Communication Skills for EFL Learners
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1. What is communication?

Communication is the sharing of ideas and information.

A communication process involves a sender, a receiver and the message to be sent.

Effective Communication is a process where a message is received and understood by the receiver in the manner that the sender intended it to be.

A common mistake people make is to focus only on the delivery of message, rather than how it is received. Communication has to be two-way!

2. Elements of the communication process

Sender- formulate (encode) an idea or **message** - through communication **channel** deliver the message to **receiver**, who receives or acts on the message (decode).

Receiver responds by formulating his own message and communicates to sender (**feedback**) .

Communication is a two way process, that is, the ability to receive il as important as the ability to send. For successful communication, feedback is important- it tells how the message is being interpreted.
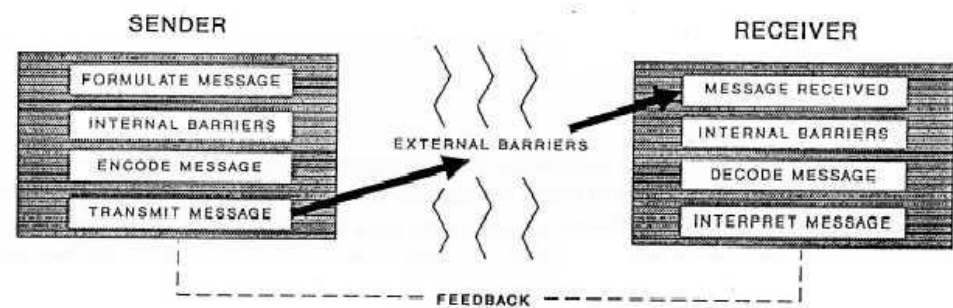
Message

Encode

Send

Decode

Interpret

Feedback
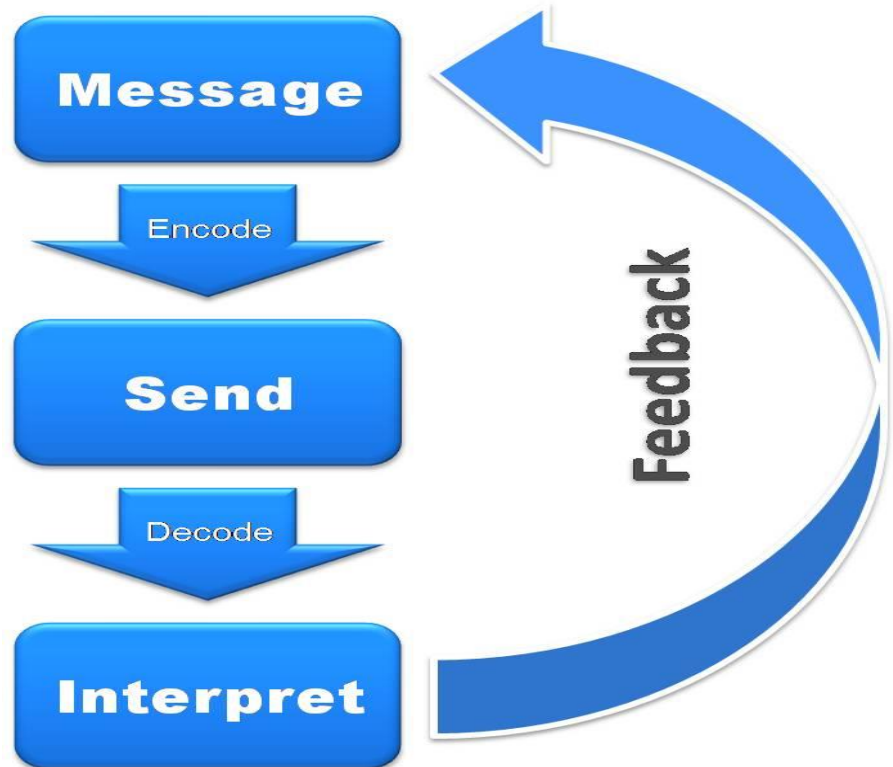
3. Communication barriers

External

- **Noise**
- **Time**
- **Environment**

Internal

- **Physical**   (time, environment, comfort, needs etc.)
- **Cultural**   (ethnic, religious, cultural and social differences)
- **Perceptional** (perceptional differences)
- **Motivational** (lack of motivation)
- **Experiential** (lack of similar experience)
- **Emotional**   (personal feelings at the moment)
- **Linguistic**   (different languages or vocabulary)
- **Non-verbal** (non-word messages)
- **Context** (situation of the sector, the public space, attention -high / low)
- **Mode** (differences in way a message is sent).

