

Practical Manual

B.Sc. (Hons.) Agriculture

1st Semester

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

(AEC - 101)

Exercise: 01

Listening and Note Taking

Listening and note taking are two important academic skills for every student. Good listening helps us understand lectures, discussions, and conversations, while effective note taking helps us remember and organize the information for later use. Both skills are essential for success in studies as well as in professional life.

Meaning

Listening is not the same as hearing. Hearing is just receiving sound, but listening is paying attention, understanding, and interpreting the message.

Types of Listening

1. **Active Listening** – Fully concentrating, understanding, and responding.
2. **Passive Listening** – Listening without much attention or involvement.
3. **Critical Listening** – Analyzing and evaluating the speaker's message.
4. **Empathetic Listening** – Understanding the feelings and emotions of the speaker.
5. **Comprehensive Listening** – Listening to learn and understand concepts.

Tips for Effective Listening

- Stay focused and avoid distractions.
- Maintain eye contact with the speaker.
- Take short notes while listening.
- Ask questions if you do not understand.
- Do not interrupt the speaker.

Note Taking

Meaning

Note taking is a way of recording important information in a simple and organized manner. Notes help in revision, better understanding, and long-term memory.

Common Methods of Note Taking

1. **Linear Notes** – Writing main points in sequence.
2. **Cornell Method** – Page divided into three sections (cues, notes, summary).
3. **Mind Mapping** – Drawing diagrams with keywords and arrows.
4. **Charting Method** – Making tables or columns for comparison.
5. **Sentence Method** – Writing each idea in a separate sentence.

Qualities of Good Notes

- Short and clear.
- Well-organized with headings and subheadings.
- Use of bullet points, symbols, and abbreviations.
- Easy to revise later.

Conclusion

Listening and note taking go hand in hand. Good listening improves concentration and understanding, while good note taking helps in recording and remembering information. With practice, students can improve these skills and use them effectively in studies and future careers.

Exercise: 02

Writing skills: precise writing, summarizing, and abstracting

Writing skills are very important for students in both academic and professional life. Good writing is clear, simple, and meaningful. Among different writing skills, **precise writing, summarizing, and abstracting** are very useful because they help us present information in a short and clear way without losing the main idea.

Precise Writing

Meaning

A precis is a short version of a passage. It expresses the main idea of the passage in fewer words without changing the meaning.

Characteristics of a Good Precis

- Clear and brief.
- Covers only the main points.
- Written in your own words.
- One-third of the original passage (approximately).

Tips

- Read the passage carefully.
- Identify the main theme.
- Remove unnecessary details.
- Write in simple sentences.

Summarizing

Meaning

A summary is a shorter version of a passage that gives the **main points in order**, but it may be longer than a precis. It tells the essence of the original text in a simplified way.

Features of a Good Summary

- Contains main ideas only.
- Logical sequence of points.
- Clear and simple language.
- Shorter than the original but longer than a precis.

Abstracting

Meaning

An abstract is a brief description of a longer report, research paper, or article. It tells the reader what the document is about.

Types of Abstracts

1. **Descriptive Abstract** – Gives an overview of the content without details.
2. **Informative Abstract** – Provides key findings, results, and conclusion.

Qualities of a Good Abstract

- Very concise (usually 150–250 words).
- Covers purpose, method, and findings.
- Written in simple and formal language.

Conclusion

Precise writing, summarizing, and abstracting are useful skills for students. They help in presenting long information in a short, clear, and meaningful way. With practice, students can improve these skills, which are highly valuable for exams, reports, research, and professional communication.

Exercise: 03

Reading and comprehension (written and oral) of general and technical articles

Reading and comprehension are essential skills for students. Reading means understanding the meaning of written or spoken material, while comprehension means interpreting, analyzing, and remembering it. For students in higher education, both **general reading** (like newspapers, magazines, and stories) and **technical reading** (like research articles, manuals, and scientific reports) are important. These skills help in learning, problem-solving, and effective communication.

Reading and Comprehension

A. General Reading and Comprehension

- General reading refers to reading everyday materials such as newspapers, magazines, and blogs.
- Helps to improve vocabulary, general knowledge, and speed of reading.
- Focuses on understanding the theme, main ideas, and facts.

Tips:

- Skim the passage for the main idea.
- Scan for specific information.
- Identify keywords and important sentences.
- Summarize in your own words.

