the bronchi have an active role. This air travels to the upper stages of the vocal tract from the lungs via wind-pipe. In the first stage it goes to the **larynx or voice box** encompassing the vocal cords. The larynx is cylindrical in shape.

**Articulators** are the sections of the vocal tract that can be used to shape sounds. By and large, there is a conversion of aerodynamic energy into acoustics in this process. The lower articulators of this tract are mobile. In the close connection and combination of these articulators, the sound waves are formed and the sound is produced in the form of the voice and language.

**Vocal cords:** The function of the vocal cords is to make a **vibration** to the air stream sent by the lungs.

**Glottis:** Glottis is the opening between the vocal cords or the central part of the larynx. A glottal stop is formed when it is compactly closed.

As you know, in the production and articulation of **voice**, the vocal cords have an important role to play. When these vocal cords are together, the effect of voice is formed. In the

process, vibration is triggered by compacted air causing the glottis to open and the resulting decreased air pressure to allow the vocal cords to come together again. The level of frequency of the vibration affects voice formation. The higher the pitch, the more likely the vocal cords will vibrate.

After the larynx, the air goes to **supraglottal** cavities that near the **pharynx**, the mouth and the nasal cavities. These cavities have their functions: they amend the note shaped in the larynx, and in the end, it comes out from the vocal tract in the form of speech sounds.

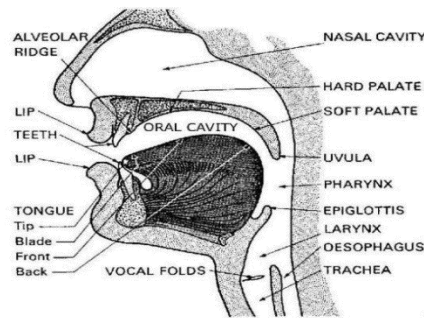


Figure – 1.2.1

Source: <https://www.slideshare.net/achumitra/1-speech-organs-and-their-role>

### **Alveolar Ridge:**

It is a bony hard ridge that holds the teeth. The location of the alveolar ridge is just behind the upper teeth. We can feel it with the tip of our tongue.

### **Hard Palate:**

We can feel the hard palate when we raise and elevate our tongue and touch the front portion of the top or roof of the mouth. The **hard palate** is a bony structure.

### **Soft Palate:**

The **soft palate** is also called as **velum**. To feel it in the vocal cavity, you would possibly have to use a fingertip or have to curl the tongue to touch it with. Its location is at the upper back of the mouth. It is a muscular flap. It easily shuts the nasal tract and blocks air going towards the nose.

**Note:** You will read more about the Organs of Speech in Unit 4.

## **1.2.2 Definition of Consonant:**

The word ‘consonant’ is taken from the Greek words ‘*consonautem*’ which means ‘sounding together or ‘sounding with.’ Consonant is a voice sound created using combinations and changes of lip, teeth, tongue, and velum with varying amounts of obstruction of the air stream in the mouth. A consonant is either voiced or voiceless. A voiced consonant is produced with the vibration of the vocal cords while a voiceless consonant is produced without vibration of the vocal cords.

The movements of parts of vocal tract especially the lips, the tip of the tongue, body of the tongue and larynx; which are the major articulators or speech organs result in speech sounds. The blockage or obstruction from these articulators in the vocal cavity leads to the formation of consonant sounds. On the contrary, there is no obstruction and blockage when we produce vowel sounds. In the articulation of vowel sounds, the mouth remains quite open. There are several sorts of consonant sounds, however, what all of them have in common is the flow of air through the vocal tract gets halted. The obstruction varies in degree, some consonants get obstructed completely and some partially. In English pronunciation, consonants have a significant role, especially in determining the organs involved in sound production. Consonants play a major role in English pronunciation, especially in determining the articulators involved in the activation and production of sound. So the major requirement is to know the participation, engagement and contribution of the articulators and speech organs to pronounce consonants.

***Check your progress:***

1. What is a consonant?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. The \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ from articulators leads to the formation of the consonants.

**1.2.3 List of Symbols of Consonants:**

Symbol	As used in the word:	Place of Articulation
[p]	<i>pea, parrot, park, pencil, pocket</i>	<i>bilabial</i>
[b]	<i>ball, bee, basket, blue, break</i>	
[m]	<i>mango, map, master, maroon, mud, make</i>	
[t]	<i>toe, torch, truck, taste, ten</i>	<i>alveolar</i>
[d]	<i>dance, dove, donkey, dog</i>	
[s]	<i>soup, sip, sand, son, sun, saloon</i>	
[z]	<i>zebra, zip, zoo, zinc, zone</i>	
[l]	<i>lid, lip, love, long, lick, large, lot</i>	

[n]	<i>nose, nest, not, neck, narrow, noon</i>	
[k] [g] [ŋ]	<i>kill, cap, cup, kilometer, kerosene, cut gun, going, guest, great, getting going, ring, falling, dancing, during, singing</i>	<i>velars</i>
[f] [v]	<i>fan, fat, frock, fridge, fat van, violence, velocity, vote</i>	<i>labiodental</i>
[θ] [ð]	<i>thought, thing, thorough, throw, think, three, thirteen that, this, them, the, they, these, those, themselves</i>	<i>dental</i>
[ʃ] [ʒ] [tʃ] [dʒ]	<i>sheep, shy, shoulder, shun, she, ship, shop pleasure, measure, vision, television, conclusion, division, choice, church, chocolate, chimney, chin jam, July, jar, January, just</i>	<i>palato-alveolar</i>
[h]	<i>high, hello, hell, hilarious, home, hall, hallow</i>	<i>glottal</i>
[r]	<i>red, rock, rare, rod, real, rat</i>	<i>post-alveolar</i>
[j]	<i>youth, yellow, yolk, young, yank</i>	<i>palatal</i>

#### 1.2.4 Classification of English Consonants:

Consonant sounds are categorized according to three dimensions:

1. **Voicing:** (causing the vocal folds/cords to vibrate: voiced or voiceless), discusses the activity of the vocal cords, in the terms when the vocal cords or folds are wide apart, then the consonant sounds are voiceless. When the vocal cords or folds are narrowly together, the consonants are said to be voiced. Voicing stimulates the vocal cords to vibrate, this signals whether the sound produced is voiced or voiceless.
2. **Place of Articulation:** It means where the articulation happens. It is also named as 'point of articulation.' It refers to one of the regions of vocal cavity or folds where the articulators create an obstacle to the air coming out from the lungs.
3. **Manner of Articulation:** It means how the articulation happens. It refers to how speech organs or articulators like lips, tongue and palate are set or configured.

#### 1.2.5 Place of Articulation:

The place of articulation simply comprises the active and passive role of speech organs used in the articulation of the particular consonant. In the vocal cavity, there is more or less blockage of air when we focus in the place of articulation. It refers to the location in which consonantal constrictions or closures are produced. In the phonetic classification of speech sounds, the place of articulation is a foremost parameter. In the parameter of a place of

articulation, consonants are classified as labial, labia-dental, dental, alveolar, palatal, velar, uvular, glottal, etc.

#### **1.2.5.1 Bilabial:**

“Bilabial” is a derivative of two words “bi” meaning ‘two’ and “labia” which means lips.’ So, bilabial denotes two lips. We can say that bilabial consonants are pronounced when the two lips are close to each other or articulated by pressing the two lips. They are also named as ‘labials.’ The letters/symbols/sounds “[p], [b], [m]” etc. are articulated by pressing the two lips together. During this process, the upper lip has a reasonably inert role compared to the lower lip while voicing the words.

#### **Examples:**

[p] As in *pen, park, pencil*

[b] As in *ball, basket, buffalo*

[m] As in *mango, man, magic*

#### **1.2.5.2 Labiodental:**

Labiodental sounds are formed when we use teeth and lips. The presence and the participation of the articulators like lower lip and the teeth typically produce these sounds. While pronouncing the letters and sounds like [f] and [v] one feels the use of the lower lips and the upper teeth are in process. When the upper teeth are fetched close near the lower lips these sounds are made. In labiodental sounds, the lower lip is a lively articulator or speech organ and the upper teeth are the reflexive and inert articulators.

#### **Examples:**

[f] As in *fit, fine, fat, fence*

[v] As in *violent, voice, velocity*

#### **1.2.5.3 Dental/Interdentals:**

When the tip of the tongue is positioned between the “upper and lower teeth” the dental sounds are formed. In dental sounds, both the lower teeth and the tongue act as an active articulator and the upper teeth have very less role to play. If you see and pronounce the words like “thought”, “through” and “thin” you will feel the tip of the tongue positioned between upper teeth and lower teeth.

**Example:**

[θ] As in *thick, thin, thought*

[ð] As in *that, then, this*

**1.2.5.4 Alveolar:**

The production of the alveolar consonants sounds takes place at and the use the alveolar ridge. The beginning of these words or sounds occurs at the tongue and then the sounds forwarded near to “alveolarridge” are categorized in this collection. Here in this group of sounds the tip or the blade of the tongue is active articulator while the teeth-ridge is the flaccid articulator. The sounds or words like “day” and “nice” “lid” “table” are articulated by the tongue and then engaged with the alveolar ridge. Pronouncing the letters like [t], [d], [n], [s], [z], and [l] involves the use of the tip or the blade of the tongue.

**Examples:**

[t] as in the words *top, tip, table*

[d] as in words *dry, day, dog, dense*

[l] as in the words *lost, lip, lick, lovely*

[n] as in words *net, nice, nor, nib*

[s] as in words *sing, song, sun, speed*

[z] as in the words *zone, zoology, zebra, zinc*

***Check your progress:***

1. Write two examples of bilabial consonants.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Give two examples of dental consonants.

\_\_\_\_\_

**1.2.5.5 Post-Alveolar:**

The sounds and articulations produced by the tongue behind the alveolar ridge are referred to as post-alveolar consonants. In post-alveolar consonant sounds, the tongue tip is the active articulator while as the passive articulator is back of the teeth-ridge.

**Examples:**

[r] as in the words *rock, red, real, rust*

**1.2.5.6 Palatal:**

When the tongue positions itself with the hard palate, the central section of the mouth the sound articulated in this process are called the palatal consonants. In palatal consonants, the tip of the tongue is an active part and the hard palate is a passive section. Words, like, ‘yellow’, ‘yolk’ and ‘your’ are the words pronounced due to the active participation of the tongue.

**Examples:**

[j] as in *young, youth, yellow*

**1.2.5.7 Palato-Alveolar:**

Palato-alveolar consonants are also called post alveolar consonants or sounds. They are common sounds across the languages voiced with tip or blade of the tongue. They are also called ‘apical’ or ‘laminal.’ In palato-alveolar consonant sounds active articulators are tip, blade and front of the tongue, and the passive articulators are teeth-ridge and rough palate.

[ʃ] as in *shoot, shallow, shy, ship*

[dʒ] as in *July, jam, jackal, job*

[ʒ] as in *pleasure, vision, conclusion, occasion,*

[tʃ] as in *chin, chocolate, lunch, church, picture, pitch*

**1.2.5.8 Velars:**

In the vocal cavity when there is a movement of the velum and the back of the tongue the sound which is being produced in this process is referred to as a velar consonant.

When the words “kite” “gun” and “going” are articulated, the back of the tongue is upraised in the direction of the velar. This process allows the velar to play an active part in pronouncing the word.

**Examples:**

[k] as in *cup, kite, kilometer, kitchen*

[g] as in *goat, gun, ghost, great*

[ŋ] as in *going, during, playing, dancing*

#### **1.2.5.9 Glottal:**

In the glottal consonants, the glottis has a major role to play all the sounds which are articulated due to multiple movements of glottis are referred to as glottal consonants. These sounds or consonant are recognized when air passes through the vocal tract precisely at glottis as it is narrowed like in the sound [h].

Examples:

[h] as in the words *house, hat, high, hill, hilarious*

#### **1.2.6 Manner of Articulation:**

Manner of Articulation deals with the manner of blockage or mode of obstruction of the airflow when it passes in the vocal cord. As mentioned earlier, it means how the articulation happens. It refers to how speech organs or articulators like lips, tongue and palate are set or in configuration, and these important articulators in the manner of articulation are palate, lips and tongue.

Sometimes the air in the manner of articulation may come across closure. Sounds produced in this manner are called **plosives**. The semi-closures or friction-causing sound are called **fricatives**. Then there are sounds having less degree of closure which are called **approximants**. In **laterals**, the airflow scatters around the tongue, and in **nasal sounds** it passes through the nasal cavity.

##### **1.2.6.1 Plosive/Stop:**

The word “plosive” means an explosion or outbreak. The plosive consonants are also referred to as occlusive “produced by blocking or occluding the airflow in the vocal tract.” In plosive or stop sounds, one feels a burst of air in pronouncing these consonants words or sounds. The course of air is halted in the vocal track that triggers the force results in a sudden sound. The stoppage in these sounds are made by the tip of the tongue, blade, tongue body, glottis etc. and one feels oral and nasal cessation in the articulation of these sounds. [p], [b], [t], [d] [k], [g] are the six plosive consonant sounds in English language.

These plosive or stop sounds are further divided into the following categories:

[p] [b]	bilabial plosive	two lips are very close and pressed
[t] [d]	alveolar plosive	the tongue is curled and pressed with the hard palate or alveolar ridge
[k] [g]	velar plosive	the backside of the tongue is elevated and it touches the soft palate of the roof of the mouth

### Examples:

Keep your hand close to your mouth and attempt to utter [p] and [b] sounds. You will sense a small burst of air on the hand in uttering these sounds. You will find the same burst of air while pronouncing the words given below.

[p] as in *pink, pillar, plot, pick*

[b] as in *brother, blue, blank, blog*

[t] as in *treat, tall, table, truth*

[k] as in *kite, kilometer, kangaroo, kiss*

[d] as in *dog, den, donkey, door*

[g] as in *sing, gallows, great, going*

### 1.2.6.2 Fricative:

The term ‘fricative’ is taken from the word “friction.” In fricatives, ‘friction’ is formed or created when two speech organs of the vocal cord like the two lips, lower lip and upper teeth and, alveolar ridge and tip of the tongue come close together causing friction. These articulators generate a pause and halt the flow of the air partially. So consonants that are articulated and create blockade which is fricative to passing air from the lungs or vocal track are called fricative consonants. In the process of articulating fricatives, the active speech organ is fetched together with the passive organ. The channel between these articulators is very thin and the air channelizes with distinct brushing and friction.

### Examples:

While pronouncing the fricative sounds, one feels a hissing sound.

[ʒ], [ʃ], [h], [z], [s], [ð], [θ], [v], [f], [v]

### ***Labiodental***

[f] as in *infill, form, fan, fruit, fall*

[v] as in *vet, van, violin, vast, velocity*

### ***Dental***

[θ] as in *three, thought, theory, theorem*

[ð] as in *these, their, them, the, those*

### ***Alveolar***

[s] as in *sit, song, singing, sorrow, set*

[z] as in *zebra, zoo, zodiac, zoology, zeal*

### ***Glottal***

[h] as in *has, horse, hang, host, hospital*

### ***Palate-alveolar***

[ʃ] as in *shoe, shy, shower, show, shot*

[ʒ] as in *leisure, vision, provision, region, religion*

#### **1.2.6.3 Affricates:**

The blend of a plosive and a fricative are referred to as affricate. Fricatives are also called as “affricative plosives.” [tʃ] and [dʒ] are the only two affricate phonemes in the English language and both these affricates are palate-alveolar. “These consonants are pronounced by completely blocking the path of the air from the oral cavity, like the plosives, followed by slow release of the air like a fricative.” They start the same as a plosive, with a total obstruction, with no explosion. However, these consonants have gentle discharge or release.

#### **Examples:**

To

Do

#### **1.2.6.4 Nasal:**

In the production of the nasal sounds, the nasal passage has an active role. In these consonants, the air from the lungs passes through the nose due to the movements of the soft palate. There is a complete obstruction in the oral cavity then soft palate changes its position and the air forms its way through the nasal passage. There are three nasal consonants. They are alveolar, velar and bilabial.

**Examples:**

[m] as in *mango, mother, mustered, music, monopoly, mouth*

[n] as in *nest, narrow, nasal, mastic, nose, nope, nest*

[ŋ] as in *bring, morning, playing, during, ring, sing*

**1.2.6.5 Lateral:**

In producing the lateral sound the tongue elevates and the air passes past or behind the tongue. There is only one lateral consonant sound in the English language which is sound and letter [l]. It is voiced alveolar lateral. Its pronunciation and production occurs when tip of the tongue touches the alveolar area.

**Examples:**

[l] as in *love, light, lock, leg, lost, lip, long, light, lighter, laugh*

**1.2.6.6 Approximant:**

“[r], [j], [w]” are three approximants in the English language. Approximant consonants are all voiced. Approximants are formed due to the manoeuvre of the lips, in the movement of the lips, they do not touch one another. In the following sounds and words, you will feel lips moving and are close to each other but do not touch. They are consonant sounds which resemble the vowels.

[r] as in *right, brown, rat, roller, ring, rest, rich*

[j] as in *youth, you, use, your, yet, yellow*

[w] as in *why, water, twin, war, wasp, wink*

***Check your progress:***

1. How many laterals are there in English?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How many approximants are there in English?

\_\_\_\_\_

### 1.2.7 Voicing:

In the phonetic categorization of speech sound ‘Voicing’ is an essential term. It refers about the aural effect of the vibration of vocal cords. When the vocal cords vibrate, sounds formed in the process are referred to as voiced consonants or sounds. [d], [b], [z], [ð] sounds are examples of voiced sounds. On the contrary, sounds with no vibration are called voiceless sounds. [p], [s], [f], [t], [ʃ] are examples of voiceless sounds.

So in consonant sounds, there are both voiced and voiceless sounds according to the degree of vibration. These consonant sounds are in set differentiating on the bases of vibration or as voiceless or unvoiced. So [b] is voiced (vibrated) and [p] is the unvoiced (non-vibrated) consonant in one pair, while voiced [g] (vibrated) and voiceless [k] (non-vibrated) form another pair.

In vibrated or voiced consonants the vocal cords are very close and tight, and then the air comes from the lungs cause cords to vibrate. This process is referred to as **voicing**. Sounds which are made with vocal cords vibration are said to be **voiced**. Sounds made without vocal cords vibration are said to be **voiceless**.

Voiceless	Voiced
[p]	[b]
[f]	[v]
[k]	[g]
[t]	[d]
[θ]	[ð]
[tʃ]	[dʒ]
[s]	[z]
[ʃ]	[ʒ]

#### ***Check your progress:***

1. What do you mean by voiced consonants?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Give two examples of voiceless consonants?