How to minimize communication barriers?

- **Source** (expertise and clarity about topic , information should be useful and accurate)
- **Message (**precise , based to receiver needs and understanding)
- **Encoding** (to prepare message to take consideration potential sources of confusion, for example, cultural issues, mistaken assumptions, and missing information)
- **Channel** (to choose right channel for message communication- verbal including face-to-face meetings, telephone and videoconferencing; and written including letters, emails, memos and reports)
- **Decoding** Just as successful encoding is a skill, so is successful decoding (involving, for example, taking the time to read a message carefully, or listen actively to it.)
- **Receiver (**each individual member of audience enters into the communication process with ideas and feelings that will influence their understanding of particular message, and their response)
- **Feedback (** audience will provide verbal and nonverbal reactions to communicated message. It is the only thing that allows to be confident that audience has understood/misunderstood message)
- **Context (** it may include the surrounding environment or broader culture, i.e. corporate culture, international cultures, etc.)

4. The key elements of good communication

WHO	Your audience	To whom talking Know the needs of your audience Different audience, different message
WHAT	Your message	What you want to say What is the purpose How to know how to formulate ideas
HOW	Your style	Style, attitude Verbal text & non-verbal communication

5. Communication style

Passive-Assertive-Agressive

Passive-The passive personality type places others before himself and feels that he is inferior. The passive personality looks down or away and has feelings of inferiority and self-anger.

Assertive- The assertive personality believes that equality is the key to communication. Assertive personalities make direct eye contact, speak with firm voices and have high self-esteem while having self-respect and the respect from others.

Agressive-The aggressive personality feels superior, uses a loud voice and stands up for self-rights while violating the rights of others. The aggressive personality is feared, is disrespected and has guilt and a low self-esteem.

6.1. How to communicate- verbal and non-verbal communication

Elements in Conveying a Message: The Mehrabian Study
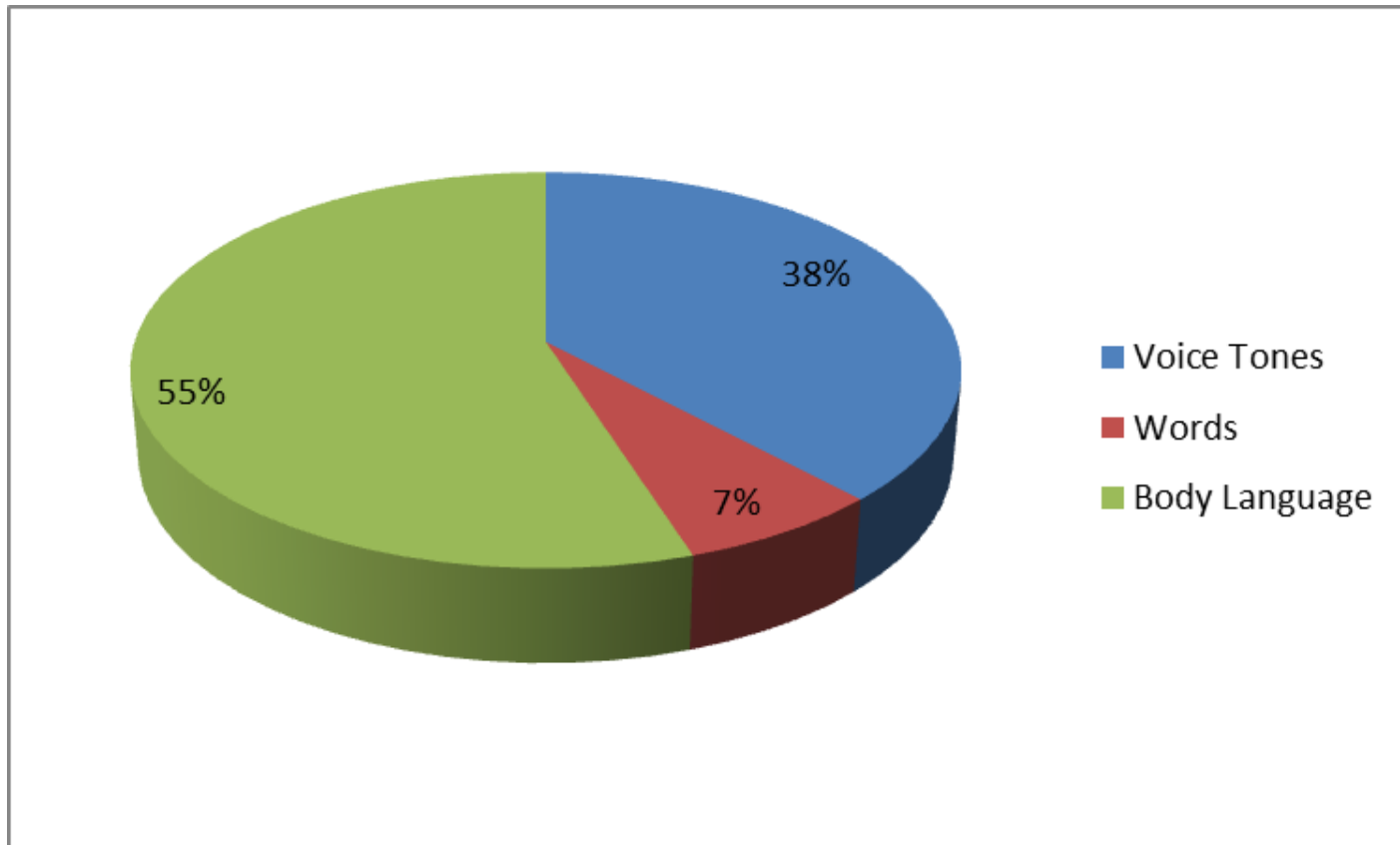
Verbal communication