B. Technical Reading and Comprehension

- Technical reading refers to reading professional or subject-specific texts such as research articles, manuals, technical reports, and scientific papers.
- Requires focus on facts, data, methods, and results.
- Language is formal, precise, and sometimes complex.

Tips:

- Pay attention to headings, diagrams, tables, and charts.
- Note technical terms and their meanings.
- Identify objective, methodology, findings, and conclusion.
- Connect with your subject knowledge for better understanding.

C. Oral Comprehension

- Oral comprehension means listening carefully to spoken content and understanding it.
- Examples: classroom lectures, seminars, presentations, or recorded audio.

Tips:

- Listen attentively without distraction.
- Take brief notes while listening.
- Focus on tone, keywords, and repeated points.
- Ask questions if needed for clarity.

Conclusion

Reading and comprehension are vital academic skills. General reading improves vocabulary and overall knowledge, while technical reading builds professional and subject-specific understanding. Oral comprehension strengthens listening and grasping ability. Regular practice of these skills will help students in exams, research, and future careers.

Exercise: 04

Micro-presentations and Impromptu Presentations: Feedback on presentations

Presentation skills are very important for students in both academics and professional life. A good presentation shows confidence, clarity of thought, and communication skills. Two useful forms of presentations for students are:

- **Micro-presentations** – Very short and focused presentations (usually 3–5 minutes) on a single topic.
- **Impromptu Presentations** – Presentations given without much preparation, often on a random or surprise topic.

Feedback plays a key role in improving presentation skills. Constructive feedback helps students know their strengths and areas for improvement.

Micro-presentations

Meaning

A micro-presentation is a very short talk on a single topic, focusing only on the key points.

Features

- Duration: 3–5 minutes.
- Covers only one topic or concept.
- Clear structure – introduction, body, conclusion.
- Use of simple visuals or notes.

Tips

- Select one key idea.
- Prepare short notes instead of a full script.
- Practice to stay within time.
- Speak with confidence and clarity.

Impromptu Presentations

Meaning

An impromptu presentation is one that is delivered without preparation. The speaker is given a random topic and a short time (or no time) to present.

Features

- Spontaneous and unplanned.
- Tests quick thinking and communication ability.

- Usually short (2–4 minutes).

Tips

- Quickly outline 2–3 main points in your mind.
- Use simple language.
- Share examples or personal experiences.
- Stay calm and confident.

Feedback on Presentations

Feedback helps presenters improve their skills. Both teachers and peers can give feedback.

Points for Giving Feedback

- **Content:** Was the topic clear and relevant?
- **Structure:** Was there a beginning, middle, and end?
- **Delivery:** Voice clarity, eye contact, confidence.
- **Time management:** Did the speaker stay within time?
- **Engagement:** Was the audience interested?

How to Give Feedback

- Be positive and polite.
- Appreciate strengths first.
- Suggest improvements clearly.
- Encourage continuous practice.

Practical Exercises

1. Micro-presentation Exercise

- Each student prepares a 3-minute talk on a simple topic (e.g., “Importance of Time Management”).
- Present in front of the class.
- Teacher and peers give feedback.

2. Impromptu Presentation Exercise

- Teacher gives random topics (e.g., “Role of Social Media,” “Organic Farming,” “My Favorite Book”).
- Students speak for 2–3 minutes without preparation.
- Class discusses strengths and suggestions.

3. Feedback Activity

- Students form groups of 3–4.
- Each student presents, while others provide constructive feedback.

Conclusion

Micro-presentations and impromptu presentations help students build confidence, improve speaking skills, and think quickly. Feedback is an important part of this process as it helps in continuous improvement. With practice and feedback, students can become effective and confident presenters.

Exercise: 05

Stage Manners: Grooming, Body Language, Voice Modulation, Speed

When speaking or presenting on stage, it is not just the content that matters but also the way we present it. Stage manners refer to the way a speaker carries themselves in front of an audience. Good grooming, confident body language, proper voice modulation, and balanced speaking speed make a presentation more effective and impactful.

Components of Stage Manners

A. Grooming

- **Meaning:** Grooming means maintaining a neat and presentable appearance.
- **Key Points:**
 - Wear clean and simple clothes suitable for the occasion.
 - Maintain proper hygiene and cleanliness.
 - Hair should be neat; avoid distracting accessories.
 - Dress confidently but modestly.

B. Body Language

- **Meaning:** Body language is the use of gestures, posture, and facial expressions to communicate.
- **Key Points:**
 - Stand straight with confidence.
 - Use hand gestures naturally.
 - Maintain eye contact with the audience.
 - Smile appropriately to create connection.
 - Avoid unnecessary movements or nervous habits.

C. Voice Modulation

- **Meaning:** Changing the tone, pitch, and volume of your voice to keep the audience engaged.
- **Key Points:**
 - Avoid speaking in a flat, monotonous voice.
 - Emphasize important words.
 - Adjust tone according to the message (serious, excited, motivating).
 - Pause for effect to let the audience absorb key points.

D. Speed of Speaking

- **Meaning:** Speaking at the right pace for clarity and understanding.

- **Key Points:**

- Avoid speaking too fast – the audience may miss the message.
- Avoid speaking too slowly – the audience may lose interest.
- Maintain a moderate pace, with pauses after important points.
- Practice timing your speech.

Practical Exercises

1. Grooming Check

- Students prepare for a short presentation with proper dressing and grooming.
- Teacher observes and gives feedback on appearance.

2. Body Language Practice

- Students deliver a 2-minute talk focusing on posture, gestures, and eye contact.
- Classmates provide feedback on body language.

3. Voice Modulation Exercise

- Students read a short paragraph aloud.
- Teacher asks them to repeat it with different tones (serious, enthusiastic, questioning).

4. Speed Control Practice

- Students give a 1-minute speech.
- Teacher times the speech and checks if the speed was too fast, too slow, or balanced.

Conclusion

Stage manners are as important as content in a presentation. Proper grooming creates a positive impression, body language shows confidence, voice modulation makes the talk engaging, and proper speed ensures clarity. By practicing these skills, students can become confident and effective speakers.

Exercise :06

Group Discussions

A **Group Discussion (GD)** is a method of communication where a small group of people talk about a common topic and exchange ideas. It helps students improve communication skills, teamwork, critical thinking, and decision-making. GDs are also widely used in academic, professional, and competitive settings to test personality and knowledge.

Steps in Group Discussion

1.Preparation (Before GD)

- Understand the topic clearly.
- Collect facts, examples, and arguments.
- Organize thoughts and prepare short points.

2.Introduction of Topic

- Moderator announces the topic.
- Sometimes, participants introduce themselves.
- Anyone can begin the discussion, but the opening should be relevant and confident.

3.Beginning the Discussion

- The first speaker introduces the topic with definitions, background, or key points.
- Beginning sets the tone for the entire GD.

4.Body of Discussion

- Exchange of ideas, arguments, and counter-arguments.
- Participants present facts, examples, and opinions.
- Good participants listen actively, add value, and avoid repetition.
- The discussion should remain respectful and focused on the topic.

5.Summarization

- Towards the end, one or two participants summarize the discussion.
- Summary should include key points, agreements, disagreements, and possible conclusion.

6.Conclusion

- Either the moderator or participants conclude the GD.
- The conclusion should be balanced and based on points discussed.

Procedure of Group Discussion

1.Formation of Group – A group usually consists of 6–12 members.

2.Topic Selection – The topic is given by the moderator/teacher or chosen by the group.

3.Time Limit – A GD usually lasts 10–20 minutes.

4.Discussion Rules –

- Speak one at a time.
- Do not interrupt others.

- Maintain eye contact with group members.
- Respect everyone's opinions.

Role of Participants –

- **Initiators:** Start the discussion confidently.
- **Supporters:** Add valuable points and examples.
- **Moderators/Leaders:** Keep the discussion on track.
- **Summarizers:** End with a brief summary.

Practical Exercises

1.GD on General Topics

- Example topics: “Impact of Social Media on Youth,” “Online Education vs. Classroom Education.”
- Students participate and practice speaking.

2.GD on Technical Topics

- Example topics: “Organic Farming is the Future,” “Role of AI in Agriculture.”
- Students use subject knowledge to discuss.

3.Feedback Session

- After each GD, teacher and peers give feedback on content, clarity, confidence, body language, and teamwork.

Conclusion

Group discussions are an effective way to improve communication and teamwork. By following proper steps and procedure, students can learn to present ideas clearly, listen actively, and respect diverse opinions. Regular practice will make them confident and successful in both academic and professional settings.

Exercise :07

Public speaking exercises; vocabulary building exercises

Public speaking is the ability to communicate ideas confidently to an audience. It improves confidence, clarity of thought, and leadership qualities. Along with speaking skills, a strong vocabulary is essential to express ideas effectively. Vocabulary building exercises help students learn new words, improve language, and make communication more impactful.

Public Speaking Exercises

A. Breathing and Voice Exercises

- Practice deep breathing for a calm and steady voice.
- Read aloud with clear pronunciation.
- Practice tongue twisters to improve fluency.

B. Short Speech Practice

- Choose simple topics (e.g., “Importance of Time Management,” “My Role Model”).
- Speak for 2–3 minutes without reading.
- Focus on clarity, body language, and confidence.

C. Storytelling Exercise

- Select a short story or personal experience.
- Narrate it in front of the class.
- Maintain eye contact and vary your tone.

D. Impromptu Speaking

- Teacher gives random topics.
- Students speak for 1–2 minutes without preparation.
- Helps in quick thinking and confidence.

Vocabulary Building Exercises

A. Word Lists

- Learn 5–10 new words daily with meaning, pronunciation, and usage in sentences.

B. Synonyms and Antonyms

- Practice finding alternative words (e.g., *happy* → *joyful, delighted*; *sad* → *unhappy, gloomy*).

C. Word Games

- Crossword puzzles, Scrabble, and word matching games.

D. Contextual Learning

- Pick words from newspapers, magazines, or technical articles.
- Note them down with meanings and use them in your own sentences.

E. Group Activities

- Word chain games (one student says a word, next student continues with the last letter).
- “Word of the Day” activity where each student presents one new word with meaning and usage.

Practical Exercises

1. Public Speaking Practice

- Each student prepares a 3-minute speech on a general topic.
- Deliver in front of class.
- Teacher and peers give feedback on clarity, voice, and confidence.

2. Vocabulary Building Task

- Students bring 5 new words from newspapers or technical texts.
- Present meanings and use them in short sentences.
- Conduct a quick quiz at the end.

Conclusion

Public speaking and vocabulary are complementary skills. Regular practice of speaking builds confidence and fluency, while vocabulary exercises strengthen language and expression. Together, these skills help students succeed in academics, interviews, and professional life.

Exercise :08

Interview Techniques; organization of events

Interviews and event organization are two important skills for students and professionals.

An **interview** is a formal interaction between interviewer and candidate to assess suitability for a job, admission, or research. Knowing the right interview techniques helps students present themselves confidently.

The **organization of events** (seminars, workshops, conferences, cultural or academic programs) requires planning, teamwork, and leadership. Students who learn these skills become more confident and effective in academic and professional life.

Interview Techniques

A. Types of Interviews

- **Personal Interview** – One-to-one interaction.
- **Panel Interview** – A group of interviewers with one candidate.
- **Group Interview** – Several candidates interviewed together.
- **Telephonic/Online Interview** – Conducted over phone or video call.

B. Preparation for Interview

- Research the organization/institution.
- Review your resume, achievements, and subject knowledge.
- Prepare answers for common questions (“Tell me about yourself,” “Why should we hire you?”).

- Dress neatly and professionally.
- Practice mock interviews.

C. During the Interview

- Greet politely with confidence.
- Maintain eye contact and sit with good posture.
- Listen carefully to the questions before answering.
- Speak clearly and to the point.
- Show positive attitude and honesty.

D. After the Interview

- Thank the interviewer(s).
- Reflect on your performance for improvement.

Organization of Events

Steps in Event Organization

1.Planning

- Define purpose (academic, cultural, social, technical).
- Set goals and expected outcomes.
- Prepare budget and resources.

2.Preparation

- Form committees (e.g., logistics, hospitality, stage, finance, publicity).
- Decide venue, date, and program schedule.
- Arrange necessary equipment (sound system, projector, seating).

3.Execution

- Welcome participants and guests.
- Conduct program according to schedule.
- Manage stage, time, and coordination.

4.Feedback and Evaluation

- Collect feedback from participants and organizers.
- Record strengths and weaknesses.
- Document event report for future reference.

Practical Exercises

1. Mock Interview Session

- Divide students into interviewers and interviewees.
- Conduct short interviews.
- Give feedback on body language, confidence, and communication.

2. Event Planning Activity

- Students form groups.
- Plan a small event (seminar, debate competition, cultural day).
- Assign roles and prepare a simple event plan.

3. Presentation of Event Plan

- Each group presents how they will organize the event.
- Teacher and classmates provide feedback.

Conclusion

Interview techniques prepare students for academic and job opportunities by building confidence and communication skills. Event organization develops leadership, planning, and teamwork abilities. Both skills are highly useful for personal growth, academic success, and professional development.