

# Oral communication in english

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



INTRODUCTION. To be able to communicate orally in English in different social contexts is one of the most essential skills that Malaysians are in the process of acquiring. We use oral communication with the help of language, in a few forms which depends on our communication needs. There's intrapersonal communication which occurs within us to think, to reason, etc. There's also a need for interpersonal communication which includes small group communication and public communication to name a few, to be able to fulfil our communication needs in other situations and contexts.

Communication comes naturally as we communicate all the time with ourselves, other people and sometimes with an audience as in during a public speaking. Our education system here in Malaysia, stresses good communication skills but first, it is vital to understand the whole process of communication, the types of communication, the functions and the strategies of an effective communication. THE PURPOSES OF

COMMUNICATION. Communication is important so as to acquire knowledge, pass information, persuade others of our frame of thinking, and develop goodwill as in maintaining and forming a harmonious relationship with others. Definitions of communication. Before beginning to learn about the process communication, the definition of communication itself should be known. The following are 4 definitions of communication according to 4 different scholars. 1) Real communication occurs when we listen with understanding — to see the expressed idea and attitude from the speaker's point of view, to sense how it feels to him, to achieve his frame of reference in regard to the things he's talking about. (Carl Rogers 1952) 2)

Communication is a process beginning when you have a message that you

want to deliver to an audience. The audience receives the message, reacts to it and responds to your message, leading to your reaction and the process goes on and on. (Elizabeth Tierney 1958) 3) Communication is a systemic process in which people interact with and through symbols to create and interpret meanings. (Julia T. Woods 2009) 4) Communication occurs when a person or more sends and receives messages that are distorted by noise, occur within a context, have some effect and provide some opportunity for feedback. (Joseph Devito 2009) Now, from these definitions, we can conclude that the process of communication includes elements such as: a) Context : physical context (e. g. the place of the conversation), psychosocial context (the relationship of the conversing people), the time context, cultural context (the values and beliefs of the conversing people) b) Source and receiver : the speaker and the listener c) Message : verbal (spoken words) and non-verbal (gestures and body language) d) Interference : noise e) Effects : the changes brought about by the conversation

Forms of communication. There are different kinds of communication as people use verbal and non-verbal ways to convey messages in different contexts, channels and media. Oral communication consists of various skill sets, the most important being able to listen and speak well. Stated below are among the few forms of oral communication that takes place in a typical Malaysian's everyday life. 1) Intrapersonal communication: is self talk, conversations we hold with ourselves to reason and think. 2) Interpersonal communication: communication between several people, ranging from impersonal to personal. 3) Small group communication: communication within a group. 4) Public communication: communication involving a speaker and an audience.

Speaker usually tries to inform or persuade the audience. 5) Mass communication: communication whereby message is sent out to receivers throughout the world, i. e. news that's spread on radio and internet. 6) Corporate communication: communication taking place in an organisation, i. e. at workplace, during a board member meeting. 7) Intercultural communication: communication between people of different race and culture, i. e. a group of friends consisting of Malays, Indians, and Chinese. As communication is ongoing all the time, it is important to be able to be a good listener and to be able to converse well to ensure your message reaches the receiver as you intended it to and the listener is able to get your frame of idea and vice versa. Models of communication There are several models of communication to better understand how the whole process of communication works. Here are among the few portraying different forms of communication processes. 1) A linear model: views communication as a linear process whereby the speaker speaks and the listener listens, including noise or interferences distorting understanding between the both of them. The flaw of this model is that it indicates that the listener never speaks and the speaker never listens. 2) An interactive model: Both the speaker and the listener take turns to speak and listen to each other. Feedback is given either verbally or non-verbally, or in both ways. The flaw in this model is that it doesn't show if the speaker and listener can send and receive messages simultaneously. 3) A transactional model: shows that the elements of communication are interdependent. ORAL COMMUNICATION Oral communication is the type of communication we use most of the time in our day to day life. It is crucial to be a good listener and a good speaker because

a bad one in both of these aspects can lead to terrible misunderstandings.

Listening skills. Active listening is being attentive to what is being heard and responding to the speaker to achieve mutual understanding. The basic process of listening comprises of:

- a) Receiving: begins with receiving the message sent by the speaker.
- b) Understanding: the stage where you try to figure out what the speaker is saying and meaning.
- c) Remembering: the stage where you try to retain what has been said in your memory and try to recall it later on when it is needed.
- d) Evaluate: the stage where you judge statements made by the speaker and being critical and analyzing received message.
- e) Responding: the stage where you give feedbacks to the speaker

Listening effectively is a skill that can be improved from time to time so as to make a better listener. There are several ways and one of it is changing our behaviour towards what we are listening to. The most important technique is to pay the fullest attention to the speaker. Giving full attention to what is being said enables you to catch every part of the message. Distractions or not being attentive often gives a chance to miss out on some things out of the whole message. Some other techniques are as follows:

- a) Focus on the verbal and non-verbal messages.
- b) Avoid or minimise distractions such as noise as much as possible.
- c) Avoid interrupting the speaker while he/she is still speaking.
- d) Clarify what is not understood to achieve mutual understanding.
- e) Rephrase the message in your own words being careful not to change the meaning intended by the speaker.
- f) Summarize and repeat the message to the speaker to be sure of the speaker's message.
- g) Resist evaluating or judging until the whole message is fully understood.
- h) Distinguish biasness, prejudice or self-interest of the speaker.

Speaking

skills. Speaking well, in English, is a skill that needs to be developed and practised. It doesn't only mean good grammar and vocabulary but also a number of other elements such as fluency and pronunciation. Some components in speaking are very, very important to be a good speaker. 1) Pronunciation: pronouncing every word clearly and correctly is important to ensure the listener understands you. Speaking too fast doesn't help. 2) Enunciation: is the act speaking clearly and concisely. Pronounce every syllable of the word correctly. (eg: going, is not goin') 3) Stress: signals meaning and attitude. 4) Intonation and rhythm: being monotone can certainly make all your listeners doze off. Interference in communication. Most often, full attention by the listener is not possible due to the distractions that exist. There are 4 types of interferences that are highlighted by scholars and those include: 1) Physical interference: noise of loud music or hustling and honking in the traffic. Eg: conversing in a concert is just almost impossible because of the extremely loud music and the shouting and creaming of the fans. 2) Physiological interference: this barrier is due to the physiological disabilities of the listener and/or the speaker. Eg: a dumb can't speak and a deaf can't hear. So no matter how much you shout or how much you pay attention as a listener, you can never be able to converse effectively with a dumb and a deaf unless you know sign languages. 3) Psychological interference: this type of interference is made up because of the mental state of the listener or even the speaker. A listener who is extremely sad or angry would not understand your message fully because his/her fullest attention is on his/her emotions and not on the speaker. Biasness, prejudice or extreme hatred towards the other person may also hinder an effective

communication. 4) Semantic interference: this includes language, dialect or even cultural differences. Eg: a computer literate may refer to “ keyboard” as part of the computer but to a musician who happens to be a computer illiterate “ keyboard” may mean a modern electric piano. So both of them will operate on different meaning system. So, in order to have a fruitful and effective communication, as much as possible, these barriers need to be overcome. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION. Interpersonal communication, also occurring within other context such as group, can be defined by itself. Interpersonal communication involves messages sent and received by two or more individuals including all aspects of communication such as listening, persuading, asserting, non verbal communication and more. Conversing individuals may communicate at different levels of proximity. It depends on who they are conversing with. For example, a conversation with a family member or a friend is different from one with an acquaintance. The functions of interpersonal communication are, to gain knowledge, to pass knowledge, to build relationships, and to persuade. Examples of interpersonal communication are a telephone conversation, meetings, or a conversation with family members. There are several principles scholars like Donnell King have come up with concerning interpersonal communication. Principles of interpersonal communication a) Interpersonal communication is inescapable We can't not communicate. The very attempt not to communicate communicates something. Through not only words, but through tone of voice and through gesture, posture, facial expression, etc., we constantly communicate to those around us. b) Interpersonal communication is irreversible You can't really take back something once it has been said. The

effect must inevitably remain. c) Interpersonal communication is contextual. In other words, communication does not happen in isolation. There is physical context (e. g. the place of the conversation), psychosocial context (the relationship of the conversing people), the time context, cultural context (the values and beliefs of the conversing people) Process of interpersonal communication. Joseph De Vito (Human communication, the basic course-7th edition) explains the process of interpersonal communication in a model simplified as below; As much as it is important in oral communication, an effective interpersonal communication also requires a good listener and a good speaker. SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION. Everyone is involved in a variety of small group; a family being the most obvious example. But occasionally, you also become a team member in workplace or in school or college and you may be required to give opinions, answer questions (or even ask one!), give suggestions and etc, all to achieve the objectives of the meeting. Of course, there's a leader who manages the meeting, opens and closes the subject of discussion. Types of group discussion. Several forms of groups exist and some of the examples are as below: a) Idea generating: is a brainstorming formula where as many ideas as possible are generated to solve a specific problem. b) Personal growth: more often referred to as support groups aiming to help members to cope with particular difficulties. c) Info- sharing: its purpose is to acquire new information or skills through sharing of knowledge. d) Problem-solving: a collection of individuals who meet to solve a problem or make decisions. During a group discussion, it is important that two speakers don't speak at the same time to avoid confusion among the group members. It is important to recognize the appropriate



moment to take the turn to start talking and signalling that you've got something to say. You should not dominate the discussion even though you're the leader as everyone deserves a fair chance of expressing opinions and ideas, asking questions and clarifying. Being polite in asking or answering questions is also extremely crucial. Malaysians have the tendency to lose temper when the other person in the conversation begins to get a little irritating and we start using words like " woi! ". There are polite and decent ways of expressing opinions, interrupting or disagreeing. Beginning sentences like, " I'm sorry, may I say something? " or " Excuse me, I didn't get what you're meaning. " It is useful to ask wh- questions like what, where, when, what, to get clarifications in a group discussion. To achieve a solution in a group discussion, it's important for all the group members to have mutual understanding of the given topic of discussion. PUBLIC

COMMUNICATION. Public communication or as most commonly known, public speaking, is speaking to an audience; usually being face to face with the audience. Public speaking is very common in Malaysian context as it is done all the time by Malaysian politicians. It is an important type of communication in today's world and being good at it may get you far especially carrier wise. Importance of public speaking. a) Improves social skills: speaking in the public often enough gives you a boost of self confidence and teaches you to be a good listener as well, as you need to be able to " listen" non-verbal feedbacks from the audience as well as the verbal ones. b) Improves academic and professional abilities: you learn to be a persuasive speaker and are more critical when analysing arguments or information given to you. You will also be able to appropriately respond to

criticism. Besides being good and fluent in English, speaking and listening well, there's also a need to possess the skills of being a good public speaker. A good training to speak in the public will do a lot of good to the speaker.

The speech should be well prepared and rehearsed with all the relevant information included to support your arguments and opinions. Types of public communication. a) Informative: such as that happens in a class where the teacher teaches about a particular subject. b) Persuasive: as in a person tries to make you buy his products or a politician trying to make you embrace his frame of thoughts and ideas. c) Negotiation: this type of speech is used when there's a conflict to resolve, or when you've to be the third party for intervention in a crisis. d) Argumentative: often used to deal with indifferences or conflict in beliefs and values. A speech should be well prepared or presented or else there will be none who wants to listen to you.

There's a guideline by Joseph De Vito of preparing a speech. **OUTLINE OF A SPEECH** Purpose of the speech: 1. Introduction (a) Attention-getting device (Capture listener's attention, perhaps with a joke or something interesting that is relevant to the topic you are speaking on). (b) Motivate the audience to listen to you (Give a good reason why they should listen to you speak. Say something which has their interests at heart). (c) Thesis statement (What are you speaking about? Provide your stand on the topic). (d) Preview of speech (Give a very brief outline of what you will be talking about). 2. Body (a) First main point: (i) Supporting statement. ii) Transition statement (Sentence linking the main points). (b) Second main point: (i) Supporting statement. (iii) Transition statement. 3. Conclusion (a) Summary of main points. (b) Closing statement. 4. References **CONCLUSION.** All types of communication takes

place all the time in our everyday life and to be able to communicate well, in English particularly, mastering the language itself is very important.

Communicating in English though, is not purely and entirely about good grammar and a good vocabulary. It also revolves around being skilful in speaking and listening so there can be an effective communication between the conversing people. So as for the conclusion, speaking and listening skills need to be acquired by every individual to make them a better, more effective communicator. It's not only important for day to day activities but also for self development and eventually development of the country.

REFERENCES: 1) Joseph De Vito Human Communication- the basic course (7th edition) 2) Wikipedia 3) OUM English and Communication module. 4) [www. scribd. com](http://www.scribd.com)