- Words are used as tools of interaction between two or more individuals

- It can be **oral** or **written**

Researchers have found that, on an average, a person spends 10 to 11 hours everyday in verbal communication i.e. speaking, listening, reading or writing.

- Some common forms of verbal communication are conversations, speeches, letters, newspapers, magazines, audio and video, telephonic conversation etc.

Non-Verbal communication

Communication can also occur without words. Human senses- ears, eyes, touch and smell work as codes of communication.

Nonverbal communication cues can play several roles

- **Repetition**: they can repeat the message the person is making verbally

- **Contradiction**: they can contradict a message the individual is trying to convey

- **Substitution:** they can substitute for a verbal message

- **Complementing**: they may add to or complement a verbal message

- **Accenting:** they may accent or underline a verbal message

Non verbal communication

Facial expressions (The human face is extremely expressive, able to express countless emotions without saying a word).

Body movements and posture (This type of nonverbal communication includes your posture, bearing, stance, and subtle movements).

Gestures (The meaning of gestures can be very different across cultures and regions, so it's important to be careful to avoid misinterpretation).

Eye contact (The way you look at someone can communicate many things, including interest, affection, hostility, or attraction).

Touch (The messages given by the following: a firm handshake, a timid tap on the shoulder, a warm bear hug, a reassuring pat on the back, a patronizing pat on the head, or a controlling grip on your arm).

Space (You can use physical space to communicate many different nonverbal messages, including signals of intimacy, aggression, dominance, or affection).

Voice (It's not just what you say, it's *how* you say it, the tone of voice can indicate sarcasm, anger, affection, or confidence).

6.2. Formal/informal communication

Based on style and purpose, there are two main categories of communication and they both bear their own characteristics. Communication types based on style and purpose are:
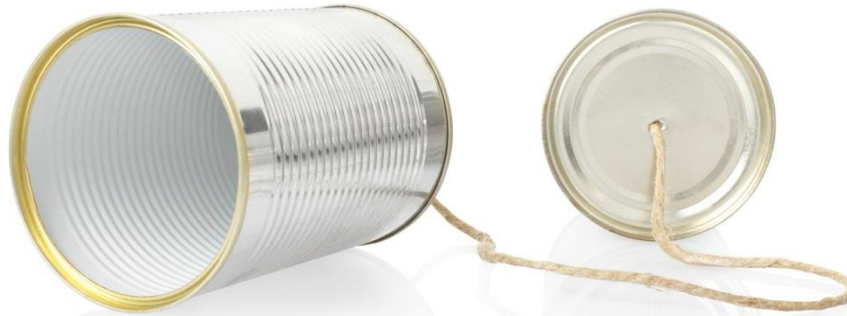
- **Formal Communication:** occurs in formal and official style. Usually professional settings, corporate meetings, conferences undergoes in formal pattern.
- **Informal Communication:** a casual talk. It happens among friends and family.