\_\_\_\_\_

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### 1.3 Learning Outcomes

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At the end of this Unit, you should be able to understand the consonants of English in detail. You should be able to know that consonant sounds have been classified concerning the manner and place of articulation, and the state of the glottis i.e. voiced or voiceless. You should have learned that a three-term label is a convenient way of describing consonant sounds. You should also be familiar that each consonant phoneme has been sub-classified under the manner of articulation and you should be able to utter each consonant sound in different contexts.

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### 1.4 Glossary

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**Articulator:** The thing that articulates; one of the organs of speech, e.g. tongue, teeth, lips, etc

**Vibration:** Status and the position of vocal chords during the articulation of any sound. (Voiced and voiceless)

**Larynx:**The hollow muscular organ forming an air passage to the lungs and holding the vocal cords.

**Pharynx:**It is the part of the throat behind the mouth and nasal cavity, and above the esophagus and trachea

**Velum:** The soft palate in mouth

**Ridge:**The roof of the mouth between the upper teeth and the hard palate or on the bottom of the mouth behind the lower teeth

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### 1.5 Sample Questions

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#### 1.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. /p/ and /b/ are examples of

- (a) bilabial consonants
- (b) dental consonants
- (c) labiodentals consonants
- (d) none of these

2. Which among the following is voiceless sound?

- (a) /p/
- (b) /b/
- (c) /d/

(d) /ʒ/

3. Which among the following is velar plosive?

(a) /p/ /b/

(b) /k/ /g/

(c) /t/ /d/

(d) none of these

4. Identify the glottal sound from the following words?

(a) hospital

(b) ball

(c) hero

(d) kick

5. Identify the nasal sound in the following words?

(a) shoot

(b) brush

(c) morning

(d) ditch

6. Which among the following has a dental sound?

(a) judge

(b) kilometer

(c) thought

(d) orange

7. /p/, /b/, /m/ are \_\_\_\_\_

(a) dental sounds

(b) labiodentals

(c) bilabial

(d) none of these

8. **Church, child, chocolate, chimpanzee, cherry** start with which of the following sounds?

(a) affricate

(b) nasal

(c) fricative

(d) approximant

9. According to the place of articulation, which of these is not a type of consonant?

- (a) bilabial
- (b) dental
- (c) velar
- (d) alveolar

10. In which of these consonants is the place of articulation the lower lip and the upper teeth?

- (a) dental
- (b) labiodentals
- (c) glottal
- (d) none of these

### **1.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. Describe and comment on velar and glottal consonant sounds.
2. Discuss articulators and function of different speech organs in articulating sounds.
3. Discuss fricatives and affricates.
4. Discuss the two consonants [p] [d] in detail.
5. Describe dental and alveolar consonant sounds.

### **1.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. Discuss in detail the consonant sounds in English.
2. Discuss in detail voicing and deliberate on voiced and voiceless sounds.
3. Describe in detail the “manner of articulation” and “place of articulation.”

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## **1.6 Suggested Learning Resources**

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1. Abercrombie, D. (1967) *Elements of General Phonetics*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
2. Ashby, Patricia (2nd edition 2005) *Speech Sounds*. London and New York: Routledge.
3. Collins, Beverley & Nigam, V. (2008) *Practical Phonetics and Phonology*, London and New York: Routledge.
4. Gibson, A.C. (1989) *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English*, 4<sup>th</sup> revised edition, London: Edward Arnold.

## Unit - 2: Vowel Sounds

### Structure

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Objectives

2.2 Vowel Sounds

2.2.1 Classification of Vowels

2.2.1.1 Position of the Soft Palate

2.2.1.2 Part of the Tongue Raised

2.2.1.3 Height of the Tongue

2.2.1.4 Position of the Lips

2.2.2 Description of Vowel Sounds

2.2.3 Monophthongs

2.2.4 Diphthongs

2.3 Learning Outcomes

2.4 Glossary

2.5 Sample Questions

2.6 Suggested Readings

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### 2.0 Introduction

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Dear Learners, as you know, there are only twenty six letters in the English language. But we must not confuse letters with sounds. The English language has 44 sounds on which 24 are consonant sounds and 20 are vowel sounds. You may have studied earlier that vowels are generally counted 5 in number such as a, e, i, o, u. But this is not the exact classification of vowel sounds. Before we move on, we must know, what are vowels. To put it in simple words, vowels are voiced sounds produced without any obstruction in the passage of air. As it is necessary to distinguish vowels from consonants, you may still ask what consonants are then. Consonants are the sounds in which we find partial or complete obstruction in the flow of air.

And, we need to learn the difference between vowel sounds. For this, it is necessary to have the classification of vowel sounds. This Unit will provide you the classification of vowels in detail.

***Check your progress:***

1. What are vowels?

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2. Can you differentiate between vowels and consonants?

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## **2.1 Objectives**

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After going through the Unit you will be able to:

- know the classification of vowels
  - know about the types of vowels
  - learn the identification of vowel sounds in words initially, medially
  - learn the description of vowels
- 

## **2.2 Vowel Sounds**

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### **2.2.1 Classification of Vowels:**

The vowels are classified based on position of the palate, part of the tongue raised, height of the tongue, and position of the lips. Let us discuss these in detail:

#### **2.2.1.1 Position of the Soft Palate:**

If we raise the soft palate (soft palate is the muscular part which constitutes the back of the roof of mouth see fig.2.2.1.1), the air will escape through the mouth and the resultant vowel sound is oral. However, if the soft palate is lowered, the oral passage gets closed, the nasal passage opens and the air passes through the nostrils which result in the production of a nasal vowel sound.

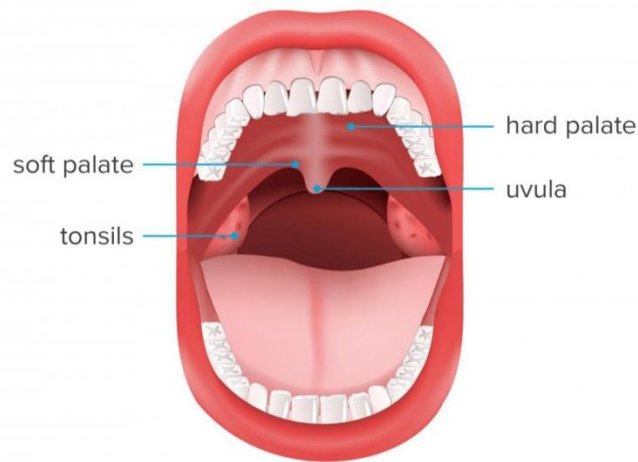


Fig.2.2.1.1. Source: <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/326894>

### 2.2.1.2. Part of the Tongue Raised:

In phonetics, the tongue is normally divided into three parts, such as the front, the centre, and the back. The tongue as we know is the flexible organ within the mouth. It has the capability of assuming quite a large variety of positions in the articulation of sounds. We know that the tongue is arbitrarily divided into parts and the production of vowel sounds depend entirely on it. Therefore, the vowels are classified as the *front*, *back*, and *central* vowels. Let us use some examples to learn it clearly:

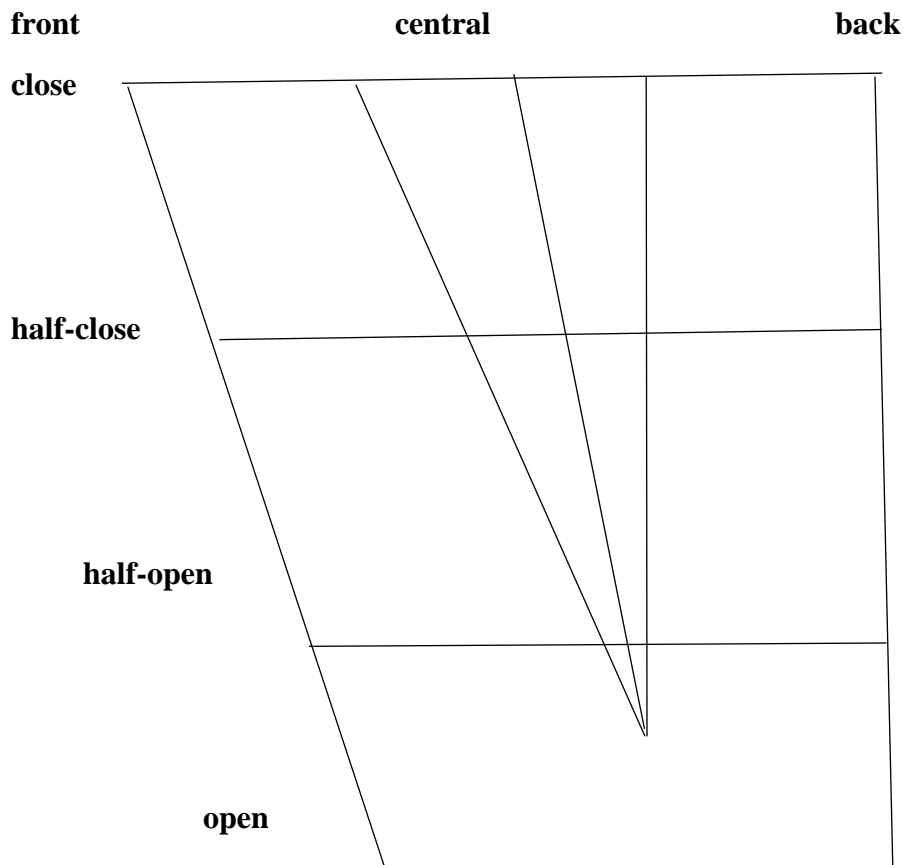
- (i) Front Vowels: Eg: **heat**, **sit** and **get**. You can observe that while uttering the vowel sounds in these words, the front part of the tongue is raised.
- (ii) Back Vowels: Eg: **palm**, **ought**, **tool**. While uttering the vowel sounds in these words, the back part of the tongue is involved.
- (iii) Central Vowels: Eg: **hut**, **shut**, **cut** and **bird** have central vowels because the centre part of the tongue is used in uttering these sounds.

The tongue occupies a range of position within the oral cavity. The available space used by the tongue to take positions in the oral cavity is known as the “vowel space.”

### 2.2.1.3 Height of the Tongue:

We have already distinguished vowels based on the part of the tongue raised. But it can never be sufficient to have such type of difference in vowels only. We can also distinguish

vowels based on the tongue raised towards the roof of the mouth: close, open, half-close and half-open. The close-open is not the only distinction and does not help distinguish all the back vowels or front vowels. So, we further need to refine the scale regarding the height of the tongue. For this, we mark imaginary positions between open and close and name them as half-close and half-open positions. For all this process, you can see the diagram below:



(Figure 2.2.1.3)

#### 2.2.1.4 Position of the Lips:

We can distinguish vowels based on the shape of the lips while producing the vowels. For instance, the vowels in *dot* and *cart*, are both back and open vowels. They can be distinguished based on their lip position i.e., rounded and unrounded respectively. The different lip positions are discussed as under:

(1) Spread: smiling lip position. Observe the vowels in *feel*, *keen*, *seat* and *beat*. While producing these vowel sounds, our lips come in a smiling position.

(2) Open Rounded: Observe the vowels in these words: *cot, hot, got, odd* etc. We find that the position of the lips is brought slightly closer to each other and the lips become slightly rounded while producing these vowels.

(3) Neutral: The position where lips are neither rounded nor spread. We can find this type of vowel sound in words like *but, hut, bus* etc.

(4) Open: The position where jaws are apart and we open the lips naturally to produce vowel sound. We can find this type of vowel in words like *palm, calm, mask, task* and *car* etc.

(5) Back Rounded: The lips are brought close together and then pushed slightly forward like in the words *book, hook, tool, fool, rude, and crude* etc.

### ***Check your Progress***

1. The muscular part which constitutes the back of the roof of the mouth is known as\_\_\_\_\_. (hard palate/soft palate)
2. *Palm, fool, ought* are termed as\_\_\_\_\_. (central vowels/ back vowels)
3. If the centre part of the tongue is raised, we are dealing with\_\_\_\_\_. (central vowels/ back vowels)

### **2.2.2 Description of Vowel Sounds:**

Vowels can be described using three-term labels. These are the **part of the tongue raised** (front, back or central), the **height to which the tongue is raised** (close, half-close, half-open, open) and the **position of the lips** (rounded/unrounded). The description unrounded, back, open vowel is the three-term label for the vowel in words like *balm* and *palm*.

However, Daniel Jones proposed a **Cardinal Vowel System** because it was found that the above three-term labels were not sufficient to describe the vowels in all human languages. Therefore, a new system (Cardinal Vowel System) of reference was devised which can help to describe all vowels appropriately. These eight cardinals are described as under:

(1) Cardinal Vowel Number 1: It is transcribed as /i/, and is a close, front, unrounded vowel. It is located at the top-left hand corner of the diagram and it is produced with the lips spread (unrounded) and the tongue as high as possible in the vowel space.

(2) Cardinal Vowel Number 2: It is transcribed as /e/ and is a front, half-close, unrounded vowel. It is produced while the lips remain unrounded and the body of the tongue remains in the front as far as possible.

(3) Cardinal Vowel Number 3: It is transcribed as /ɛ/ and is a front, half-open, unrounded vowel. It is produced when the lips are unrounded and the body of the tongue remains far in the front as possible.

(4) Cardinal Vowel Number 4: It is transcribed as /a/. It's located at the bottom left-hand corner of the diagram and is an open, front, untouched vowel. It is produced when the lips are untouched and the body of the tongue remains as low as possible in the vowel space. The tongue is moved as far to the front of the space as possible without causing friction.

(5) Cardinal Vowel Number 5: It is transcribed as /ɑ/ and is an open, back, untouched vowel. It lies at the opposite end of the vowel space, is made with the lips in a neutral position (unrounded) and with the tongue as low as possible and as far back as possible without causing friction.

(6) Cardinal Vowel Number 6: It is transcribed as /ɔ/ and is a half-open, back, rounded vowel. It is produced with the lips rounded, the body of the tongue as far back as possible, but the tongue height is lowered further from the half-close position and moves to half-open position.

(7) Cardinal Vowel Number 7: It is transcribed as /o/ and is a half-close, back, rounded vowel. It is produced with the lips touched and the tongue as far back as possible, however, the tongue is lowered to the half-close position.

(8) Cardinal Vowel Number 8: It is transcribed as /u/ and is a close, back, rounded vowel. It is produced with the lips rounded and the tongue as far back as possible and as high possible without causing friction.

***Check your Progress***

1. Cardinal vowels belong to a particular human language. true/false.
2. Cardinal vowels are based on the vowels of existing language. true/false.
3. The Cardinal Vowel system is a general phonetic system meant for the classification of vowels. true/false.

### 2.2.3 Monophthongs:

There are two types of vowel sounds in English e.g., monophthongs or pure vowels and diphthongs. These are discussed as under:

#### (1) *Monophthongs or Pure vowels*

Those vowel sounds in which the tongue assumes a single constant position are called monophthongs or pure vowels. These are 12 in number, as given in the chart below:

/i:/ read /ri:d/	/ɪ/ bid /bɪd/	/ʊ/ bull /bʊl/	/u:/ cool /ku:l/
/e/ bet /bet/	/ə/ America /əmerɪkə/	/ɜ:/ bird /bɜ:d/	/ɔ:/ short /ʃɔ:t/
/æ/ bat /bæt/	/ʌ/ bus /bʌs/	/ɑ:/ cart /kɑ:t/	/ɒ/ hot /hɒt/

Let us describe these vowel sounds one by one and see their position in words: initial, medial and/or final.

**/i:/**

It is a long unrounded, front, close vowel. But it is slightly lower than cardinal vowel number 1. It occurs in all the three positions: initial (beginning of a word), medial (middle of a word), and final (end of a word).

#### **Examples -Initial:**

eat /i:t/

each /i:tʃ/

easy /i:zɪ/

**Examples - Medial:**

weak /wi:k/

seal /si:l/

sieve /si:v/

**Example - Final:**

see /si:/

bee /bi:/

degree /dri:gi:/

**/ɪ/**

It is a short, unrounded, front, half-close vowel and its position lies more towards the centre of the tongue than to extreme close position. It occurs in all the three positions: initial, medial, and final.

**Initial:**

ill /ɪl/

insect /ɪnsekt/

if /ɪf/

**Medial:**

kick /kɪk/

sit /sɪt/

chick /tʃɪk/

**Final:**

city /sɪti/

pity /pɪti/

easy /i:zi/

**/e/**

It is a short, unrounded, front, half-close vowel between cardinal vowel [e] and [ɛ]. It occurs in the initial and medial positions.

**Initial:**

enter /entə/

edge /edʒ/

end /end/

**Medial:**

pen /pen/

men /men/

dead /ded/

Note: it cannot stand alone in final position

**/ə/**



stir /stɜː/

err /ɜː/

prefer /prɪfɜː/

**/ʌ/**

It is a short, unrounded, central, half-open vowel. It occurs in the initial and medial positions.

**Initial:**

up /ʌp/

ugly /ʌɡli/

utter /ʌtə/

Note: use only before consonants, in the initial position.

**Medial:**

double /dʌbl/

luck /lʌk/

rough /rʌf/

**/ɑː/**

It is a long, back, open vowel, in the position of the cardinal vowel number 5 [ɑ], but is not as back as the latter. It can occur in all the three positions.

**Initial:**

arts /ɑːts/

army /ɑːmi/

arm /ɑːm/

**Medial:**

balm /bɑːm/

fast /fɑːst/

shark /ʃɑːk/

**Final:**

bar /bɑː/

jar /dʒɑː/

czar /zɑː/

**/ɒ/**

It is a short, rounded, back, open vowel. But it is not fully back. And the lips are slightly rounded. It occurs in initial and medial positions.

**Initial:**

office /ɒfɪs/

otter /ɒtə/

Oscar /ɒscə/

**Medial:**

got /ɡɒt/

hot /hɒt/

shot /ʃɒt/

**/ɔ:/**

In tongue position, it is closer to cardinal vowel number 7 [o]. It is a long, rounded, back, open vowel. It occurs in all the three positions.

**Initial:**

order /ɔ:də/

ought /ɔ:t/

august /ɔ:gəst/

**Medial:**

ward /wɔ:d/

thought /θɔ:t/

short /ʃɔ:t/

**Final:**

nor /nɔ:/

shaw /ʃɔ:/

law /lɔ:/

**/ʊ/**

It occurs only in the medial position and is a short, rounded, back, half-close vowel.

wool /wʊl/

full /fʊl/

foot /fʊt/

**/u:/**

It is closer to cardinal vowel number 8 [u]. It is, however, not as back as the cardinal vowel. It is a long, rounded, back, close vowel. It occurs in the medial and final positions.

**Medial:**

zoom /zu:m/

rule /ru:l/

goose /gu:s/

**Final:**

zoo /zu:/

who /hu:/

true /tru:/

**2.2.4. Diphthongs:**

Vowels produced as a result of the glide of the tongue are called diphthongs. There is a glide from one vowel sound to another and for this reason, they are also called vowel glides. For instance, in the articulation of sound /ʊə/ as *insure*, there is a glide from the sound /ʊ/ to the sound /ə/. In English, there are 8 diphthongs. Three of them are centering, three close and two of them close at the back, as shown below:

*Closing in front: /eɪ/, /aɪ/ and /ɔɪ/*

*Closing at back: /əʊ/, /aʊ/*

*Centering: /ɪə/, /eə/, /ʊə/*

Note: the centering diphthongs glide towards the centre of the mouth indicated by schwa /ə/, and the closing diphthongs terminate at /ɪ/ and /ʊ/. Let us see how these diphthongs are used in words:

**/ɪə/**

seer /sɪə/      cheer /tʃɪə/      fear /fɪə/

**/eə/**

fair /feə/      scarce /skeəz/      chair /tʃeə/

**/ʊə/**

tour /tʊə/      poor /pʊə/      sure /ʃʊə/

**/eɪ/**

say /seɪ/      may /meɪ/      fake /feɪk/

**/aɪ/**

eye /aɪ/      my /maɪ/      bike /baɪk/

**/ɔɪ/**

voice /vɔɪs/      joy /dʒɔɪ/      boy /bɔɪ/

**/əʊ/**

old /əʊld/      load /ləʊd/      own /əʊn/

**/aʊ/**

house /haʊs/      how /haʊ/      out /aʊt/

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## 2.3 Learning Outcomes

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Dear Learners, at the end of this Unit, you should have gained information about the classification and description of vowel sounds. You should have also become familiar with the types of vowels and their uses in words. You should have got some understanding of the Cardinal Vowel System which helps in classifying the vowels.

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## 2.4 Glossary

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**Monophthongs:** Pure vowel sounds, where the tongue assumes a single constant position.

**Diphthongs:** Combination of two vowel sounds within the same syllable. Also called glides.

**Cardinal Vowels:** A set of reference vowels used by phoneticians in describing the sounds of languages.

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## 2.5 Sample Questions

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### 2.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. There are only five vowel sounds in English.      yes/no.
2. Monophthongs are 12 in number.      yes/no
3. Diphthongs are 8 in number.      yes/no
4. Cardinal vowels were proposed by Daniel Jones.      yes/no
5. We have 9 cardinal vowels in number.      yes/no
6. The cardinal vowels are arbitrarily selected.      yes/no
7. Diphthongs are also called vowel glides.      yes/no
8. Do centering diphthongs glide towards the centre of the mouth.      yes/no
9. /ə/ is a weak central vowel.      yes/no

10. /ə/ is also called 'schwa'.                      yes/no

### **2.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. What are monophthongs and why are they called pure vowels?
2. What are diphthongs? Give two examples.
3. What are cardinal vowels? Give two examples.
4. Write four monophthongs with examples.
5. Write four diphthongs with examples.

### **2.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. Explain in detail the vowel sounds in the English language.
2. What are monophthongs? Use them in word-initial, word-medial and word-final positions.
3. What are centring and closing diphthongs? Give examples.

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## **2.6 Suggested Learning Resources**

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1. Aslam, Mohammad and A.A. Kak. 2011. English Phonetics and Phonology. Cambridge University Press India Pvt. Ltd.
2. Carr, Philip. 1993. Phonology. New York: St Martin Press.
3. O' Connor, JD. 1973. Phonetics. London. Penguin.
4. Roach, Peter. 2000. English Phonetics and Phonology: A Practical Course, 2nd edn. Cambridge University Press.

## Unit - 3: Phonetic Transcription

### Structure

#### 3.0 Introduction

#### 3.1 Objectives

#### 3.2 Phonetic Transcription

##### 3.2.1 Phonetic Transcription

##### 3.2.2 Types of Phonetic Transcription

##### 3.2.3 International Phonetic Alphabet

##### 3.2.4 Demonstration of Phonetic Transcription

##### 3.2.5 Common Usages of Phonetic Transcription

#### 3.3 Learning Outcomes

#### 3.4 Glossary

#### 3.5 Sample Questions

#### 3.6 Suggested Learning Resources

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### 3.0 Introduction

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Language has evolved with the necessity of human beings to communicate with each other. As civilization progressed, people of a certain group developed some common speech sounds and gestures to denote a particular meaning. And with times they also attributed some images or written signs to the sounds to preserve it. Thus, most of the languages, we have around the world, have a spoken and a written form or pattern. When we learn any language, we need to follow the way a particular sign or letter represents a speech sound to pronounce it properly. This pattern of pronunciation also varies from language to language as every language has its own set of sounds. We may not be able to find some sounds in some language. For example, in Arabic, we don't have the /p/ sound. So, when Arabic native speakers learn English, they find it difficult to pronounce it. In other cases, within a language, the pattern of pronunciation may also be different. Likely, in English the way we perceive the pronunciation the word 'do' is different from 'go'. Or, in case of '*patient*', the letter 't' sounds like 'sh'. Resemblances between spelling and pronunciation are obvious but potentially misleading. This way the process of learning any

language becomes more complicated. Phonetic transcription helps to eradicate these pitfalls. Here, we use symbols to capture the actual pronunciation in writing. These symbols act as one-to-one equivalents between the graphemes and phonemes.

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### 3.1 Objectives

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The main objectives of this Unit are to:

- understand the basic concept about phonetic transcription, its definition and its main types
  - have a comprehensive idea about the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) chart and its main features, i.e. the consonants, vowels and suprasegmentals.
  - take up demonstration of phonetic transcription and practice.
  - know about various usages of the phonetic transcription.
- 

### 3.2 Phonetic Transcription

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#### 3.2.1 Phonetic Transcription:

Phonetic transcription is concerned with how the sounds used in spoken language are represented in written form. Phonetic transcription makes it more conceivable by demonstrating the pronunciation of a given word of a language with the help of some specific symbols, which act as something exact or much nearer to one-to-one equivalent between sounds and letters than is possible with the regular orthographic presentation. It takes into account the nuances in pronunciation pattern rather than focusing on the spelling of a word. For example, in the word ‘machine’, the grapheme ‘chi’ sounds like the phoneme ‘she’. So, when we do a phonetic transcription of the same word, we use the symbol /ʃ/ in place of ‘chi’. We will discuss this more elaborately as we progress.

#### ***Check your Progress***

1. Define phonetic transcription.

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2. What is the role of a one-to-one equivalent?

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### 3.2.2 Types of Phonetic Transcription:

Phonetic transcription can be categorized into many types depending upon what is its function or purpose, i.e., Systematic and Impressionistic Transcriptions, Specific and Generic Transcriptions etc. The most notable categorization among all is a **narrow transcription** and **broad transcription**. Broad transcription takes into account only the most noticeable phonetic features of the pronunciation, while narrow transcription encrypts detailed information about the phonetic features of the pronunciation. It considers allophones and other nuances in the utterance of a word. The broad transcription is often referred to as phonemic transcription, which neglects all allophonic features. For example, the pronunciation of the English word ‘cat’ may be transcribed using the IPA as /kæt/ or [k<sup>h</sup>æt]; the broad, phonemic transcription, placed between slanted lines or slashes, shows that the word starts with phoneme /k/, but the narrow, allophonic transcription, enclosed with square brackets, indicates that this /k/ is rather aspirated [k<sup>h</sup>] and sounds different considering the native pronunciation.

#### *Check your Progress*

1. What are the main types of phonetic transcription?

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2. Explain narrow transcription and broad transcription.

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### 3.2.3 International Phonetic Alphabet:

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is an alphabetic system which comprises of a standardized set of symbols which represent each distinctive sound of any language. These symbols are primarily based on Roman letters but also include some other characters from different languages and are modified to adapt to the Roman style. The concept of IPA was proposed by Otto Jespersen. Later it was developed by some linguists i.e., A.J. Ellis, Daniel Jones, Henry Sweet, and Passy in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The International Phonetic Association has been instrumental in the development of IPA and it also revised and updated the symbols on multiple occasions. The Association recommends that a phonetic transcription should be enclosed in square brackets “[ ]”. On the other hand, any particular symbol which is used to



In articulatory phonetics, consonants refer to those speech sounds that are articulated with complete or partial obstruction in the vocal tract. We generally describe a consonant sound mentioning its manner of articulation, place of articulation and voicing. Here we will describe and exemplify those consonants which are of the English language and those which we often encounter in many Indian languages.

### The English Consonants:

Symbols	Description	Representative Graphemes	Examples
/ p /	voiceless bilabial stop	p, pp	pen, copper, top
/ b /	voiced bilabial stop	b, bb	ball, rubber, cab
/ f /	voiceless labiodental fricative	f, ff, ph, gh, lf, ft	fan, cliff, photo, rough, half, often
/ v /	voiced labiodental fricative	v, f, ph, ve	vine, of, Stephen, five
/ t /	voiceless alveolar stop	t, tt, th, ed	tap, utter, Thomas, slipped
/ d /	voiced alveolar stop	d, dd, ed	bad, odd, pilled
/ k /	voiceless velar stop	k, c, ch, cc, lk, q, ck	key, cat, Christ, accent, talk, quiet, sack
/ g /	voiced velar stop	g, gg, gh, gue	game, egg, ghost, dialogue
/ tʃ /	voiceless palato-alveolar affricate	ch, tch, t	chin, watch, actual
/ dʒ /	voiced palato-alveolar affricate	j, g, dge, di, gg	just, age, ridge, soldier, exaggerate
/ s /	voiceless alveolar fricative	s, ss, c, sc, ps, st	set, loss, cycle, scene, psycho, listen
/ ʃ /	voiced post-alveolar fricative	sh, ce, s, c, sio, ch, sci, tio	shut, ocean, sure, space, tension, machine, science, ration
/ θ /	voiceless dental fricative	th	thank
/ ð /	voiced dental fricative	th	feather
/ m /	voiced bilabial nasal	m, mm, mn, lm	man, summer, column, palm
/ n /	voiced alveolar nasal	n, nn, kn, gn, pn	not, funny, knot, gnosis, pneumonia
/ l /	voiced alveolar lateral approximant	l, ll	lot, well
/ r /	voiced alveolar trill	r, rr, wr, rh	red, parrot, wrong, rhyme
/ ŋ /	voiced velar nasal	ng, ngue	lung, tongue
/ w /	voiced labial-velar glide	w, wh, u, o	wit, why, quick, choir
/ j /	voiced palatal glide	y, io, j	you, onion, hallelujah
/ z /	voiced alveolar fricative	z, zz, s, ss, x	zebra, buzz, is, scissor, anxiety

/ ʒ /	voiced palato-alveolar fricative	s, zion, z	pleasure, division, azure
/ h /	voiceless glottal fricative	h, wh	hot, who

### Some other Consonants in Indian languages:

Symbols	Description	Examples
/ p <sup>h</sup> /	voiceless aspirated bilabial stop	फाल/बेहाल
/ b <sup>h</sup> /	voiced aspirated bilabial stop	भाल/बेहाल
/ k <sup>h</sup> /	Voiceless aspirated velar stop	खान/कहान
/ g <sup>h</sup> /	voiced aspirated velar stop	घान/गहान
/ t̪ /	voiceless dental stop	ताल/तल
/ d̪ /	Voiced dental stop	दाल/दल
/ t̪ <sup>h</sup> /	Voiceless aspirated dental stop	थाल/तेहाल
/ d̪ <sup>h</sup> /	voiced aspirated dental stop	धार/दहार
/ tʃ <sup>h</sup> /	voiceless aspirated palatoalveolar affricate	छूट
/ dʒ <sup>h</sup> /	voiced aspirated palatoalveolar affricate	झूट
/ ŋ /	voiced palatal nasal	ஞானம்/ Nāṇam
/ q /	voiceless uvular stop	Qatar (Arabic)/قطره

There are many other consonants we come across in many of the Indian languages. Here we have discussed the most common ones.

### Transcription of Consonant Clusters:

Consonant Clusters (CC) are formed when two or more consonants combine, without any intervening vowel sound, to create a distinct consonant-sound. In this case, the sounds from each original consonant can still be heard, they are just combined rapidly and efficiently together. We often encounter CC at the beginning, middle or end of a word. For example, we can take some words as follows- clock, spring, splash, strength, handspring.

While transcribing the consonant cluster, we only take into account the realized consonants. Likely, in the word ‘strengths’ we do not realize any sound for the letter ‘g’, that is why we transcribe it as /ˈstreŋθs/ where the consonant cluster ‘str’ is transcribed as /str/ and ‘ngths’ transcribed is as /ŋθs/.

### Vowels:

As you have already studied in the previous Unit, vowels are those sounds of any language that are pronounced without any obstruction in the vocal tract. In this case, the air passes through an open vocal tract with some slight modification. Vowel sounds are usually voiced, and function along with the suprasegmental features in prosodic variation such as tone, intonation and stress. Vowels are very important sounds of any language as it is rarely possible to form any word without the help of the vowel sounds.

The British phonetician Daniel Jones introduced the Cardinal Vowel System (which resembles the shape of our mouth) to describe vowels in terms of the features like the height of the tongue (high, mid, low or close, mid-close, mid-open and open), the position of the tongue (front, central, back) and roundedness of the lip (unrounded or rounded). You have studied this in detail in the previous Unit. In English, we have twenty vowel sounds of which twelve sounds are monophthongs and eight sounds are diphthongs. Monophthongs refer to the single vowel sounds while the diphthongs are articulated as a combination of two vowel sounds which then form a distinct sound itself (i.e., /ʊə/ as in *poor*). According to the Indian linguist Manjari Ohala, we have a symmetrical ten-vowel system in the Hindustani language. Three of them are short vowels i.e., /ə/, /ɪ/, /ʊ/, while the other vowels /ɑ:/, /i:/, /u:/, /e:/, /o:/, /ɛ:/, /ɔ:/ are long vowels represented with the diacritic ':', in addition to this we have an eleventh vowel /æ:/ which is also common to many other Indian languages.

### **Suprasegmentals:**

Vowels and consonants are considered as segments of which speech is composed. They form syllables together, which then make up utterances. Other features are superimposed on those syllables. These features are known as suprasegmentals. These features or markers denote variations in stress and pitch (tone and intonation). Differences in length (long, half-long, shorts) are also considered to be suprasegmental features. The suprasegmentals play very important role to represent the significant phonetic qualities of an utterance. There are many suprasegmentals mentioned in the IPA chart. Among them, the most important are as follows.

For example, 'ˈ' refers to primary stress and 'ˌ' for secondary stress. On the other hand, 'ː' refers to long vowels and 'ˑ' refers to half-long vowels.

### **Diacritics:**

Diacritics are mainly the markers that are added to the symbols of the specific sounds to provide them with a particular phonetic value (i.e., aspirated, dental or nasal qualities etc.). These markers are very crucial to represent the language-specific typical pronunciation pattern of the sounds. See the chart for some important diacritics and their functions.

◌̥	Voiced	◌̥	◌̥	Voiceless	◌̥
◌̃	Nasalized	◌̃	◌̣	Dental	◌̣
◌ <sup>h</sup>	Aspirated	◌ <sup>h</sup>	◌̠	Velarized	◌̠

***Check your Progress***

1. What is IPA?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What are the main features of IPA?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is Diacritic and Suprasegmental? Give examples.  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 3.2.4 Demonstration of Phonetic Transcription:

Now that we are acquainted with most of the common sounds and other features of the IPA, let us learn how to transcribe any word using IPA. While transcribing any word we should always take into account only the phonetically realized sounds. For example, in the word “subtle” the presence of the letter ‘b’ is not realized, hence, it is not considered.

Some other important things we need to notice to properly read any transcription or to transcribe any word are as follows:

1. We need to first identify all the symbols.
2. Then we should recognize the actual pronunciation of each of the symbols.
3. Then we need to notice all the diacritic markers and suprasegmentals to correctly utter those symbols.
4. Then we should divide the same into a syllabic structure.
5. Finally, we can pronounce the word properly.

For example, say, we have encountered an unknown word in the Dictionary. Now we see the transcription below the word that is- /,ɒntrəprə'nə:/

Now we can recognize the sounds that are- ɒntrəprənə

Now we notice the suprasegmentals- ‘, ’ for secondary stress and ‘<sup>1</sup>’ for primary stress. And, ‘:’ refers that final ə is a long vowel.

Then we divide them in a syllabic structure that is, ɒn - trə - prə' - nə: in order to pronounce the word “**entrepreneur**”.

In order to do a phonetic transcription of any word:

1. First of all, we should know the exact pronunciation of a particular word.
2. Now, we divide the word into a syllabic structure.
3. Then we need to recognize all the vowel and consonant sounds of these syllables and represent them with appropriate IPA symbols.
4. We should be aware of other suprasegmental features especially the kind of stresses on each syllable.
5. We should also be able to attribute appropriate phonetic value on necessary sounds such as aspirated or dental markers etc.
6. Finally, we combine all the symbols in the proper order to transcribe the word.

Now, let us go through some examples of IPA transcription of some English words involving English vowels and consonants. See the figure 3.2.4.

### Vowels and diphthongs

i:	see	/si:/
i	happy	/'hæpi/
ɪ	sit	/sɪt/
e	bed	/bed/
æ	cat	/kæt/
ɑ:	father	/'fɑ:ðə(r)/
ɒ	got	/gɒt/ (British English)
ɔ:	saw	/sɔ:/
ʊ	put	/pʊt/
u	actual	/'æktʃuəl/
u:	too	/tu:/
ʌ	cup	/kʌp/
ɜ:	fur	/fɜ:(r)/
ə	about	/ə'baʊt/
eɪ	say	/seɪ/
əʊ	go	/gəʊ/
aɪ	my	/maɪ/
ɔɪ	boy	/bɔɪ/
aʊ	now	/naʊ/
ɪə	near	/nɪə(r)/ (British English)
eə	hair	/heə(r)/ (British English)
ʊə	pure	/pjʊə(r)/ (British English)

### Consonants

p	pen	/pen/
b	bad	/bæd/
t	tea	/ti:/
d	did	/dɪd/
k	cat	/kæt/
g	get	/get/
tʃ	chain	/tʃeɪn/
dʒ	jam	/dʒæm/
f	fall	/fɔ:l/
v	van	/væn/
θ	thin	/θɪn/
ð	this	/ðɪs/
s	see	/si:/
z	zoo	/zu:/
ʃ	shoe	/ʃu:/
ʒ	vision	/'vɪʒn/
h	hat	/hæt/
m	man	/mæn/
n	now	/naʊ/
ŋ	sing	/sɪŋ/
l	leg	/leg/
r	red	/red/
j	yes	/jes/
w	wet	/wet/

(Fig. 3.2.4) ([https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/about/english/pronunciation\\_english](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/about/english/pronunciation_english))

#### ***Check your Progress***

1. Give the phonetic symbols for any 3 vowel sounds.

2. Read out the transcribed words with the help of IPA.

- i) /'matə/, ii) /'ɒbdʒekt/, iii) /ɛdʒʊ'keɪʃ(ə)n/, iv) /'nætʃ(ə)r(ə)l/, v) /ɒm'nɪpət(ə)nt

### **3.2.5 Common Usages of Phonetic Transcription:**

Phonetic Transcription is very useful in many ways. As it follows a standardized alphabet system (most commonly IPA), it is more convenient to recognize the symbols, their attributed pronunciation and other phonetic details. Especially, it proves to be extremely fruitful when we learn any language. There are many other uses of Phonetic Transcription. Let us look at some of them:

1. In case of learning any foreign language, we can note all the native pronunciation drills using the phonetic transcription.
2. In Dictionaries, we often encounter unfamiliar words of which we don't have any idea about correct pronunciation. If we know the IPA and phonetic transcription, we will be able to utter it.
3. In order to have an accurate written record of how a native speaker of some foreign language speaks, we can use phonetic transcription.
4. It is also useful in documentation of some of the forensic, pathological, or sociophonetic analysis, etc.

***Check your Progress***

1. What are the common usages of phonetic transcription?
- 

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### 3.3 Learning Outcomes

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At the end of this Unit, you should be able to know the definition of Phonetic Transcription and the kinds of PT. You should have gained phonetic information about vowels, consonants, suprasegmentals and diacritics and also, the IPA symbols which denote them.

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### 3.4 Glossary

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**Phoneme:** The smallest part of spoken language denoting distinction in meaning, as the **m** of a mat and the **b** of a bat in English.

**One-to-one relationship:** Refers to the relationship between two entities, here graphemes and phonemes.

**Systematic Transcription:** Identifies all acoustic differences of an utterance.

**Impressionistic Transcription:** Recognizes only the perceptible features of articulation.

**Morphology:** The study of words, how they are formed, and their relationship to other words in the same language.

**Clicks, Implosives and Ejectives:** Clicks are velaric ingressive sounds, while implosives are glottalic ingressive sounds. Ejectives are glottalic egressive sounds.

**Devanagari:** A syllabic script in which Sanskrit, Hindi, and other modern languages of India are written.

**Velarized sound:** A speech sound pronounced with the back of the tongue near the soft palate.

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### 3.5 Sample Questions

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#### 3.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. What does IPA stand for in articulatory phonetics?

- (a) International Phonetic Alphabet      (b) Is Propyl Alcohol  
(c) Inflation-Protected Annuity      (d) International Phonetic Association

2. Who did first propose the idea of IPA?

- (a) A.J. Ellis      (b) Daniel Jones  
(c) Otto Jespersen      (d) Henry Sweet

3. What is the right phonetic transcription of the word “meticulous”:

- (a) /metikulus/      (b) /mitikʊləs/  
(c) /mɪ'tɪkjʊləs/      (d) /mɪ'tɪkjələs/

#### True (T) or False (F):

1. Daniel Jones developed the cardinal vowel system.      T/F  
2. The signs ‘, ’ stands primary stress and ‘ ’ for secondary stress.      T/F  
3. /d<sup>h</sup>/ is an aspirated bilabial stop.      T/F

#### Fill in the blanks:

1. Most of the languages have a written and a \_\_\_\_\_ form.  
2. IPA chart provides details about the vowel and consonant sounds and \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Answer the question in a sentence:

1. What is a syllable?  
2. How do we denote a long vowel in phonetic transcription?

### 3.5.2 Short Answer Questions:

1. What is narrow transcription and broad transcription?
2. What are the suprasegmentals? Discuss with some examples.
3. How does phonetic transcription help us in learning a language?
4. What are diacritics? Why do we need these markers?
5. Transcribe the following words using IPA.
  - i) black
  - ii) moisturizer
  - iii) friends
  - iv) play
  - v) laboratory
  - vi) microwave
  - vii) lieutenant
  - viii) exotic
  - ix) psychology
  - x) examination

### 3.5.3 Long Answer Questions:

1. Discuss phonetic transcription. How does it become useful?
2. What is IPA? What are the salient features of IPA?
3. Demonstrate the process of phonetic transcription with the help of examples.

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## 3.6 Suggested Learning Resources:

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1. Yule, George. (2006) *The Study of Language*. Cambridge University Press.
2. Heselwood, Barry. (2013) *Phonetic Transcription in Theory and Practice*. Edinburgh University Press.
3. Ladefoged, Peter. (2014) *A Course in Phonetics*. Wadsworth Publishing Co Inc.
4. Balasubramanian, T. (1981) *A Textbook of English Phonetics for Indian Students*. Macmillan India Limited.

## **Unit - 4: English Pronunciation Practice**

### **Structure**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

#### **4.1 Objectives**

#### **4.2 English Pronunciation Practice**

##### **4.2.1 Organs of Speech**

##### **4.2.2 The Respiratory System**

##### **4.2.3 The Phonatory System**

##### **4.2.4 The Articulatory System**

##### **4.2.5 The Air-stream Mechanism**

##### **4.2.6 The Glottis/ The Larynx**

##### **4.2.7 Received Pronunciation**

##### **4.2.8 Vowels**

###### **4.2.8.1 Pure Vowels**

###### **4.2.8.2 Diphthongs**

##### **4.2.9 Consonants**

##### **4.2.10 Stress and Intonation**

###### **4.2.10.1 Word Stress**

###### **4.2.10.2 Intonation**

##### **4.2.11 Summary**

#### **4.3 Learning Outcomes**

#### **4.4 Glossary**

#### **4.5 Sample Questions**

#### **4.6 Suggested Readings**

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### **4.0 Introduction**

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The world is increasingly becoming more and more connected. As English plays a crucial role in this, many people are interested to learn and use English in their day-to-day life. It can be discouraging for English language learners if they have recurring experiences where their communication breaks down because of the problems with their pronunciation. Those who have good command over vocabulary and grammar may also fail to convey their message if they lack good pronunciation.

Most of the language learners often wish their pronunciation to be easily comprehensible and are often prepared to work diligently to achieve this. As English is spoken all over the world, its use varies from place to place. We do have several varieties such as British, American, Australian, Indian English and so on.

The growing use of English as an international language for communication leads to the development of further varieties. Thus, there are many ways of pronouncing English and different English speakers. This, of course, evokes a question that on what model or way of pronunciation we need to follow. It is also useful for language learners to know in general what kinds of error are most likely to interfere with communication.

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## 4.1 Objectives

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The objectives of this Unit are to:

- familiarize you with the different stages of speech production
- identify the relationship between spelling and pronunciation and
- acquaint you with different modes of transcription

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## 4.2 English Pronunciation Practice

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### 4.2.1 Organs of Speech

The air that we breathe comes out of the lungs and passes through various organs in our body. Before it gets out of the body it passes through various organs such as windpipe, larynx, lips, tongue, nose and other organs and gets converted into speech sounds. These various organs in our body that we use to produce sounds are called organs of speech.

**Lungs:** Lungs are the main source of energy for speech. It has small air packets called alveoles in which oxygen is stored.

**Larynx:** Larynx is the protruding part of the throat which is most commonly called as ‘Adam's apple’.

**Vocal Cords:** Vocal cords are two elastic strips placed across larynx facing each other. The gap between vocal cords is known as glottis.

**Lips:** Lips are two flexible organs of speech.

**The roof of the mouth:** It consists of the upper front teeth, alveolar ridge, palate, hard and soft palates.

**Teeth:** The upper front teeth are fixed organs of speech.

**Alveolar ridge:** Hard, bulging, bony part found immediately behind the upper front teeth is called the alveolar ridge.

**Palate:** Hard concave part of the roof of the mouth is known as the palate.

**Soft Palate:** Soft, loosely hanging, the fleshy part after the hard palate is called the soft palate.

**Tongue:** Tongue is the most flexible, prime organ of speech. It is divided into four parts:

The tip, the blade, the front and back.

The organs of speech can be divided into three parts:

- 1) The Respiratory System
- 2) The Phonatory System
- 3) The Articulatory System

These three systems work together as a unified whole to produce sounds.

#### **4.2.2 The Respiratory System:**

This system comprises of the lungs, the windpipe, muscles of the chest and trachea. The main source of energy for producing sounds is provided by an airstream mechanism. Although there are some languages which have sounds not requiring lung air for the production of speech sounds, English need pulmonic air for the articulation of sounds.

#### **4.2.3 The Phonatory System:**

The system is formed by the larynx or voice box. It contains vocal cords or vocal folds. Vocal cords are the major source of periodic vibration which helps for the production of speech

sounds. They let small puffs of air to pass through space between them. This space between the vocal cords is called the glottis.

#### **4.2.4 The Articulatory System:**

The articulatory system consists of the entire organism of the speech producing mechanism. The air stream after passing through the larynx is further modified by various organs lying above it. As a result, the quality of sound is produced. It mainly consists of the nose, lips, the teeth and the mouth and its contents especially teeth and tongue.

#### **4.2.5 The Air-stream Mechanism:**

The airstream mechanism is one of the main components of speech production by which airflow is formed in the vocal tract. There are mainly three types of air stream mechanisms in human speech and each has a different initiator. The organs generating the airstream in the vocal tract is called the initiator. The three initiators are the diaphragm together with the lungs and ribs, the glottis, and the tongue.

In speech sounds if the air stream is created by pushing air out through the nose or mouth are called **egressive** sounds and if the air stream is generated by drawing the air in through the nose or mouth are called **ingressive** sounds.

The main three types of air stream mechanisms are given below:

The **pulmonic** airstream mechanism is the first type of air-stream mechanism. It consists of lungs and the respiratory muscles. The walls of the lungs form as the initiator and air are either pushed in or out of them. English and most of the human languages employ such sounds and use pulmonic egressive airstream.

The second airstream mechanism is called **glottalic**, in which larynx and firmly closed glottis form as the initiator. An upward movement of the closed glottis let the airflow out of the mouth; a downward movement of the closed glottis causes air to be driven into the mouth. There are many languages which are produced by ingressive and egressive air-stream mechanisms.

The third and last of the air stream mechanisms is **velaric** airstream mechanism. These sounds are initiated when the back of the tongue comes into contact with velum (soft palate). The sounds produced by velaric air stream are referred to as 'clicks'.

#### **4.2.6 The Glottis/ The Larynx:**

The pulmonic airstream mechanism is the mechanism generally used for the production of sounds of English and most of the Indian languages. The air comes out of the lungs pass through the trachea or windpipe and reaches to the larynx. It consists of two elastic tissues which may be brought together or parted called vocal cords. The opening between the vocal cords is known as glottis. While articulating sounds sometimes glottis acts in different states such as opened, closed and narrowed and vibrated. Based upon the state of articulation, sounds in English can be divided into two categories: voiced and voiceless. Sounds with vocal cords vibration are called voiced sounds. Sounds without the vibration of vocal cords are called voiceless sounds. This can be easily identified by placing your fingers on your throat while making the sounds. You may feel a vibration when you make the **b** sound and no vibration when you make the **f** sound.

**Exercise I**

Plug your ears with your fingers and then produce the /s/ sound and then produce /z/ sound. Check whether you could hear a buzzing sound when you say /z/. Repeat the same after removing the fingers from the ears and placing it above your Adam’s apple. Check whether you hear the vibrations. Repeat the same task by producing the initial sounds in the following and decide whether a sound is voiced or voiceless.

<u>G</u> um .....	<u>S</u> ound .....
<u>T</u> own .....	<u>Z</u> oo .....

**4.2.7 Received Pronunciation:**

We know that there is no one to one relationship between the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they represent. Thus, we need a common notation in which one symbol represents only one sound. The symbols of the International Phonetic Association can be used to transcribe the sounds of any language. It is a unified system in which sounds are represented by the same symbols regardless of the language being transcribed. These symbols are known as the **International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)**. It presents the symbols used to represent the main accents of British English (**Received Pronunciation**).

Phonetics is the branch of linguistics which deals with the scientific study of production, transmission and reception of human speech sounds. We all know that there are 26 letters of the alphabet in the English language. These alphabets represent 44 sounds in the received

pronunciation of English, a variety of speech which we are going to discuss now. The 44 sounds can be classified as vowels and consonants.

#### 4.2.8 Vowels:

You have already studied in detail about vowels in this course. You are also aware that vowels are further classified into 12 pure vowels and 8 vowel glides or diphthongs.

##### 4.2.8.1 Pure Vowels:

Pure Vowels are sounds during the production of which air escapes through the mouth freely and continuously without any frictional noise. These vowels are made by opening the mouth and letting the airflow out freely. The following are 12 pure vowels in English.

/i/- pin, village, fill	/u/-women, put, would
/i:/- feel, key, field	/u:/-June, pool, blue
/e/-many, set, bread	/ʌ/-colour, cut, blood
/æ/-man, sat, hand	/ɑ:/-car, far, army
/ɒ/-pot, shot, orange	/ɜ:/-girl, bird, word
/ɔ:/-door, caught, war	/ə/-ago, mother, sugar

##### 4.2.8.2 Diphthongs:

**Diphthongs** are vowel glides during the production of which the tongue glides from one vowel position to another. Diphthongs are represented by the symbols of two vowels; the first indicating the tongue position at the start and the second the direction of its movement.

/ɪə/- fear, sphere, ear	/aɪ/- fly, high, bye
/eə/- fare, air, pair	/ɔɪ/- boil, coin, annoy
/ʊə/- poor, sure, tour	/əʊ/- go, so, bow
/eɪ/- play, base, great	/aʊ/- now, out, found

#### Exercise II

Pronounce the words and identify the vowels represented by the underlined letters in the following words.

Spit .....

Brunch .....

Approve .....

Their .....

### Exercise III

Categorize the words into monophthongs and diphthongs.

Sight, fuel, close, hike, couple, harm, poor, bear, badge, wear, spare, toil, rare, chin, spy	
Category	Words
Monophthongs	
Diphthongs	

#### 4.2.9 Consonants:

You have studied in detail about consonants in an earlier Unit. **Consonants** are produced by means of a complete or partial obstruction in the mouth, giving rise to a frictional noise. There are 24 consonant sounds in English represented by 21 letters of the alphabet. The consonants in English are

/p/-**pin, pet**

/n/- **name, no**

/b/-**bin, bag**

/ŋ/-**king, sing**

/t/-**tap, tin**

/f/- **fish, fire**

/d/-**dog, dig**

/v/- **vase, van**

/k/-**kin, cat**

/θ/-**thought, thin**

/g/-**girl, gun**

/ð/-**then, this**

/tʃ/-**chin, church**

/s/- **sip, song**

/dʒ/-**judge, jam**

/z/- **zip, zeal**

/m/- **man, money**

/ʃ/- **shoe, ship**

/ʒ/-measure, pleasure

/h/- hat, hot

/l/- light, leave

/r/- red, wrong

/j/-yet, you

/w/- wet, wind

### Exercise IV

Identify the consonants represented by the underlined letters in the given words.

1. <u>G</u> ain	6. Fut <u>u</u> re
2. <u>V</u> et	7. <u>M</u> ake
3. Bri <u>d</u> ge	8. <u>V</u> ision
4. <u>Y</u> oung	9. Stea <u>l</u>
5. Sw <u>i</u> ng	10. Che <u>ck</u>

### Exercise V

Transcribe the following words in the space provided and then look up each word in the dictionary.

Word	Transcription
Country	/kʌntri/
About	_____
Church	_____
Pleasure	_____
Leave	_____

#### 4.2.10 Stress & Intonation:

##### 4.2.10.1 Word Stress:

All the syllables in a polysyllabic word in English are not pronounced with the same force. An understanding phonetic alphabet alone is not enough for the correct pronunciation. One should also know where to stress in each word. While uttering some are articulated with greater force than the others. Stress may be defined as the degree of force with which a sound or syllable is pronounced. As English is an accent-based language, in a word not all the syllables are pronounced with equal emphasis. Every syllable is pronounced with a certain degree of force and the one articulated with the greatest degree of force is known as the stressed or accented syllable. One syllable stands out than the others. Stress is marked above the accented syllable. There are some rules in determining word stress. Some are given below:

1. Words with the same spelling and sound can have a difference in their pronunciation. If the word is a noun or adjective the stress is given on the first syllable.

Ex. Absent (noun)- /'ab-sent/

Absent (verb)- /ab-'sent/

2. If the word is with a weak prefix the stress falls on the root word.

Ex. a'go, re'duce

3. Words ending in -ion are stressed on the syllable before the final syllable.

Ex. examination- e-xa-mi-'na-tion

4. Words that end in ic, ical, ically, ian have stress on the syllable before the suffix.

Ex. arti-'ficial

5. Words ending with the suffix-eer and ee are stressed on the suffix.

Ex. pay'ee

### Exercise VI

Transcribe the following words and mark the word stress.

Word	Noun/Adjective	Verb
Accent	/ 'aksent/	/ ak'sent/
Digest		
Attribute		
Desert		

#### 4.2.10.2 Intonation:

The term intonation refers to variations of pitch and stress in relation to utterance. It describes how the voice rises and falls in speech. Rather than focusing what we say, it mainly focuses on how we say things. It is very difficult to understand the expressions and thoughts that go with words. Intonation is used to express intentions. Pitch is decided by the frequency of the vibration of the vocal cords by considering the number of times they open and close in a second.

When you say **Shut the door!** the pitch of your voice will move from a high level to a low level. This is called a **falling tone**. It can be illustrated as:

**Shut the**

d

o

o

r!

If you say the same sentence with a **rising tone**, the pitch of your voice will move from low to high, as illustrated below:

**r!**

**o**

**o**

**d**

Shut the

There are mainly three patterns of intonation in English. They are falling intonation, rising intonation and fall-rise intonation.

### **The Rising Intonation**

In rising intonation, the pitch of the voice rises from a low level to a high level. It is marked (↗). The rising tone is mostly used in incomplete statements, polarity questions which seek yes/no answer, wh-questions, requests, question tags, greetings, apologies and so on.

Examples:

1. I'll buy you a watch (if I go there). (↗)
2. Will you do it?(↗)
3. How's your family?(↗)
4. Go and open the door.(↗)

5. I'm so sorry.(↗)

### **The Falling intonation**

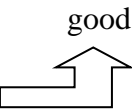
Falling intonation consists of a fall in the pitch of the voice from a high level to a low level. It is marked as (↘). This tone is commonly used in statements, questions, commands, rhetorical questions and exclamations.

