



La-Net

ARA 111

COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH



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Course code: ARA 111

Course title: Communication in English

Course credit load: 2 Units

List of Series:

- **Series 1: Foundations of Communication in English**
- **Series 2: Grammar, Usage, and Sentence Structure**
- **Series 3: Comprehension, Summary, and Critical Analysis**
- **Series 4: Academic and Professional Writing Skills**
- **Series 5: Oral Communication and Global Contexts**

Series 1: Foundations of Communication in English

Series Outline

This Series will be organised into three main Parts, each with relevant sub-Parts:

- **Part 1 (1.1): Introduction to Communication**
 - 1.1.1 Meaning and importance of communication
 - 1.1.2 Types of communication
 - 1.1.3 Barriers to effective communication
- **Part 2 (1.2): Fundamentals of Spoken English**
 - 1.2.1 Pronunciation and articulation
 - 1.2.2 Listening and responding skills
 - 1.2.3 Everyday conversational strategies
- **Part 3 (1.3): Fundamentals of Written English**
 - 1.3.1 Sentence construction and clarity
 - 1.3.2 Paragraph organisation
 - 1.3.3 Writing for academic and professional contexts

Introduction

Communication is at the heart of human interaction. Whether you are speaking with friends, writing an academic essay, or presenting ideas in a professional setting, your ability to communicate effectively shapes how others perceive and respond to you. In Nigeria and across the world, English serves as a vital medium for education, business, and social exchange, making it essential for academic success and professional growth.



The aim of this Series is to introduce you to the foundations of communication in English, equipping you with the basic skills needed to express yourself clearly in both spoken and written forms.

We shall commence this Series by exploring the meaning, importance, and types of communication, as well as common barriers that hinder effective interaction. Next, we will move on to the fundamentals of spoken English, focusing on pronunciation, listening, and conversational strategies. Finally, we will conclude with the fundamentals of written English, where we will examine sentence construction, paragraph organisation, and writing for academic and professional purposes.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 1.1** define communication and explain its importance in academic and everyday contexts,
- **SLO 1.2** identify and categorise different types of communication,
- **SLO 1.3** analyse barriers to effective communication and suggest ways to overcome them,
- **SLO 1.4** demonstrate correct pronunciation and effective listening skills in spoken English,
- **SLO 1.5** apply conversational strategies to everyday and professional interactions,
- **SLO 1.6** construct clear sentences and organise paragraphs logically in written English, and
- **SLO 1.7** produce short academic and professional texts that communicate ideas effectively.



1.1 Introduction To Communication

1.1.1 Meaning and importance of communication

Communication is the process of sharing information, ideas, or feelings between individuals or groups. It is important because it enables understanding, cooperation, and progress in academic, social, and professional contexts. Without effective communication, misunderstandings occur and goals are harder to achieve.

Fill-in-the-blank: Communication is the process of _____ information, ideas, or feelings between individuals or groups.

1.1.2 Types of communication

There are three main types of communication. **Verbal communication** involves spoken words, **non-verbal communication** includes gestures, facial expressions, and body language, while **written communication** refers to letters, essays, reports, and other text-based exchanges. Each type serves a unique purpose and is used in different contexts.

1.1.3 Barriers to effective communication

Barriers such as noise, poor language skills, cultural differences, and lack of attention can hinder communication. Recognising these barriers helps you to overcome them and improve your effectiveness.