Formal communication

- Official letters
- Petitions
- Public speeches

Don't use slang, jargon, foul language!

Informal communication

- Informal communication helps in building relationships.

6.3. Intrapersonal communication
You must be able to communicate with yourself before you can communicate with others.

6.3. Interpersonal communication
The process by which people exchange information, feelings, and meaning through verbal and non-verbal messages- it is **face-to-face communication**.

Message!!!

Feedback!

Sender
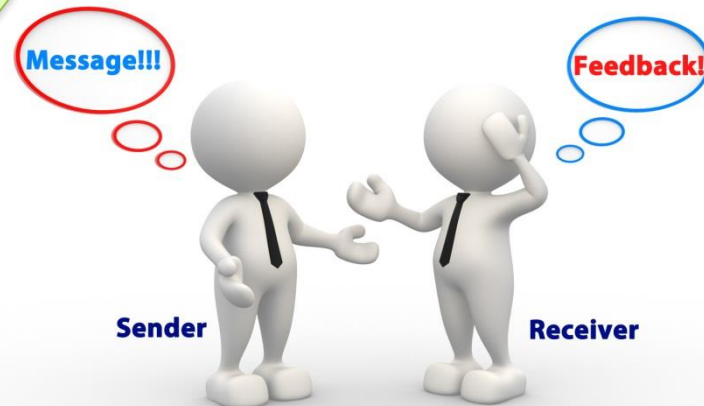
Receiver

Slang, jargon words, foul language is not restricted.

Public communication

6.4.Public communication involves the sending and receiving of messages on a large scale to and from the general public. Public communication includes: *mass media*; *public relations*; *public speaking*

It can include any form of sending a message to a large group of people.

6.4.1a Public communication - communication campaign

1.Define the communication campaign goal effectively (Identify the larger goal, determine which part of the larger goal could be met by a communication campaign, describe the specific objectives of the campaign; integrate these into a plan)

2. Define the intended audience effectively (Identify the group to whom you want to communicate your message, consider identifying subgroups to whom you could tailor your message , learn as much as possible about the intended audience; add information about beliefs, current actions, and social and physical environment to demographic information)

3. Create messages effectively (Brainstorm messages that fit with the communication campaign goal and the intended audience(s), identify channels and sources that are considered credible and influential by the intended audience(s), consider the best times to reach the audience(s) and prepare messages accordingly, select a few messages and plan to pretest them)

6.4.1b Public communication - communication campaign

4. Pre-test and revise messages and materials effectively (Select pre-testing methods that fit the campaign's budget and timeline, pre-test messages and materials with people who share the attributes of the intended audience(s), take the time to revise messages and materials based upon pre-testing findings)

5. Implement the campaign effectively (Follow the plans you developed at the beginning of the campaign, communicate with partners and the media as necessary to ensure the campaign runs smoothly, begin evaluating the campaign plan and processes as soon as the campaign is implemented)

Preparing an effective presentation

Preparation

• Researching the audience

• Structuring the presentation

• Organizing presentation aids

• Checking the venue if appropriate

• Rehearse

• Ready yourself

Purpose

• Presentation must have aims and objectives, for example: attention, explain who you are, establish credibility etc.

Persuasion

• Analyzing and using persuasive skills

Passion

• Being effective and interested into the topics

Personality

• Bringing the whole of yourself into the presentation

Communication Tools

- **Media relations** (press conferences, briefings, press releases, radio call-in shows, topical supplements to newspapers and specialist magazines, topical television shows).

- **Special publications, leaflets, posters, postcards and calendars**.

- **Direct communication** (open telephone, websites, round-table discussions, conferences, lectures, training events, business conferences for the specialist public, visits to trade fairs and other similar public events, commercial centres, hospitals, schools, military barracks...).

- **Publicity, promotional materials**.

CONCLUSION

"Never doubt that a small group of **Thoughtful, committed** citizens

can **change** the world; indeed,

it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead