Listening and Speaking Skills

Speaking Skills

Speaking: is an act of making vocal sounds. It means expressing the person's thoughts and feelings in spoken language.

Speaking is the productive skill in the oral mode. It is more complicated than it seems and involves more than just pronouncing words.

There are three kinds of speaking situations in which we find ourselves:

1. Interactive speaking: include face-to-face conversations and telephone calls, in which we are alternately listening and speaking, and in which we have a chance to ask for clarification, repetition, or slower speech from our conversation partner.

2. Partially interactive: such as when giving a speech to a live audience, where the convention is that the audience does not interrupt the speech. The speaker however can see the audience and judge from the expressions on their faces and body language whether or not he or she is being understood.

3. Non-interactive: such as when recording a speech for a radio broadcast.

Types of Speaking

- **Formal speaking:** is a type of speaking which does not involve personal matter. In this type, the speaker has to follow some norms and principles whenever conveying the message in the formerly and structured manner for the firm. Formal speaking can be included conferences, debates, presentations, speeches, etc.
- **Informal Speaking:** It takes place in an unstructured manner and outside of the formal one. Informal speaking is a type of speaking which involves the personal things that mean whenever people communicate informally, they never bound by their organizational positions.
- **Task-oriented speaking:** It is a form of a formal speaking, this type of speaking is concerned with conversion among officers, employees, colleagues and related to the organization.
- **Semi-Formal Speaking:** This is the type of speaking which combines formal and informal speaking. This speaking takes place mainly in offices between the people nearly in the same post.

- **Interpersonal Speaking:** It is talking between two persons. This type may be either formal or informal.

Speaking Skills: are the skills that give us the ability to communicate effectively. These skills allow the speaker, to convey his message in a passionate, thoughtful, and convincing manner. Speaking skills also help to assure that one won't be misunderstood by those who are listening. There are four important skills that you need to develop:

1. **Fluency:** it is about how comfortable and confident you are in speaking English. If you can speak for an extended period of time, that is an indicator of strong fluency. It is also about showing a clear connection between each point that you are trying to make. This skill means that the listener can follow what you are saying and does not get lost.
2. **Vocabulary:** being a good speaker means constantly growing your vocabulary. The more interesting words you know, the stronger your speaking skills. The best way to grow your vocabulary is to read in English and make a note of any new words that you encounter in a vocabulary notebook.
3. **Grammar:** the fewer mistakes you make, the better your speaking skill will be. However, do not worry about making mistakes, a good speaker does not have to use perfect grammar. It is a good idea to make sure that you have mastered the major tenses.
4. **Pronunciation:** is a complex area, with a lot of sub skills that can be practiced.
   An average speaker can speak and be understood. A skilled speaker can use the sub skills of pronunciation to emphasise and make the communicative effect of their speech more impactful. The sub skills of pronunciation include: word and sentence stress, intonation, rhythm and the use of the individual sounds of a language.
   A good way to practice your pronunciation is to copy, simply listen to how someone with good pronunciation speaks, and try to imitate them as closely as possible.

Preparation before speaking

Good speakers have the ability to quickly analyse and absorb the information given to them, assess it fast and to make a decision and communicate that decision to other. Therefore, the speaker has to:

- **Be an active listener:** The key factor towards making you a person who can respond intelligently is to be an active listener. This means listening carefully and giving your full attention to the words, tone, emotion and logic behind what the other one is saying.

- **Be a quick organiser of thoughts:** The speaker should have the ability to think fast. It is important to adopt some frameworks or models to structure new information into something coherent that we can respond with. One can break down issues or ideas into past, present and future.
- **Structure the speech in mind:** These are useful frameworks to organise ideas and thoughts quickly. The basic structure of any speech involves: Opening, Body, and Conclusion. It is very useful in delivering speeches especially for speaking in situations such as topics during meetings.

Speaking skills required in public speech

1. Prepare and practice: The more you know what you want to say, the better you'll get at it.
   - First, brainstorm the topic of your speech and research it, if you need to.
   - Write down all the points you want to make and then organize them into an outline.
   - Practice your speech out loud at least 3 to 5 times.
2. Know your audience: The better you know your audience or listeners, the easier it will be to connect to them as you speak. When you are able to make that connection, you'll hold their attention.
3. Keep the speech short and simple: When you are speaking don't try to impress with complex descriptions. Shorter messages leave more impression, they are also easier for your audience to remember.
4. Interact with your audience: Lectures will rarely have the same impact on an audience that an open discussion will. Make sure to establish eye contact with your audience, and keep it throughout your speech.
5. Speak with sincerity and passion: When a person wants to leave a lasting impression with the audience about one’s topic then be sure that you are true to yourself and your topic as you speak .Don't be afraid to insert enthusiasm and passion into the speech as well.
6. Close your speech in a memorable way: Give your audience something to think about as you finish up your speech. It is good to summarize your main points one more time.
7. Fluency: Try to speak as fluent as possible (even making some grammar mistakes). Then, after making one’s speaking fluent, one can focus on grammar aspects.

Speaking skills required in meetings:

Speaking skills are very important in business. Effective business meeting communication is very much a learnable skill.

1. Talk to the entire group: When speaking in groups moves your eyes around and talk to anyone who's listening to what you have to say. "When responding to a question, address the entire group, not just the person who asked the question"

2. Reach out and encourage feedback: Actively encourage comment and feedback based on what you have to contribute.

3. Mirror the tenor of the meeting: establishing a comfortable atmosphere where everyone feels at ease. One effective way to achieve that is to establish a consistency in communication.

4. Don’t take long time: be thorough, but don't take much time to get your message across that you lose others' attention.

Extra skills needed in speaking.

- The speaker has to Pronounce the distinctive sounds of a language clearly enough so that people can distinguish them.
- Use the correct forms of words for example, changes in the tense, case, or gender.
- Put words together in correct word order.
- Use vocabulary appropriately.
- Use the language that is appropriate to the situation and the relationship to the conversation partner.
- Make the main ideas stand out from supporting ideas or information.

How to improve speaking and pronunciation skills:

1. Listen More: try to listen to the words which are spoken by others or any audio clip and try to understand the stretch of words, you can use headphone or earphone to listen clearly then you will pronounce the words after listening.
2. Practice where and when you can: Any practice is good whether you speak to someone who is a native English speaker or not.
3. Build your confidence: use simple English sentence structure that you know is correct, so that you can concentrate on getting your message across.
4. Try NOT to translate into and from your own language: This takes too much time and will make you more hesitant.

5. If you forget a word then say things that 'fill' the conversation. This is better than keeping completely silent.
6. Don't speak too fast: It's important to use a natural rhythm when speaking English, but if you speak too fast it will be difficult for people to understand you.
7. Try to relax when you speak: When you speak English at normal speed, you'll discover that many of the pronunciation skills, such as linking between words, will happen automatically.
8. Remember to be polite use "please" and "thank you" if you ask someone to do something for you.

Barriers while speaking: There are certain barriers to speaking:

1. Unclear messages.
2. Lack of consistency in the communication process.
3. Incomplete sentences.
4. Not understanding the receiver.
5. Words can have different meanings to different listener.
6. Use of negative words.