Examples:

1. Leave it ↘ alone.
2. 'What's the ↘ matter?
3. 'Wasn't that an ↘ easy task?
4. Marvelous! ↘
5. Keep ↘ quiet.

### **The Falling-Rising Intonation**

This type of intonation falls from high to low and then rises to the middle of the voice. This tone is marked ↘ ↗ This may be illustrated as:

That was  good. (↗)

This type of tone is normally used for special implications not verbally expressed

### **Examples:**

1. Please be careful.
2. He is handsome.
3. Is this your new car?
4. Would you like another cup of tea?
5. Thank you (to express one's displeasure).

### **Exercise VII**

1. Try and say the following utterances using a falling tone.

What's the time?

She is very beautiful.

Splendid!

2. Try and say the following utterances using a rising tone.

What's your name?

Keep it on the shelves.

Goodbye

3. Good afternoon

Sit down

What can I do for you?

#### **4.2.11 Summary:**

Producing various speech sounds are depended on the movement of speech organs. It is essential to know the movement and place of articulation to produce particular sounds. The above descriptions have discussed the speech sounds and the body mechanisms involved in the production of speech. We have discussed the respiratory, phonatory and articulatory systems. The energy for most of the Indian languages and English comes from the lungs and the mechanism involved here is called pulmonic airstream mechanism. The state of the glottis decides whether the sound is a voice or voiceless. We understood that sounds with vocal cords vibration are called voiced sound and sounds without the vibration of vocal cords are called voiceless sounds. We also have understood that same letter of alphabet may have different pronunciations. Thus, we must have a system transcribing the sounds of English in which each sound is represented by one particular symbol. We have also studied various symbols based upon the IPA system. We advise you to practice transcribing English words and sentences for your understanding of the mismatch between the word and pronunciation.

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### **4.3 Learning Outcomes**

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In this Unit we have studied about the various organs of speech and the body mechanisms involved in the production of speech. We have shown you how we can give phonetic transcription of speech sounds-vowels and consonants. At the end of the Unit you are expected to

be familiar with the organs of speech, sounds in English, stress and intonation. You should also be able to practice English pronunciation.

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## 4.4 Glossary

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**Phonetics:** The science of speech sounds.

**Phonology:** The system of speech sounds in a language.

**Stress:** The degree of force put on a part of word.

**Syllable:** A word or part of the word which contains a vowel sound or a consonant acting as a vowel.

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## 4.5 Sample Questions

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### 4.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. English and most of the human languages employ and use \_\_\_\_\_ mechanism.

- (a) Glottalic air stream
- (b) Pulmonic egressive airstream
- (c) Pulmonic ingressive airstream
- (d) Velaric airstream

2. There are \_\_\_\_\_ sounds in the received pronunciation of England.

- (a) 26
- (b) 44
- (c) 12
- (d) 8

3. Expand the letters IPA.

- (a) Indian Phonetic Alphabet
- (b) International Phonetic Alphabet
- (c) International Pronouncing Alphabet
- (d) International Phonology Alphabet

4. Find the pure vowel sound from the following:

- (a) /p/

- (b) /t/
  - (c) /k/
  - (d) /u/
5. There are \_\_\_\_\_ pure vowels or monophthongs in English.
- (a) 8
  - (b) 12
  - (c) 20
  - (d) 24
6. The degree of force with which a sound or syllable is pronounced is known as \_\_\_\_\_ .
- (a) Stress
  - (b) Intonation
  - (c) Rhythm
  - (d) Accent
7. If the word is a noun or adjective the stress is given on the \_\_\_\_\_ syllable.
- (a) First
  - (b) Second
  - (c) Third
  - (d) Last
8. Variations of pitch and stress in relations to utterances is called \_\_\_\_\_ .
- (a) Stress
  - (b) Intonation
  - (c) Rhythm
  - (d) Accent
9. Which of the following word does not have the sound /e/?
- (a) Pet
  - (b) Feel
  - (c) Bet
  - (d) Spell
10. How many syllables are there in the word *examination*?
- (a) Two
  - (b) Three
  - (c) Four

(d) Five

#### **4.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. Explain the term phonetics.
2. What is airstream mechanism?
3. Distinguish between voiced and voiceless sounds, giving examples.
4. Discuss the status of English as a global language.
5. Transcribe:
  - (a) College.
  - (b) English.

#### **4.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. Discuss the various organs of speech in detail.
2. Distinguish between vowels and consonants giving examples.
3. Define Standard English and justify the need in the present world.

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### **4.6 Suggested Readings**

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1. Abercrombie, D. (1967) *Elements of General Phonetics*. Edinburgh UP.
2. Balasubramanian, T. (1981) *A Textbook of English Phonetics for Indian Students*. Macmillan.
3. Gimson, A.C. (1989) *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English*. Edward Arnold.

# Unit - 5: Greetings, Leave Taking, Compliment Extension, and Response

## Structure

### 5.0 Introduction

### 5.1 Objectives

### 5.2 Greetings, Leave Taking, Compliment Extension, and Responses

#### 5.2.1 Greetings

#### 5.2.2 Leave Taking

#### 5.2.3 Compliment Extension and Responses

### 5.3 Learning Outcomes

### 5.4 Glossary

### 5.5 Sample Questions

### 5.6 Suggested Learning Resources

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## 5.0 Introduction

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Communication is inevitable to survive in any society. It strengthens the relationships and gets things organized in possible ways. Communication helps to create understanding and to gain information through message or direct conversation. Conversation is the tool used for conveying meaning to listeners. When people meet, the conversation begins with *greetings* and ends when one person takes the leave of others. There are two major types of conversation- formal and informal. Both have different styles, approaches, and uses in different contexts with a different language. When somebody makes a conversation at public offices, in an academic sphere, or in professional spaces, formal language is mostly preferred. *The informal* talk involves a personal and emotional exchange of information. The former is always formal in style and factual in content while the latter is both formal and informal in style and factual and emotional in content. The informal conversation does not follow any fixed rules. It involves simple social conversations, greetings and common inquiries while interacting in society every day. There can be semi-formal conversations too.

When we consider the normative aspects of any communicative event, one should remember that these rules/norms are culture-bound. The usages and expressions in English used for communication vary across cultures. However, beginners need to learn how to carry forward a conversation with a proper beginning, content, and end. This Unit focuses on greetings, leave-taking, compliment extension and responses.

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## **5.1 Objectives**

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The objectives of this Unit are to give you:

- a basic and comprehensive understanding of English conversation.
  - the basic forms of formal-informal greetings.
  - an understanding of different leave-taking sequences while closing a conversation.
  - an insight into compliments and responses at different contexts.
- 

## **5.2 Greetings, Leave Taking, Compliment Extension, and Responses**

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### **5.2.1 Greetings:**

Greetings are the beginning points of interaction among people. They can be verbal as well as nonverbal. The speakers take the help of different words, gestures, and facial expressions to convey their emotions. Greetings can extend up to the level of interest expressed by the listener. A conversation generally begins when people greet one another and ends in the greeting again. According to Goffman, “Greetings mark a transition to increased access and farewells to a state of decreased access.” During social interactions, greetings always help to break the ice and thereby make communication much better. Greetings are not only dependent on people, but also contexts. For example, your greetings will be different for your colleague when you meet him/her in an official meeting or a party/get together.

### **Formal Greetings:**

As mentioned before, formal greetings are used on certain occasions with certain people in a different language. The greetings change depending on time as well. Formal greetings are preferred to use in professional spaces for example, in a business conference, job interview,

client meetings etc. Apart from this, formal greetings are used while talking to seniors, older persons, strangers, etc.

The following are some examples of greeting someone:

- Good morning!
- Good afternoon!
- Good evening!
- How are you?
- How have you been?
- Nice to meet you.
- I am glad to see you.
- How do you do?
- It's a pleasure to see you!
- How can I help you?

Here are some common situations where formal greetings are necessary.

i) Professional meeting/ conference

*You: Good morning Sir!*

*B: Good morning Arun. How are you?*

*You: I am fine. Thank you! How about you?*

*B: I am good. By the way, meet Dr. Ansari. He is an expert in Developmental Studies.*

*You: Hello, Dr Ansari! Pleasure to meet you.*

ii) Talking to a new colleague

*You: Hello!*

*A: Hello!*

*You: Are you newly appointment here?*

*A: Yes. I'm.*

*You: That's great. Nice to meet you.*

*A: Thank you so much. Glad to see you too.*

*You: Well, Can I know your name?*

*A: Asad. Mohammed Asadullah. Yours?*

*You: Sameer. Shaik Sameer.*

iii) Conversation between customer and seller

*S: Good evening Sir! How can I help you?*

*C: Good evening! I need to check out your cosmetic collection.*

*S: Sure, I will show you.*

*C: Actually, I would prefer the organic ones.*

*S: Sorry, we don't keep organic products.*

*C: It is completely fine. Thank you*

*S: You are most welcome. Have a good day!*

### **Informal Greetings:**

People familiar with one another and those who share a friendly relationship greet each other informally. In an informal conversation 'hello' can be replaced with 'hi'. Instead of asking "How are you?" to enquire well-being, "how's it going?" can be used. The following are some common greetings in an informal conversation:

- Hi!
- Hey!
- How's life?
- How's it going?
- How are things?
- What's new?
- What's up?
- Long-time no see!
- How have you been?

In the following situations, informal greetings are preferably used:

Situations:

i) Meeting a friend

*You: Hi Sarah. What's up?*

*S: Going well. And you?*

*You: Not bad. What's new?*

*S: I got a job by the way. Have to join next week.*

*You: Great! I'm so happy for you. Congrats dear!*

*S: Thanks.*

ii) Between neighbours

*You: Hey Anwar. What's going on?*

*A: All good. You say. Long-time no see!*

*You: Yeah. Was little busy.*

*A: I saw your mom yesterday by the way.*

*You: Yeah, she told me. Anyways, good to see you.*

### **Telephone Conversation:**

Telephonic conversations can be formal and informal. Here are some situations where **telephonic formal greetings** are used.

Situations:

i) Enquiring about admission in a college

*A: Hello! Good Morning, GP Memorial College of Engineering, Sahil speaking, how may I help you?*

*You: Good Morning Sir. This is Irfan from Ghaziabad. I would like to get the recent updates of M Tech Admission 2025.*

*A: Pleasure to help you, Sir. The admission process is about to start. We will update you the further process. Please drop your mail-id.*

*You: Sure. Thank you*

ii) Conversation with your doctor

*R: Good Evening Doctor! This is Raghu speaking.*

*D: Hello Raghu! How are you feeling now?*

*R: Not feeling good for the last two days.*

*D: Did you finish the course of medicine?*

*R: Yes, but I think I might have a chest infection. Can I get an appoint to meet you tomorrow?*

*D: Sure. Please, come by 3 pm. Take care until then.*

The following situations involve **telephonic informal greetings**.

Situations:

i) Conversation between friends

*A: Hi Sunny! Guess who?*

*B: Hey, you sound so familiar. Is that you, Rahul?*

*A: Yep. What's up, dude? It's been a long time.*

*B: Yeah. I'm good. How about you?*

*A: All good. Listen, can we meet tomorrow at Almond Café?*

*B: Sure. I am free tomorrow.*

ii) Mother-daughter conversation

*D: Hi Mom!*

*M: Are you still sleepy? It's already 10 am.*

*D: Yeah, I know. How's it going there?*

*M: It's work from home this week*

*D: Glad you agreed! Enjoy the week.*

*M: Well, let's see how it works out.*

**Check your Progress**

1. In what kind of situations formal and informal greetings are preferred?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What are the common usages in formal and informal greetings?

\_\_\_\_\_

### 5.2.2 LeaveTaking:

Leavetaking is generally used when someone needs to say goodbye to somebody in various contexts. According to situations, leavetaking expressions can be expressed as gestures, clear cut closing remarks or extended closing remarks.

‘Leaving’ can be two types- *formal leaving and informal leaving*. Leavetaking happens in a variety of ways. There are both formal and informal situations where you must learn how to take leave and how to respond to it.

#### Common Expressions and Responses:

Here are some common leavetaking expressions (both formal and informal) and the responses.

Formal Expressions	Responses
Goodbye!	Goodbye. Take care!
See you soon!	See you!
I have to take leave.	Sure. See you!
Sorry, I have to go now.	It's ok. Never mind.
I will see you later.	Ok. Bye!
Can we meet tomorrow then?	Sure. See you tomorrow.
I think I should say bye now.	Ok. See you later.
It's been nice talking to you.	For me as well.
Shall we continue over the phone?	Sure. Bye for now!
How about meeting tomorrow?	Yeah. Sure.

Informal Expressions	Responses
Bye for now	Bye!
So long for now	You are right. Bye!
Bye. take care	You too. Bye!
Say my 'hi' to your bro	Sure, I will.
Have a fun day ahead	Thanks!
Got to go.	Yeah. Sure.

I'll catch you later.	Ok. See you.
I'll leave now.	Ok. Bye!
We'll meet tomorrow.	Sure.
Take care. See you.	Take care. Bye!

### **Formal Leaving:**

Here are some situations where formal leavetaking expressions are applicable.

Situations:

- i) Leaving from classroom

*A: Sir. My brother is hospitalised. He had a small accident.*

*B: How sad! It is really unfortunate. How is he now?*

*A: He is fine. Nothing to worry.*

*B: Glad to know that. I wish him a speedy recovery.*

*A: Thank You! I think I should leave for the hospital now.*

*B: Sure. Please take care*

*A: I will see you tomorrow*

*B: Ok. See you*

- ii) Leave-taking from office

*A: What about arranging a client's meeting today evening?*

*B: I have some engagements today. Can we postpone it?*

*A: Ok. Will you be available tomorrow?*

*B: Yes. I will be there. For now, I have to take leave. Sorry.*

*A: It's ok. Please carry on.*

*B: Ok. See you. Goodbye!*

*A: See you!*

### **Informal Leaving:**

Informal leavetaking expressions are used in casual and friendly conversations. For example,

i) Saying goodbye to friends

*A: Hey Biswas, come, let's have tea.*

*B: Sorry, I've an online lecture. I'll leave now.*

*A: Ok then. We can meet tomorrow.*

*B: Sure. Will see you in the canteen.*

*A: Ok! Bye. Take care!*

*B: Bye!*

ii) Saying goodbye to colleagues

A: Hey guys! I better get going. I had a long day.

B: Alright. Take care.

C: I am also running late.

A: It's time to leave. Bye!

***Check your Progress***

1. Discuss the common leave taking expressions and responses.

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2. Discuss the situations where formal leavetaking expressions are applicable.

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### **5.2.3 Compliment Extension and Responses:**

According to the definition of *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2008), a compliment is "a remark that expresses approval, admiration or respect." Paying compliments and giving responses in the appropriate context is an important aspect of communication. A compliment is an expression of admiration, respect, and appreciation. It is a quick way to make people understand that you are impressed by their appearance, ability, successes, skills, performances, or any other accomplishments. Verbal compliments and responses are affected by the complementor's feelings, attitudes, and thoughts.

Compliments vary across cultures. What is considered as appreciable in one culture may not be acceptable in another one. Compliments are supposed to be felt genuine by the listener. It should not be flattery, overly enthusiastic or unwelcoming. The rapport between complimenter and complimentee is one of the major factors that influence compliment responses. Thanking is the most common response to compliments. Responses can be either positive or negative. There are some common expressions to extend and receive compliments.

### Common Expressions and Responses:

The following are some common expressions to extend and receive a compliment:

Expressions	Responses
You look nice!	Thank you so much.
You look beautiful!	Thank you for the compliment.
You look stunning!	Thanks.
What a lovely dress!	Thank you! It's very cheap.
I like your hair cut.	Thanks.
Western dress suits you.	I appreciate the compliment.
You cook delicious meals.	Thank you. That was just a humble attempt.
I love your earrings.	Thanks. I love yours too.
You are a great parent!	Thank you. I am trying to be a better one.
You carry yourself well.	Well, I do. Thank you.
You are an excellent orator.	Thank you.
You have such a nice voice.	Thank you.

### Compliments on Appearance:

The following examples show how to compliment someone on their appearance.

#### Example 1

*A: Have you done your hair? It looks amazing.*

*B: Thank you so much. By the way, I have done it myself.*

*A: Oh! Is it? It looks perfect.*

*B: I am glad you liked it.*

### **Example 2 (Compliment on Possession)**

*A: I really like the watch you're wearing.*

*B: Thank you. I bought it on Amazon last year.*

*A: It really suits you by the way.*

*B: That's a nice compliment. Thanks.*

### **Compliments on Accomplishments:**

#### **Example 1**

*A: I must say, your recent article was superb.*

*B: Nice to hear this from you.*

*A: I will definitely share it among students.*

*B: Thank you so much. I would be honoured.*

#### **Example 2 (Compliment on skill)**

*A: This was the best chicken I have ever had in my life.*

*B: I am glad you liked it.*

*A: It was an amazing recipe. Can I get it?*

*B: Sure. Why not? Thank you.*

Compliment responses can be agreement utterances with acceptance or disagreement utterances with rejection. The above examples come under the category of 'appreciation' or an agreement token where responses are given through 'thanking expressions'. There are responses which challenges/ questions the appreciation made by the complementor.

For example,

**Agreement:** *I like her/ I like her too.*

**Disagreement:** *She is very brave/ I don't think so.*

**Acceptance:** *You are pretty/ Thank you.*

**Rejection/ negated appreciation:** *I can stare at your new car the whole day/ No Thanks.*

**Check your Progress**

1. What are the common English expressions to extend and receive a compliment?
2. Give the examples which show how to compliment someone on their appearance, possessions, accomplishments, and skill.
3. Discuss how to reject/challenge/question a compliment.

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### 5.3 Learning Outcomes

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By the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- identify and understand different forms of greetings in conversation
- distinguish between formal and informal leaving situations
- know how the compliments should be extended and how to give a response to it
- to enhance the skills of academic communication

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### 5.4 Glossary

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- **Communication:** Act of exchanging/ sharing ideas/ thoughts/ feelings
- **Conversation:** A talk between two or more people sharing sentiments/ opinions/ ideas.
- **Greetings:** A polite and friendly expression a person do when he meets/ welcome someone.
- **Compliment:** A statement of action that appreciates somebody

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### 5.5 Sample Questions

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#### 5.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. Informal talk involves \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (a) simple social conversations
  - (b) greetings

- (c) common inquiries
  - (d) All the above
2. Formal talk happens in \_\_\_\_\_.
    - (a) public offices,
    - (b) academic sphere
    - (c) professional spaces
    - (d) All the above
  3. Giving compliments on people's accomplishment acknowledges their \_\_\_\_\_.
    - (a) Skills
    - (b) Performances
    - (c) Ability
    - (d) All the above
  4. Compliments are not supposed to be \_\_\_\_\_.
    - (a) Genuine
    - (b) Welcoming
    - (c) Flattery
    - (d) None of the above
  5. Compliment is an expression of \_\_\_\_\_.
    - (a) Admiration
    - (b) Respect
    - (c) Appreciation
    - (d) All the above
1. A polite and friendly expression a person does when he meets/ welcome someone is called as \_\_\_\_\_ .
  2. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a statement of action that appreciates somebody.
  3. In informal conversation, *hello* can be replaced by \_\_\_\_\_ .
  4. "I'll catch you later" is an \_\_\_\_\_ expression of leavetaking.
  5. "How are you" can be replaced by "How's it going" in \_\_\_\_\_ situation

### 5.5.2 Short Answer Questions:

1. What are the different expressions used in informal and formal greetings?
2. Write a note on the common leave-taking expressions.

3. Telephone conversations can be both formal and informal. Explain with examples.
4. Write a note on compliments on accomplishments
5. Write a note on compliments on appearance.

### **5.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. Write an essay on formal and informal greetings.
  2. Write an essay on compliments and responses.
  3. Write an essay on 'Leave Taking'.
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## **5.6 Suggested Readings**

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Aarts, B. *Oxford Modern English Grammar*. Oxford UP, 2011.

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## **Unit - 6: Thanking, Regrets & Apologizing, and Responses**

### **Structure**

- 6.0** Introduction
- 6.1** Objectives
- 6.2** Thanking, Regrets & Apologizing, and Responses
  - 6.2.1** Thanking & Responses
  - 6.2.2** Regret and Apologizing & Responses
  - 6.2.3** Conclusion
- 6.3** Learning Outcomes
- 6.4** Glossary
- 6.5** Sample Questions
- 6.6** Suggested Readings

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### **6.0 Introduction**

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Communication is a mode of sharing thoughts, ideas, opinions and information with others via different modes and channels. It is a two-way process that takes place between listener and speaker. Communication can take place verbally and non-verbally, such as by speaking, listening, writing, drawing, and by gestures to mention a few. Different forms of communication such as most common phrases to express thankfulness, regret and apology including polite and courteous ways to responses facilitate the process of communication. These forms of communication help express ourselves in effective, courteous and considerate manner at personal as well as professional front and make the process of communication more efficient. Expressing gratitude, disappointment, putting up a request for forgiveness and many other such forms of expression used in the process of communication in a variety of appropriate situational and timely manner makes communication more viable. Hence, knowledge and regular practice of incorporating these most commonly used English phrases of expressing thankfulness, conveying regret and apology, besides responses are important to let the effective and courteous process of communication take place.

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## 6.1 Objectives

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The Unit has been designed to fulfil the following objectives:

- to familiarize you with the significant skills of communication, particularly thanking, regrets & apologizing, and responses
- to enable you to understand and master the process of oral and verbal communication
- to make you comprehend, understand and become skilled at the process of verbal communication to facilitate and improvise their interpersonal skills
- to enable you to be able to master the four key skills in English, i.e. listening and speaking, reading and writing, particularly listening and speaking skills

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## 6.2 Thanking, Regrets & Apologizing, and Responses

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Thanking, expressing regret & apologizing including responses are the most common phrases used in the process of communication. These courteous and polite expressions are used to demonstrate gratefulness, regrets and apologies or other responses to facilitate the process of expressing our thoughts in a considerate manner. Regular practice and use of these expressions can also help us create a good impression of ourselves at professional as well as personal fronts. Moreover, they help us express a specific intention and sincere gratitude to others. It could be, for instance, for the help or assistance that they have provided or maybe in establishing our candid regret for the mistake that was done whether intentionally or unintentionally to others. Hence, to smoothen the process of communication, one should be acquainted with a variety of different ways of expressing appreciation, gratitude, remorse and request including other responses.

### 6.2.1 Thanking and Responses:

Expressing gratefulness and appreciation to others by making use of polite and courteous words is a significant part of your communication that makes others feel acknowledged and accredited for the good work they did or any help they offered. These expressions also work as an encouragement and motivation for people to whom they are addressed. The rightful acknowledgement for the good work boosts efficiency in people, in addition to, offers them the

rightful inspiration and reinforcement in continuing the good work that they have been carrying out.

Being courteous also leaves a positive impact on our mind and body. It brings more positivity that helps us improve the mood. Besides, a variety of expressions used to demonstrate sincere gratitude helps in showing the specific reason of thanking someone, such as whether it is just a used as a small token of gratitude, a sincere and deep appreciation or a kind acknowledgement towards someone. It comes handy on every occasion.

The list of expressions to convey thankfulness in a variety of manners by using occasion appropriate different words is given below. The expressions reflect the intensity of the gratefulness that you are trying to demonstrate in words.

❖ **Most common ways of saying ‘thank you’:**

- Thank you.
- Thanks.
- Thank you very much.
- Thanks so much.
- Thanks a lot.
- Thanks a million.
- All I can say is thank you.
- I appreciate it.
- I really appreciate it.
- That means a lot.

❖ **Thankfulness for specific reasons:**

- Thank you for your company.
- Thank you for calling.
- Thank you for letting me know.
- Thank you for the gift.
- I really appreciate the favour.
- Thank you for your kind words.
- Thank you for the encouragement.

- Thank you for the invitation.
- Thank you for your support.
- Thank you for taking the time to (do something)...

❖ **Some appreciative words:**

- You are very generous.
- That is very kind of you.
- That is so nice of you.
- I am deeply touched.
- You didn't have to do this.
- You don't need to do this.
- You are very thoughtful.
- You are very generous.
- That means a lot.
- That means so much to me.
- You are very sweet.
- This wouldn't have been possible without you.

❖ **More respectful appreciation with a sincere emphasis:**

- I am eternally grateful.
- I deeply respect it.
- I don't have words to thank you.
- I cannot thank you enough.
- I will never forget your kindness.
- I sincerely appreciate the help.
- I am deeply moved.
- Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

❖ **Expressing gratitude/thankfulness in business communication:**

A small expression of gratitude towards your colleagues or team members helps them understand them that their contribution is not only acknowledged but also appreciated or an

expression of thankfulness to your senior or boss help them understand that how mindful you are of the support and encouragement you receive from them. Therefore, this small act of expressing gratefulness help us to establish a positive and encouraging environment at the workplace or professional front, whether it is said to your colleagues, juniors or seniors and facilitates the process of effective communication.

- My sincere appreciation/gratitude/thanks.
- My thanks and appreciations.
- Please accept my heartfelt gratitude.
- Please accept my deepest appreciations.
- I appreciate your guidance/consideration/time.
- Many thanks for the opportunity.
- Thank you very much for your guidance/time/considerate support.
- Thank you very much for referring us...
- I really appreciate your assistance and look forward to working with you sometime soon.
- It was very thoughtful of you.
- I truly appreciate the confidence you have shown in me.

❖ **Responses:**

- You are welcome.
- Don't mention it.
- That is alright.
- It's my pleasure.
- Not at all.
- I am glad you liked it.
- Happy to help.
- Thanks anyway.
- Anytime.
- Glad to be able to help.
- No worries.
- That is alright.

- It's my duty.
- I am glad you liked it.

**Let us see how to express gratitude/thankfulness with appropriate responses in the sentences given below:**

A. *I really appreciate your assistance and look forward to working with you sometime soon.*

B. *I am glad you liked it.*

A. *This wouldn't have been possible without you.*

B. *It's my pleasure.*

A. *Thank you very much for your guidance/time/considerate support.*

B. *You are welcome.*

A. *I will never forget your kindness.*

B. *It's my duty.*

A. *Thank you for your kind words.*

B. *You are welcome.*

A. *Please accept my deepest appreciations.*

B. *Happy to help.*

A. *You are very thoughtful.*

B. *Glad to be able to help.*

A. *Thank you for the gift.*

B. *I am glad you liked it.*

A. *All I can say is thank you.*

B. *Anytime.*

A. *That is so nice of you.*

*B. Don't mention it.*

***Check your Progress***

1. Why is courtesy important for public mannerism?

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2. How can a simple expression of thankfulness make communication more effective?

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3. What are the common phrases used for expressing gratitude?

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**6.2.2 Regret and Apologizing & Responses:**

We often make mistakes – sometimes knowingly or many times unknowingly. However, at some point, they may lead us towards regret at a later stage. The simplest word ‘sorry’ could be of great help in accepting the error that was made whether intentionally or unintentionally. Remorse leads one to request a pardon for the hurt caused deliberately or accidentally by his/her words or actions. One small sincere apology may help you express your sincere remorse caused by the wrongful act. Accepting mistake and working on it, to avoid repeating the same error in the future is, in fact, a key that is needed to let the effective communication take place.

It is important to understand that you should mean what you are speaking about and not say something only for the sake of saying. For instance, while expressing regret and asking for an apology you ought to take the responsibility of your actions, whether done intentionally or accidentally and make sure to sound humble and sincere. Please keep away from giving excuses and justifying your action. Hence, please, make sure to not use words such as ‘but’ and ‘so on’ when you say ‘sorry’. Use of these words could lead the listener to thinking that you do not mean what your words are expressing. It would be better if you sincerely address the precise mistake and express the apology instead of talking about it in general:

• **Most common ways of saying ‘sorry’:**

- I am sorry.
- I am really sorry.

- I apologize.
  - I regret.
  - It was all my fault.
  - I beg your pardon.
  - Please forgive me.
  - I made a mistake.
  - That was wrong of me.
  - I didn't mean to do/say that.
  - Sorry. It was an accident.
- **Sincere and deep remorse for the wrongful action:**
    - I would like to express my sincere apologies.
    - My apologies.
    - I owe an explanation for my mistakes/actions.
    - I am ashamed of my actions.
    - I didn't mean to hurt your emotions.
    - I truly regret my actions.
    - I take full responsibility for my misconduct.
    - Please accept my sincere apologies.
    - It will not happen again.
- **Certain informal ways of expressing apology:**
    - My bad.
    - I hope you will forgive me.
    - How can I make it up to you for my mistakes?
    - Will you forgive me?
    - I shouldn't have done that without asking you.
    - It was wrong of me.
    - I am ashamed of myself.
    - It won't happen again.

- **Saying ‘sorry’ and using alternative phrases to draw someone’s attention or politely ask them to repeat the said words:**

- Excuse me, please.
- Excuse me, may I talk to you for a moment?
- Pardon?
- Sorry, what?
- I didn’t get what you said.
- Would you mind repeating it?
- Please excuse me.
- Excuse me, could you please pass on that book?

- **Expressing apologies in business communication:**

An expression of remorse, owning and accepting the mistakes that were made, in front of your colleagues or team members or customers helps them understand that it is humane to make mistakes. An honest acceptance of the mistake not only can help others understand your deep regret but can also help you get another chance to correct and improvise them. Moreover, truthful acknowledgement of mistakes could become a strong stepping-stone for future learning, it can also help you in becoming a better version of yourself. Your seniors/boss would trust you and the colleagues/juniors would look up to you since you can set an example by owning your mistakes because not everyone can do that. Therefore, the act of expressing regret or apology helps in establishing a positive and encouraging environment at the workplace or professional front, whether it is said to your colleagues, juniors or seniors, besides facilitates the process of effective communication.

- I regret...
- I truly regret....
- We sincerely apologize...
- I deeply regret...
- Please express our sincere apologies...
- I sincerely ask for forgiveness...
- I want to make an apology
- I own my inaccuracies.

- I beg your pardon.

❖ **Responses:**

- That's alright.
- Never mind.
- I understand.
- It's alright.
- It's OK.
- It doesn't matter.
- You don't have to say that.
- Don't worry. It's Okay.
- Apology accepted.
- You don't need to apologize.
- No harm done.
- Not at all.
- I understand. I am sure you couldn't help it.
- Forget it.
- I forgive you.
- It happens.
- I quite understand.
- Forget about it.
- Don't apologize.
- It's not needed.
- Don't worry about it.
- Okay.
- No problem.
- No worries.
- It's my fault.
- Sorry about that.

**Let us see how to express regret and accept apologies with appropriate responses in the below-mentioned sentences:**

A. *I truly regret the inconvenience caused owing to our unintentional actions.*

B. *I quite understand. It happens.*

A. *I beg your pardon for my forgetfulness.*

B. *I understand. I am sure you couldn't help it.*

A. *Excuse me, may I talk to you for a moment?*

B. *Sure. How can I help you?*

A. *I shouldn't have done that without asking you.*

B. *Don't worry about it.*

A. *Such mistakes will not be repeated. It will not happen again.*

B. *Don't worry. It's okay.*

A. *I didn't mean to do/say that.*

B. *No harm done.*

A. *How can I make it up to you for my mistakes?*

B. *Forget it, no issues.*

A. *My apologies.*

B. *Apology accepted.*

A. *It won't happen again.*

B. *No worries.*

***Check your Progress***

1. Why should we use polite words to express regret?

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### 6.2.3 Conclusion:

The process of communication is a direct way of establishing connection with others. To let an effective communication take place, we should ensure, to the best of our understanding that whatever the situation is, whether happy favourable or sad and negative the exact expressions should be used during the conversation. It is evident to let the other person(s) know directly and straightforwardly how do you feel about a particular event or incident. It helps establish an unambiguous environment between the speaker and the listener. For instance, if you are happy about someone's achievement, your small word of encouragement could boost his or her confidence. Speaking out loud and clear word of appreciation or thankfulness to someone for their assistance or help let them understand that they are valued and their efforts are acknowledged.

Similarly, a clear yet polite way of expressing your dissatisfaction/disappointment to someone for their mistakes can help them learn from their mistakes. It is also a key to establish a positive environment at your workplace/personal fronts. Besides, owning your own mistakes will send a direct message to your colleagues/team members/seniors/boss that you also can accept and learn from your mistakes.

Hence, the phrases of expressing thankfulness, regret and apologies including other responses, however, unimportant they seem, could help you grow as a better professional and a genuine human being as well. It also facilitates the unambiguous and effective process of communication.

#### *Check your Progress*

1. What is the significance of using a variety of diverse polite expressions during a communication process?

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## 6.3 Learning Outcomes

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At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- understand the importance of using polite expression during the process of communication
- learn and understand the benefits of incorporating these expressions in their routine communication
- express gratitude using a variety of different polite phrases
- know how expressing thankfulness can make the process of communication more effective
- understand how expressing regret and apologizing can make the process of communication more effective

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## 6.4 Glossary

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**Regret:** A feeling of sadness about something sad or wrong

**Gratitude:** The quality of being thankful

**Remorse:** Deep regret or guilt for a wrongfully committed action

**Appreciation:** Recognition, admiration

**Apology:** Regretful acknowledgement of an offence or failure

**Excuse:** Seek to lessen the blame attaching to something, try to justify

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## 6.5 Sample Questions

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### 6.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. Can the acceptance of mistake make the process of communication more effective?
2. Can appreciation make the process of communication more effective?
3. Why should one own one's mistakes?
4. Why should one appreciate others efforts at professional or personal fronts?
5. Should the common phrases of expressing thankfulness be used more often? Why?
6. Should the common phrases of expressing regret be used more often? Why?
7. Should the common phrases of expressing of apologizing be used more often? Why?
8. Write two expressions of expressing sincere and deep gratitude.
9. Mention two phrases of showing polite and courteous regret.

10. Use two expressions of saying sorry from the unit into sentences.

### **6.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. How can accepting your mistakes help you in your growth?
2. How can acknowledging other's achievements help you in establishing a positive environment at the workplace?
3. Give examples of how you appreciate your juniors/team members.
4. Give examples of how you acknowledge the support received from the boss or seniors.
5. How can incorporating the gestures of thankfulness, apology & regret be useful in establishing an effective process of communication?

### **6.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. Write in detail about expressing thanks with relevant references. Give examples in the form of dialogue between two friends and dialogue between a student and teacher.
2. Discuss the importance of using polite words for expressing regret and apologizing in the process of communication'. Write a dialogue to illustrate different situations to express regret and apology.
3. Describe in detail the significance of incorporating polite expressions of thankfulness, apology & responses to make the process of communication more effective. Please support your statements with certain simple examples that are drawn from routine conversations.

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## **6.6 Suggested Readings**

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1. Aarts, B. *Oxford Modern English Grammar*. Oxford UP, 2011.
2. Eastwood, J. *Oxford Practice Grammar*. Oxford UP, 2000.
3. Habeeb, G. *English for Speakers of Urdu: A Proficiency Course*. Orient Blackswan, 2013.

## **Unit - 7: Making Request, Seeking Help, Giving Advice**

### **Structure**

- 7.0** Introduction
- 7.1** Objectives
- 7.2** Making Request, Seeking Help, Giving Advice
  - 7.2.1** Making Requests
  - 7.2.2** Seeking Help
  - 7.2.3** Giving Advice
- 7.3** Learning Outcomes
- 7.4** Glossary
- 7.5** Sample Questions
- 7.6** Suggested Learning Resources

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### **7.0 Introduction**

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The English language has significance in Indian history due to its British colonial past. English despite being widely spoken in most parts of the world and with a history of use in India still creates confusion due to the many complexities that can make it difficult to use intuitively when needed by non-native speakers of the language. One of the ways to overcome such confusion is to read about the important aspects and basic phrases that can be used in basic conversation.

This Unit deals with three such important topics of English-speaking skills that can be useful in multiple situations. The three topics discussed in the Unit are (1) making requests, (2) seeking help and (3) giving advice. Imagine going to a new place and not knowing where something is or needing to tell your friend to study harder to pass an exam or just asking someone for help in understanding bus routes to your university. All of these different scenarios require the understanding and skills of requesting for help and advising someone. Making request is important as they can be useful to a person in not only their professional life but also in daily lives to ask for permission or seek something. Asking for help in English language is another important skill for non-native English speakers as it can be of help in emergencies and

times of need. There can be times when we might need to give some advice to others or give certain suggestions.

All of these topics are parts of our daily life and can be of great help at any point of time and knowing these topics and basic communication rules concerning them will be helpful for speakers learning the language.

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## 7.1 Objectives

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The objectives of this Unit are to help you:

- make requests, ask for help and give advice in a sufficiently fluent and coherent manner
  - make requests and ask for certain things from others in a proper manner
  - Make formal and informal requests when required and understand the differences in their usage and the situations that require them
  - Ask for help from others when needed
  - know when to be formal or informal in asking for help from others according to the demand of the situation
  - give advice and suggestions to others when needed according to the situation and learn the different ways in which advice can be given in a subtle or direct manner
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## 7.2 Making Request, Seeking Help, Giving Advice

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### 7.2.1 Making Requests:

When we need to ask something or make a request to someone we need to know how to make these requests politely. We make requests regularly but we often forget that the same types of requests cannot be used in all instances.

For example- a) *Hey Rahul, pass me a pen.*

This is an example of making requests in an informal conversational manner, often with friends.

Alternatively, b) *Can you give me a pen, please?*

This is a polite manner of requesting something from someone. ‘Please’ can be used at the end of the sentence like in the example given above or it can be used in the beginning as in

the following example, *“Please, can you give me a pen?”* It can even occur in the middle of a sentence for example, *“Can you please give me a pen?”*

Therefore, it is important to know the different ways in which requests can be made both formal and informal.

A key point to keep in mind when making requests is that they often start with modal verbs like can, could, will, would, and may. The framing of requests is usually done by asking questions. And these questions are usually formed by starting the question with the modal verbs.

a) *May I use your textbook for my next class?*

b) *Would mind lending me your textbook for my next class?*

### **Making Formal Requests:**

Formal Requests are usually made when asking someone older than us or in a higher position for something. A student could use it to request a further clarification of a concept in a class or to request for some information from an authority or administration. Formal requests can also be made in other situations that are formal like when making announcements, for example; *Could Mr. Smith report to the information desk, please?*

The modal verbs that are usually used when making formal requests are could, would, and may. This is because these are considered to be more formal and polite.

Examples of formal requests using ‘could’

a) *Could you tell me how to fill this form?*

b) *Could you help me with this project?*

c) *Could you possibly be able to complete the task tomorrow?*

Examples of formal requests using ‘would’

a) *Would you please explain this concept again?*

b) *Would it be fine if I ask a question?*

c) *Would you be able to tell me where room number 112 is?*

**Note- Sometimes ‘would’ and ‘could’ can be used in other forms to create even more complex formal requests.** The formal request. “*Would you mind getting me a pen?*” can be also written as, “*I wonder if you could get me a pen?*” or “*I wonder if you would get me a pen?*”

Examples of formal requests using ‘may’

a) *May I use your laptop to submit my assignment?*

The modal verbs ‘may’ can also be used when making formal requests but is mostly used when asking for permission. This will be discussed in the next section.

**Making Requests for Permission:**

Permissions, like requests, are also asking something from someone but unlike making requests, asking for permission leads to the conclusion that certain activities are policed or restricted and thus need to be permitted. It is more to do with rules in certain places like institutions, schools and universities. Another example is of asking for permission from parents. One of the examples of requesting for permission is:

a) *May I go to the washroom?*

This is a common request made by students in schools, colleges or even in universities.

The modal verb ‘may’ is commonly used for asking permission as it lends itself best to the formal dialogue where requesting for permission to do something is needed.

Here are some examples for the use of ‘may’ when requesting for permission

a) *May I sit besides you?*

b) *May I leave early today?*

c) *May I watch a movie?*

<b>Informal requests</b>	Will/Can + verb form	Will you do this? Can you do this?
<b>Formal requests</b>	Would/Could/May +Verb form	Would you be able to do this? Could you do this? May I ask you to please do this?

### **Making Informal Requests:**

Informal requests can be made to our friends and family. These are mostly used when the person to whom the request made is someone familiar. Some of the informal requests can be made by using can and will. These are polite ways to make a request but still more casual than could and would.

Examples of informal requests with ‘can:’

- a) *Can you bring me a glass of water?*
- b) *Can I get some advice on which book to read?*
- c) *Can you switch on the light?*

Examples of informal requests with ‘will’

- a) *Will you help me clean the room?*
- b) *Will it be alright if we eat out today?*
- c) *Will you pass the glass?*

Another way to make requests that sound casual is through the use of question tags. Question tags are used to make statements into questions. Usually, if the statement clause is positive then the question tag is negative and if the statement clause is negative, the question tag is positive. The examples are:

- a) *It is raining outside, isn't it?*
- b) *It is not raining outside, is it?*

An example of how question tags are used to make requests is, “*Can you give me a pen?*” may also be written by using question tags; “*You can give me a pen, can't you?*”

Some other examples of using question tags to make requests:

- a) *This won't be possible for you to do, will it?*
- b) *You will be on time, won't you?*
- c) *You can't help me with this question, can you?*

***Check your Progress***

1. Give two formal methods of making requests?

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2. Give two informal methods of making requests?

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3. Give examples of two situations where formal and informal ways of making requests are needed.

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**7.2.2 Seeking Help:**

There can be many situations in which there could be a need to ask for help like in emergencies, sickness or distress. We might also need to ask for help in simple everyday things like asking for directions, explanation or help in some work. Seeking help therefore is a very important speaking skill. It is usually done in the form of interrogative sentences. Interrogative sentences are sentences that ask questions and usually end in a question mark.

There is a difference between asking for help from officials or strangers and from friends or family. The latter does not require formality. Think about any incident where you have asked a younger sibling to help you do something. We often just tell them to do it rather than asking them for help. This can also be seen when our parents might tell us to do something like, “Carry these shopping bags to the car.” In this sentence, the parent is seeking help but these types of sentences are extremely informal and cannot be used in all situations.

**Asking for Help Formally:**

Many instances require the need to ask for help in a very polite and formal manner like when in institutional settings like schools, universities, hospitals, police stations etc. Just like making of formal requests, asking for help in a formal manner is usually done with the help of modals like ‘could’ and ‘would’.

One of the ways to ask for help is by using the modal ‘would’. It is used in formal conversations. Some of the examples are;

a) *Would you mind helping me with this application form?*

b) *Would you be able to drop me to the bus stop?*

c) *Would you mind telling me where the post office is?*

Another way to use ‘would’ is by adding the phrase ‘would it be possible’. This makes the request more polite.

a) *Would it be possible for you to help me with this question?*

b) *Would it be possible for you to carry my baggage?*

‘Could’ is also a formal way of asking for help but it is slightly less formal than ‘would’.

Examples of seeking help by using ‘could.’

a) *Could you tell me where the nearest bus stop is?*

b) *Could you help me with this math problem?*

c) *Could you come and help me with this package?*

Another way of asking for help by using ‘could’ to make it more polite is by adding the phrase ‘I wonder if you could’ for example; *“I wonder if you could help me with the assignment tomorrow?”* or by using the phrase ‘Could it be possible’ for example; *“Could it be possible for you to help me tomorrow?”*

### **Asking for Help Informally:**

Asking for help informally can be done in many ways. It can be through interrogative sentences or just through statements. We usually seek help informally in casual situations from our friends and family.

We can ask for help casually through interrogative sentences by using modals like ‘can’ and ‘will’.

a) *Can you help me, please?*

b) *Will you be able to help me with this concept tomorrow?*

c) *Will you help in organizing this seminar?*

Sometimes interrogative sentences like; *“Do you think you could help me with the homework?”* or *“Do you think you could pick me from the airport?”* can also be used.

Sometimes we can even use sentences like “*Please help me*” or “*Help me, please*” to seek help.

a) *I don't know where the classroom is. Please help me.*

b) *I lost my wallet in the city. Please help.*

#### **7.2.2.4 Making Use of Question Tags:**

Another way of seeking help is through the use of question tags in making requests. This is a very casual manner of asking for help from others. Some examples of seeking help by making use of question tags are:

a) *You don't know where the nearest playground is, do you?*

b) *You can tell me the address of the hospital, can't you?*

To be more polite it is better to use the modals ‘could’ and ‘would’.

a) *You couldn't complete the assignment, could you?*

b) *You would be able to help with the project tomorrow, wouldn't you?*

#### **Other phrases and questions that can be used to ask for help informally;**

1. Can I ask you for a favor?
2. Can you help me to find my phone?
3. I need help with something.
4. Do you mind helping with this?
5. Lend me a hand with this, please.

#### ***Check your Progress***

1. What are some of the ways in which help can be asked for in formal situations?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What are the ways in which help can be asked informally?

### 7.2.3 Giving Advice:

It is important to first know the difference between ‘advice’ and ‘advise’. ‘Advice’ is a noun referring to an opinion, recommendation while ‘advise’ is a verb meaning to give an opinion or to give a recommendation. Since giving advice means giving an opinion on something or someone it is uncountable and therefore usually advice is written as ‘some advice’.

There are many situations that might require us to advise others but the manner in which we give advice is important depending on the situation. There are many ways of giving advice that will be discussed in this Unit. Sometimes advice can be given directly in a more forceful manner and sometimes in an indirect manner as suggestions or in a very casual suggestive manner.

The following table shows the different ways in which direct and indirect advice can be given.

<b>Direct Advice that is Forceful</b>	<b>Indirect Advice that is not Forceful</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Giving Advice by Using Modal Verbs like ‘Should’ and ‘Ought to’</li><li>• Giving Advice by Using ‘Suggest’ and ‘Recommend’</li><li>• Using ‘Must’, ‘Have to’ and ‘Had Better’ to Give Strong Advice</li><li>• Using Imperatives to Give Advice</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Giving Advice by Asking Questions</li><li>• Giving Conditional Advice by putting oneself in others position</li></ul> <p>Eg: (1) It is cold outside. Do you think you should wear a sweater before you leave.</p> <p>(2) It is cold. I would wear a sweater before I leave, if I were you.</p> <p>Eg: It is cold outside. Wear a sweater before you leave.</p>

#### 7.2.3.2 Giving Advice by Using Modal Verbs such as ‘Should’ and ‘Ought to’:

The modal verbs ‘should’ and ‘ought to’ are used to give suggestions that are direct in nature but not very forceful. It is the most commonly used form of giving suggestions to others. Both are widely used but there is a slight difference between their usages. ‘Should’ is used to indicate that something should be done but ‘ought to’ implies some moral necessity, duty or urgency behind the suggestion.

Examples of giving advice by using the modal verb ‘should:’

- a) *You should eat all your vegetables.*
- b) *You should always be polite to your elders.*

Examples of 'ought to' to give advice

- a) *You ought to eat all your vegetables.*
- b) *You ought to do more exercise.*

**Notice the difference in the examples given above. They suggest the same thing but by changing 'should' to 'ought to', a sense of duty is added to the suggestion.**

### **7.2.3.3 Giving Advice by Using 'Suggest' and 'Recommend':**

Another way to give advice is to make use of the words 'suggest' or 'recommend'. These can be used to advise more directly. There are two ways in which these can be used to give advice:

#### **1. Suggest/Recommend + -ing form of the verb**

- a) *I suggest buying a new car.*
- b) *I recommend going to the hospital.*
- c) *I suggest doing the work on time.*

#### **2. Suggest/Recommend + that + simple present form of the verb**

- a) *I suggest that you buy a new car.*
- b) *I recommend that you go to the hospital.*
- c) *I suggest that we do the work on time.*

### **7.2.3.4 Giving Advice by Asking Questions:**

Many times, it is easier to give advice and suggestions framing questions to others. This form of giving advice is less forceful and direct.

Questions can be raised using modals like 'can' and 'could'. They can also be raised in other ways like adding 'how about' and 'why don't'.

Examples of raising questions as a form of giving advice:

- a) *Can you study for your exam instead of going to the movies?*
- b) *Can we cancel the meeting?*
- c) *Could we make more calls to the customer service?*
- d) *Could you make more tea for the guests?*
- e) *How about completing the assignment before going out with friends?*
- f) *How about joining an online certification course?*
- g) *Why don't you go for a walk in the park?*
- h) *Why don't you eat your meals on time?*

#### **7.2.3.5 Giving Conditional Advice:**

Conditional advice is another form of advice that is not very forceful. It is conditional in nature and is given from personal experience and by putting oneself in someone else's shoes.

Examples of conditional advice:

- a) *If I were you, I would tell the truth.*
- b) *If I was in your position, I would try harder for the scholarship.*

#### **7.2.3.6 Using 'Must', 'Have to', and 'Had Better' to Give Direct Advice:**

Sometimes we need to give direct and forceful advice to others and in such situations, 'must', 'have to' and 'had better' is used to emphasize the advice given.

Examples of giving direct advice:

- a) *You must take your medicines on time.*
- b) *You must attend the seminar.*
- c) *You have to go see the movie.*
- d) *You had better pay attention in class.*

#### **7.2.3.7 Using Imperatives to Give Advice:**

Imperative sentences are sentences that usually provide some direction, order, or instruction to others. Imperative sentences are made up of imperative verbs. The root form of the

verb is used to make imperative sentences. For example, “Clean the room” and “Give me that book.”

Imperative verbs can also be used to advise others. It is a direct way of giving advice. One of the common ways to do so is to use the structure- Imperative verb + ing form of verb- to give the advice.

Examples of imperative verbs to give advice:

- a) *Start going for a walk every day.*
- b) *Try becoming more patient.*
- c) *Stop wasting your time.*
- d) *Consider making an effort in the class.*

***Check your Progress***

1. What are the different ways of giving assertive advice?

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### **7.3 Learning Outcomes**

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After studying the Unit, you should achieve the following learning outcomes:

- gain knowledge about the different ways in which they can make requests, seek help, and give advice.
- understand the different situations in which they should use the formal, informal, direct and indirect methods of making requests, seeking help and giving advice.
- learn to apply the different ways of using these methods in everyday life.
- be able to evaluate situations and give appropriate answers and ask an appropriate question during conversations.
- achieve proficiency in speaking and using English when making requests, seeking help, and giving advice.

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### **7.4 Glossary**

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**Modal verbs:** A verb that indicates modality or the likelihood, ability, permission, request, suggestions, order, duty, or advice.

**Advice:** Guidance, opinion or recommendation for a future action

**Coherent:** Logical and consistent

**Conversation:** It is a talk between two or more people that includes the exchange of ideas and news.

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## 7.5 Sample Questions

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### 7.5.1 Objective Questions:

**Choose the most suitable answer:**

1. (Can/Ought) I help you in cleaning the house?
2. You (should/might) be on time when going to a meeting.
3. (May/ Can) I come in, sir?
4. (Could/Will) I take a leave of absence as I have a doctor's appointment?
5. You (must/can) wear seatbelts when driving.

**Fill in the blanks:**

6. You can help me with my homework, \_\_\_\_\_?
7. \_\_\_\_\_ we eat more healthy today?
8. \_\_\_\_\_ you pass me some butter for my bread?
9. \_\_\_\_\_ you help me take a photograph?
10. I \_\_\_\_\_ that we go on holiday next year.

### 7.5.2 Short Answer Questions:

1. Rani is trying to fill application forms for admission to a postgraduate programme. She is confused about where she should apply. She asks her friend Zoya to help her make a decision.

Give two examples each of how Zoya can advise her friend in a direct as well as an indirect manner.

2. Explain how you can request permission from someone. Also, explain in what situations you would need to ask for permission. Give an explanation with examples.
3. Your flight is arriving early in the morning at the airport. You need to seek help from your friend to come and pick you up from the airport and take you to your hostel. The help that you ask for, is it a formal or an informal request for help? Give examples of the different ways in which you can ask for help from your friend.
4. Explain how you can advise others that is not forceful in nature?
5. How can question tags be used to make requests and seek help casually in informal situations?

### **7.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. Explain how to make requests in both formal and informal situations with examples.
2. Explain the different ways in which advice can be given to others with the use of examples.
3. Explain how to seek help in both formal and informal situations with the help of examples.

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## **7.6 Suggested Readings**

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1. Aarts, B. *Oxford Modern English Grammar*. Oxford UP, 2011.
2. Eastwood, J. *Oxford Practice Grammar*. Oxford UP, 2000.
3. Habeeb, G. *English for Speakers of Urdu: A Proficiency Course*. Orient Blackswan, 2013.

## **Unit - 8: Seeking and Giving Directions**

### **Structure**

#### **8.0 Introduction**

#### **8.1 Objectives**

#### **8.2 Seeking and Giving Directions**

##### **8.2.1 Communication as an Art**

##### **8.2.2 Seeking Knowledge and Asking for Directions**

##### **8.2.3 Giving Directions**

##### **8.2.4 Seeking and Giving Directions in the Classroom**

##### **8.2.5 Seeking and Giving Directions in Day-to-Day Life**

##### **8.2.6 Examples of “Seeking and Giving Directions” in Practice**

#### **8.3 Learning Outcomes**

#### **8.4 Glossary**

#### **8.5 Sample Questions**

#### **8.6 Suggested Learning Resources**

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### **8.0 Introduction**

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Seeking and giving directions are a part and parcel of daily life, be it in the place of learning (school/college) or in public places, offices, buildings, streets and the like. The situation can arise where one has to seek for directions and there are situations where one is expected to give directions. In both these cases, there is a proper way of communicating with people. Communication has to be done in such a way that the message is received clearly and completely and also it must be done in a way that good relationships would be built amongst people. There are different ways of speaking to someone while seeking for directions. Depending on the situation, one may use formal or informal language.

This Unit is specifically designed keeping in mind the hindrances that might come about while in the process of seeking and giving directions. It must be understood that while some people are able to communicate their doubts in a proper way, others cannot for various reasons. The reasons could be problems with language or speech, a non-conducive atmosphere and other valid reasons. In the same way, a person’s directions can be misconstrued or misheard.

***Check your Progress***

1. What are the formal and informal ways of communication?

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## **8.1 Objectives**

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The objectives of this Unit are to help you in the following:

- seeking and giving directions are important aspects in communication and in day-to-day life.
- effectively being able to give directions.
- grasp the problems faced by “seekers” in comprehending directions for a certain method of communication.
- utilizing of certain tools and techniques of seeking and giving directions that will contribute to learning.

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## **8.2 Seeking and Giving Directions**

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Learning requires the acquisition of knowledge. By gathering knowledge about things, events and other phenomena of nature that were not previously known to an individual, learning can be accomplished. It is a widely accepted form of socialization of individuals. sometimes learning is based on experiences and sometimes it is based on skills. For example, when one learns to not play with fire or poke a snake, it is experience based learning. Similarly, learning to ride a bike or a vehicle or even learning to handle heavy machinery is a skill that is acquired through diligent effort.

This Unit concentrates on the second kind of learning. This involves the gathering of skills through research, reading, instruction and other interactions. There are many kinds of skills that can be acquired through learning that include not only job related skills but also knowledge-based critical engagement with nature, outer-space, individuals, society and structures of knowledge. The various subjects within the natural sciences and social sciences are part of this kind of learning.

**Effective Communication:**

Learning is highly dependent on effective communication. One of the most important aspects of effective communication in distance learning is to always be in touch. This advice is helpful for both the tutor as well as the student. The second important aspect of effective communication is accessibility; this not only means access to learning materials for the students but also accessibility of mediums that will help in the instruction, interaction and comprehension (Example of such a medium would be postal mails or emails; access to internet as well as access to basic necessities that involves learning like electricity, tables, stationery etc.).

### **Classroom Communication:**

Teachers should be careful in their attitude towards their students. A teacher should always try to ascertain the background of each individual student and the access of the student to basic necessities. Depending on that, teachers should work towards building environments that are conducive to learning. Teachers should be careful about their tone when communicating with the students. Having an attitude of helpfulness, speaking with clarity and communicating precisely what one desires helps the students respond accordingly towards the instructions provided by her tutor.

Students should always listen to the instructions given by their teachers carefully. It is an essential part of effective communication. Having a friendly attitude that is open to learning is also helpful for the student. It is best if the student remembers and inculcates the habit of gleaning as much information, instruction and interaction with her tutors in order to give her best to any task put before her. A student who has her priorities in place and remembers why she has chosen to pursue her course through distance learning will be able to bring her best to the table.

### **8.2.1 Communication as an Art:**

Communication is an important aspect of learning. Effective communication can open doors and show us opportunities that we would have otherwise overlooked. Communication is an art that involves the exchanging of ideas and the courteous techniques of seeking and giving instructions or directions to one another. It is the first tool of seeking knowledge. It is through communication that people form social groups and develop deeper relationships. In the act of giving and seeking directions, people learn to appreciate the differences and support each other's' similarities.

There are two kinds of communication – informal and formal. The best way to make the most out of any exchange with another person is to understand when to use formal and when to use informal communication. In terms of seeking and giving directions, it is best to use formal

style of communication when it is being done via written method. On the other hand, with intimate relationships, informal exchange of information is definitely possible. The art is to understand when to use which form of communication. This Unit will help you understand these various aspects of communication and exchange of information.

### **8.2.2 Seeking Knowledge and Asking for Directions:**

Seeking knowledge is a time-honoured tradition of individuals in societies. Various cultures have had different instructions for both the teacher and the student when it comes to seeking knowledge. The respect that is afforded the teacher and the patience that a teacher has to show her student are long-standing customs.

Humans uniquely start to seek knowledge from the time of birth. They continue to pursue all kinds of knowledge throughout their life. As children, humans seek knowledge through playfulness and experimentation. It is only by dabbling with various sounds that children settle on the sounds that make meaning and sense in the grown-up world. It is through their playfulness including repetition of an activity, role play, building new games with rules etc., that they learn new things and seek knowledge.

As humans grow older, the quest for seeking knowledge does not get diminished. Depending on the circumstances in which they are born, humans learn various skills in order to survive. The education systems of the modern world are structured such that children grow up to acquire some skill or another that will help them continue to exist in a certain form of comfort. This leads to individuals seeking various ways of increasing their skill-set that will help them reach a higher form of well-being.

There are different ways in which instructions and directions for learning can be given to those seeking directions. The person giving directions and the one seeking knowledge should always try to make the instruction engaging and precisely instructive. There are four points that should always be remembered while giving directions –

1. S/he should always seek to be proactive and engaging with those seeking knowledge. Similarly, the one seeking knowledge should appreciate the efforts of the teacher and try to respond appropriately to the efforts the teacher is making. Both should try to go the extra mile to make the work easier for each other.

2. S/he should always be careful that all her instructions are well-connected and make a coherent sense overall.

3. S/he should show empathy towards the one seeking knowledge so as to build better relationships.

4. S/he can best support her methods with various forms of courtesy. The seeker of knowledge should also show courtesy when receiving the desired information.

### **8.2.3 Giving Directions:**

When person is asked for directions, he or she has to keep in mind that the one asking for directions is new to the field, the place or even the subject. One also has to keep in mind that the person seeking directions might have some discomfort to be in such a position of not knowing something. This is why it is important to be kind and patient enough to listen to the person's queries and needs without making the other person feel uncomfortable. The case with most people is that they are almost always in a rush themselves and thus, usually ending up giving people the wrong directions or else, they leave the person feeling awkward and uncomfortable by refusing to acknowledge his or her queries. Refusing help to those in need would be a disservice to the community in general. It ruins a person's day, possible future liaisons and impressions that a person might have of a place or a person.

Therefore, it is important and necessary to keep a few things in mind while being faced with a person with queries or in need of help and directions.

1. The person requiring help and directions must be new to the place (or subject in case of the classroom).
2. The person is already in an uncomfortable situation or position to have to be asking for help.
3. One must listen to the person and understand exactly what they need and give directions such that it does not confuse them in any way.
4. Giving directions is not exclusively about verbally dictating the directions. Body language and hand gestures are also equally important.
5. One must understand that it is their duty to make the person seeking directions comfortable enough to ensure the person trusts them.

One needs to keep the above in mind when faced with someone who needs help or directions. A person also has to bear in mind the following few questions when in such a situation.

- a. What does the person need?
- b. Where and how can a person obtain this?
- c. How can one make sure the person understands the directions given?

#### **8.2.4 Seeking and Giving Direction in the Classroom:**

The classroom is a forum and a platform where people from various backgrounds and learning capacities come to study and gain knowledge. Seeking and giving directions are important aspects of learning. Be it in traditional forms of learning (classrooms) or in non-traditional forms of learning (distance learning, online classes). Sometimes, due to some lapses in communication and direction giving on the instructor or the teacher's part, the student is unable to understand the exact purpose of an assignment or task. Some other times, it could arise that the teacher has been clear on instructions related to a task. A student may have misunderstood or is unclear about the instructions. It is the duty of said student to seek clarity from the instructor or teacher or from fellow classmates and school mates.

It is only through effective seeking and giving of directions that holistic and complete learning can be achieved. What the unit tries to do, then, is to show how the aspect of seeking directions (which is usually being done by the student or learner) is as important as giving directions (which is done by teacher or instructor). In any form of learning, both aspects are important because it is only through effective seeking and giving of directions can learning be implemented.

The following are examples of situations where a student may require seeking directions:

1. Directions regarding an assignment or a task that has been allotted to the class, in terms of subject matter, sources, word count, last date and others.
2. In the case of a new student, directions to the principal's office, staff/teachers'/faculty room or other facilities and rooms.
3. Directions on how to formulate a letter for a specific purpose or purposes like permission for leaves, half-days and permissions for various other activities.
4. Directions on how to perform tasks during laboratory practical exercises etc.

In each case, the approaches that the person or student must practice when seeking for directions must be polite and carefully thought out. The student in question should remember that he or she is the one in need of help. Communication must therefore be well thought out and the words must be framed accordingly. The “seeker” of directions has to be clear on what they want to know and must, therefore, approach people in a way that is polite and courteous. Conversations must start with “excuse me”, “please” and “may I?” and must end with a “thank you”. This is the only way in which a student will be able to get the help he or she needs while also simultaneously building stronger relationships and bonds with their peers.

When it comes to giving directions, the fellow students or classmates who are approached must be empathetic and kind. As has already been mentioned, the “giver” of directions needs to listen to the “seeker” carefully and make sense of what the latter needs in order to be able to give the proper directions adequately and clearly. In the case of a classroom, where students may feel insecure or uncomfortable asking the teacher or instructor directly for help, a peer’s duty is to ensure that they are as equipped to deal with the situation.

Replies by people giving directions must also be polite and courteous, keeping in mind one’s own capacity for helping as well.

For example, sentences or replies can begin with –

1. “of course”; or
2. “not a problem”;

And in case the person in question is unsure of the question, they may seek the help of someone else in turn or else refer to another person by saying –

3. “I’m sorry, I am not sure of this myself. May I refer you to someone else who might be able to help?”

### **8.2.5 Seeking and Giving Direction in Day-to-Day Life:**

There are many instances where people will be faced with the situation of having to seek or give directions in their daily lives.

Below are examples of a few places where people would need the most help with directions since these are places that may not be the easiest places to get around.

- a. School/College/University
- b. Library
- c. Post Office or any other kind of postal service

- d. Government office (Transport office, Passport office etc.)
- e. Hospital or Clinics of any kind
- f. Departmental store or any other kind of store
- g. Car Garage or any kind of service centre
- h. Bank
- i. Market
- j. Fire Station
- k. Police Station
- l. Airport or Railway/Bus Station

These are a few places where one might be needing help with various issues. One also has to be ready to meet various other people who might be in need of directions and help. Courteousness and politeness is of the utmost importance in this case because (except in the case of school or college) the people a person will meet will be strangers in most cases.

When a person needs the help of someone else, it is not right to barge into people's spaces and demand that they give them directions immediately. Boundaries and people must be respected regardless of the emergency of the situation. It is necessary to ensure level-headedness while faced with a crisis of not knowing and one must approach the next person with caution.

The following are a few things one must keep in mind when having to approach a complete stranger for help especially in a public place.

1. The person in need of help must speak clearly and fluently in whatever language they believe would be best for the situation.
2. It is also not right to assume that the next person would understand the primary language one speaks in. Therefore, English is the more preferred of languages to begin a conversation with.
3. One's body language and gestures must reflect politeness. No one likes to help a rude person.
4. "Please", "Sorry" and "Thank You" are a must to any approach, especially in places where the other person might seem busy and preoccupied.
5. "Excuse me" is also a good way to enter into conversation with someone to seek for directions.

When faced with a situation where one must give directions to a person, it is important to bear in mind that the person in question must be new to the place or situation. Therefore, one

must extend a helpful hand to those in need of help. This will give the person a good impression about the people and the place and will also ensure that everybody is able to complete the task or work they are there for. Following are a few ways in which a person can assist another person in need of their help and give proper directions to them.

1. Being gracious and kind to the person who is seeking for help. We do not know their situation and therefore, kindness is a necessity.
2. Body language and gestures are also a must in this case. Simply talking to them might not be enough. When a person asks for directions to a certain place or an office, it is also useful to employ hand gestures. Directions are subjective.
3. Making sure one gives the correct directions by being as clear and as simple as possible.
4. It is also usually the case where the person who is sought for help might not be sure of the place that the person needs help with. In this case, it is also useful to refer the person to someone else who might be able to help them better; like a desk clerk or an information helpdesk.
5. Sometimes, even the language that the person seeking directions uses might not be a comfortable area for the person who has been approached. In this case, one can take the help of someone else or refer the “seeker” to someone who might be able to assist the person better.

These are a few useful points that people must keep in mind when faced with such situations. The next topic will highlight a few examples (both in the classroom and in day-to-day life) that one can follow or take help from when faced with having to seek or give directions.

#### **8.2.6 Examples of “Seeking and Giving Directions” in Practice:**

These are examples of possible conversations between people seeking directions and those having to give directions. Examples **A** through **C** are classroom scenarios while examples **D** through **F** are day-to-day scenarios.

- A. This is a scenario where a new student (NS) asks another student (S) for directions to the principal’s office.**

*NS: Excuse me. I am new here. Please could you direct me to the principal’s office?*

*S: Yes. It is the first room on the left down this hallway.*

*NS: Thank you so much!*

\* NS needs to approach S politely.

\* S needs to make sure he/she is faced towards the hallway and gives the appropriate hand gestures showing which “left” he/she is talking about.

**B. This is a scenario where a student who has been absent the previous day (AS) needs help with a particular task assigned to them on that day.**

AS: *Hello, I was absent yesterday. Please can you help me out with this assignment?*

S: *Sure, what do you need help with?*

AS: *I am not sure where to look for sources or material and also of the word count.*

S: *The word count is 1500 words but I am not sure of where to look for sources either. Let me ask someone else and get back to you. Or else, we can go and find out together.*

AS: *That would be very helpful. We could go and find out together. Thank you!*

**C. This is a scenario where a student (S1) needs help formulating a letter for a half-day from school/college S1 asks another student (S2) for help.**

S1: *Excuse me; please could you help me frame this letter I am writing to the principal seeking a half-day leave from school. I am not feeling well.*

S2: *I am so sorry to hear that! I am not so good at writing letters myself but why don't you take help from S3? I will speak to him for you.*

S1: *Yes, that would be fine too. Thank you so much!*

S2: *No problem, you are most welcome. Get well soon!*

The above are a few examples that are common for school or college students. Following are a few examples of conversations at public places where a person is seeking directions from another.

**D. A scene at the bank**

X approaches Y with caution because Y seems to be preoccupied with filling out a form similar to the one X is filling.

X: *Excuse me. I am sorry to disturb you but I see that you are also filling out a withdrawal slip. Please could you help me out with mine?*

Y: *Yes, sure. Let me just finish filling out mine and I will help you out with yours.*

X: *Thank you!* (X then sits on the bench and patiently waits for Y to finish filling out the form).

### **E. A scene at the hospital/clinic**

X has never been to this particular hospital before and is unsure of where the ENT doctor's room is. X approaches Y for help.

X: *Excuse me, would you mind telling me where the ENT doctor's room is? I have never been to this hospital before.*

Y: *I am so sorry but I have not been here before either and I am here to get an X-Ray. The helpdesk is on the left side of the entrance to the building. Perhaps they can assist you better.*

X: *Oh, I see. Thank you so much!*

### **F. A scene in a street**

X is new to the locality and wants to know where the nearest post office is. X approaches Y who is strolling. X makes sure to approach Y politely.

X: *Hello, I am sorry to disturb you. Would you mind telling me where the nearest post office is? I seem to be lost.*

Y: *Not a problem! It is just around this corner. I am going there myself.*

X: *What a relief! Thank you so much.*

In the above situations, we find that it is not always the case that the person who is approached for help knows what to do. However, the person tries as much as possible to ensure that the other person is not uncomfortable and gets the help he/she needs.

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## **8.3 Learning Outcomes**

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There are many kinds of learning outcomes that the seekers of knowledge will enjoy, on successful completion of this Unit. These outcomes are multi-faceted. You should be able to:

- understand the importance of effective communication
- be able to acquire extensive knowledge through informative interaction
- differentiate between a classroom atmosphere that is conducive to learning and one that is not

- be able to garner enough knowledge through courteous and effective communication

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## 8.4 Glossary

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**Analytical:** Using analysis or logical capabilities

**Clarify:** To make something (a concept/subject/term/theory) clear and understandable

**Competent:** As having the necessary skills for a task or a role

**Comprehend:** Understand

**Conducive:** Which tends to promote, assist and make possible

**Depth:** The quality of a topic or a subject to be deep or intense

**Develop:** Growing from a primary and basic stage to a more advanced stage

**Effective:** That which produces the desired effect; successful (use of)

**Empathetic:** Understanding and being aware of

**Epistemophile:** One who loves knowledge and continues to seek it

**Extensive:** Something extending over a wide range

**Gestures:** A movement of the body to show an idea, attitude or direction

**Holistic:** Wholesome or how every part of something is connected and contributes to making it a whole

**Honing:** To make better or polish

**Impartiality:** Not preferring something or someone else over others, be fair

**Implementation:** The process of making certain law, tools or techniques active

**Lapses:** Slight errors

**Liaisons:** A close bond or connections

**Multi-faceted:** Having many layers or aspects

**Reasoning:** Thinking

**Satiated:** Satisfied or content

**Simultaneously:** At the same time

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## 8.5 Sample Questions

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### 8.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. The most important aspect of effective communication is \_\_\_\_\_.

- (a) attitude
- (b) staying in touch
- (c) being responsible
- (d) always doing as the teacher says

2. Effective Learning includes the instructor \_\_\_\_\_.

- (a) showing courtesy and empathy
- (b) mails
- (c) discussions
- (d) a and c

3. Humans have been learning since \_\_\_\_\_.

- (a) school
- (b) they started playing
- (c) being born
- (d) they acquire language

4. Communication is an art because \_\_\_\_\_.

- (a) It involves the exchange of information
- (b) writing postcards
- (c) shorthand
- (d) globalisation

5. Seeking knowledge helps individuals develop \_\_\_\_\_.

- (a) skills
- (b) better relations
- (c) critical thinking
- (d) creative thinking

6. Doubts should be cleared to promote \_\_\_\_\_.

- (a) healthy living
- (b) clear communication

- (c) deep thinking
  - (d) build character
7. An instructor or seeker should show empathy towards a seeker of directions in \_\_\_\_\_.
- (a) understanding the instructions
  - (b) lack of internet
  - (c) blaming the instructor for not understanding
  - (d) being disrespectful
8. An instructor or giver should \_\_\_\_\_.
- (a) refuse help to the seeker
  - (b) bully the seeker for not knowing
  - (c) patiently listen to the seeker's questions and then decide if it is possible to help
  - (d) give the seeker wrong directions
9. Traditionally, learning can be done in \_\_\_\_\_.
- (a) classroom
  - (b) home
  - (c) library
  - (d) all of the above
10. Learning entails \_\_\_\_\_.
- (a) face-to-face learning
  - (b) seeking directions
  - (c) being attentive to instructions
  - (d) all of the above

### **8.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. Why is proper communication important in daily life?
2. What do you understand by "seeking or asking of directions"?
3. What is the importance of practicing proper etiquette giving directions?
4. What is the role of effective speaking in the classroom?
5. How can one improve one's skills in speaking?

### 8.5.3 Long Answer Questions:

1. What is the difference between “seeking and giving directions” in the classroom and in day-to-day life?
2. Why do people fail to make or create better relationships with other people that they meet? How can this be rectified?
3. How does one cultivate a better sense of confidence and self-esteem through effective speaking and communication?

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### 8.6 Suggested Readings

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1. Aarts, B. *Oxford Modern English Grammar*. Oxford UP, 2011.
2. Eastwood, J. *Oxford Practice Grammar*. Oxford UP, 2000.
3. Habeeb, G. *English for Speakers of Urdu: A Proficiency Course*. Orient Blackswan, 2013.

# Maulana Azad National Urdu University

Programme: UG (B.A / B.SC / B.Com )

I Semester Examination

Paper Code: **UGEN101AET** Paper Title: **Communication Skills in English 1**

Time: 2 Hours

Total Marks: 35

Note: This question paper consists of three parts: Part – A, Part-B and Part-C. Number of words to answers each question is only indicative. Attempt all parts.

**Part–A** contains **05** compulsory questions of multiple choice/fill in the blank/very short answer type question. Answer all questions. Each question carries **1** mark. **(5x1=5 marks)**

**Part-B** contains **08** questions of which students are supposed to answer **05** questions. Answer each question in approximately 200 words. Each question carries **04** marks. **(5x4=20 marks)**

**Part-C** contains **02** questions of which students are supposed to answer **01** question. Answer each question in approximately 250 words. Each question carries **10** marks. **(1x10=10 marks)**

## **Part-A**

Question: 1:

- i. We use informal English when we speak to..... (officials / friends).
- ii. There are ..... (26/44) sounds in English language.
- iii. According to RP, there are ----- (8/12) diphthongs in English Language.
- iv. There are ..... (6 / 3) aspirated sounds in English language.
- v. The letter..... (m/b) is silent in the word “comb”.

## **Part-B**

2. Define and discuss the difference between ‘formal and informal English’.
3. Write a short paragraph on the use of ‘Smart Phone’.
4. Explain briefly problems you face in speaking English.
5. Write a brief note on SMS language.
6. Describe your favourite political leader in a paragraph.
7. Write a short description of your home town.
8. Write a letter to your friend inviting him to attend your brother’s marriage.

## **Part-C**

9. Discuss the ‘Consonants Sounds’ of English with appropriate examples.
10. Write an e-mail to your friend about ‘Azad Day Celebrations.’