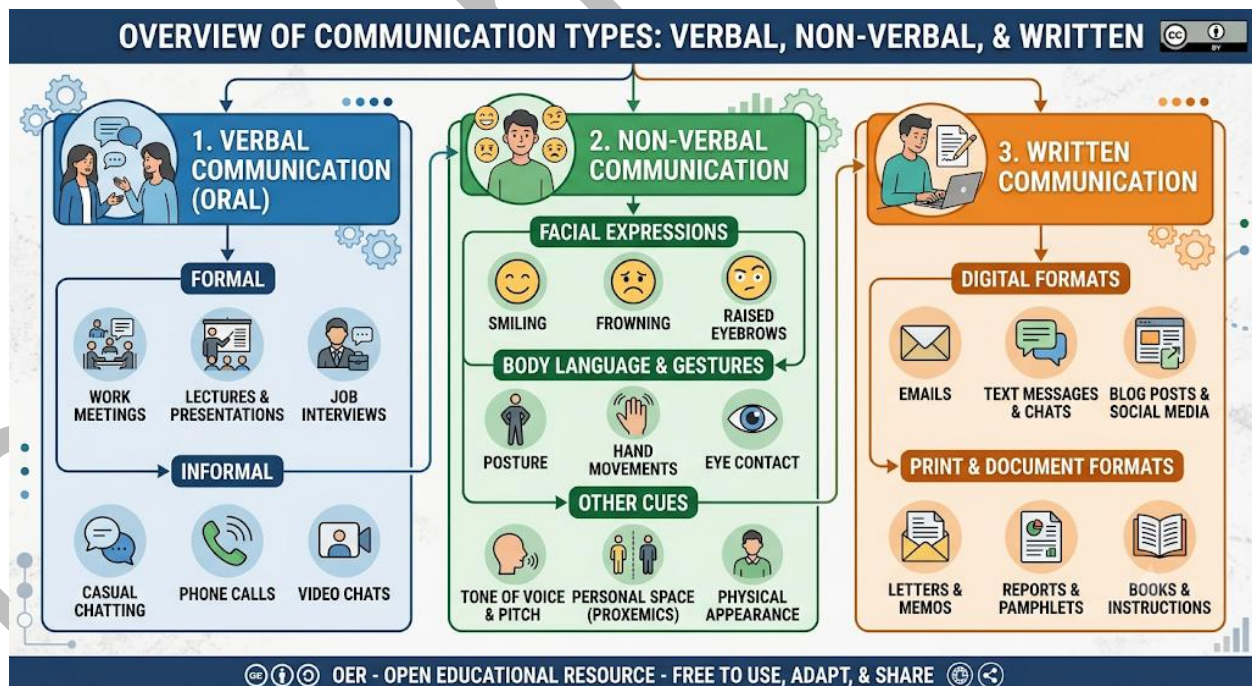


Figure 1.1 – Types of communication (verbal, non-verbal, written) Description: A simple diagram showing three categories of communication.



Pilot questions 1.1

1. Communication is best defined as the process of _____.
2. Which of the following is not a type of communication: verbal, written, mechanical?
3. Name one barrier to effective communication.
4. True or False: Non-verbal communication includes gestures and facial expressions.
5. Fill in the blank: Effective communication enables _____ and progress.

1.2 Fundamentals Of Spoken English

1.2.1 Pronunciation and articulation

Pronunciation is the way words are spoken, while **articulation** refers to the clarity with which sounds are produced. Good pronunciation and articulation make speech understandable and professional.

1.2.2 Listening and responding skills

Effective communication requires listening as much as speaking. **Active listening** means paying full attention, interpreting correctly, and responding appropriately.

Fill-in-the-blank: Listening becomes effective when you pay full _____ to the speaker.

1.2.3 Everyday conversational strategies

Conversational strategies include greeting politely, maintaining eye contact, and using appropriate tone. These strategies help you build rapport and communicate smoothly in everyday life.

Pilot questions 1.2

1. Define pronunciation.
2. What does articulation mean in spoken English?
3. What is active listening?
4. Mention one conversational strategy that improves communication.
5. True or False: Listening is less important than speaking in communication.

1.3 Fundamentals Of Written English

1.3.1 Sentence construction and clarity

A **sentence** is a group of words that expresses a complete thought. Clear sentence construction involves correct grammar, punctuation, and logical flow.



1.3.2 Paragraph organisation

A **paragraph** is a collection of sentences that develop a single idea. Effective paragraphs begin with a topic sentence, followed by supporting sentences, and end with a concluding sentence.

1.3.3 Writing for academic and professional contexts

Academic and professional writing requires precision, formality, and logical organisation. Essays, reports, and memos must be structured to communicate ideas effectively.

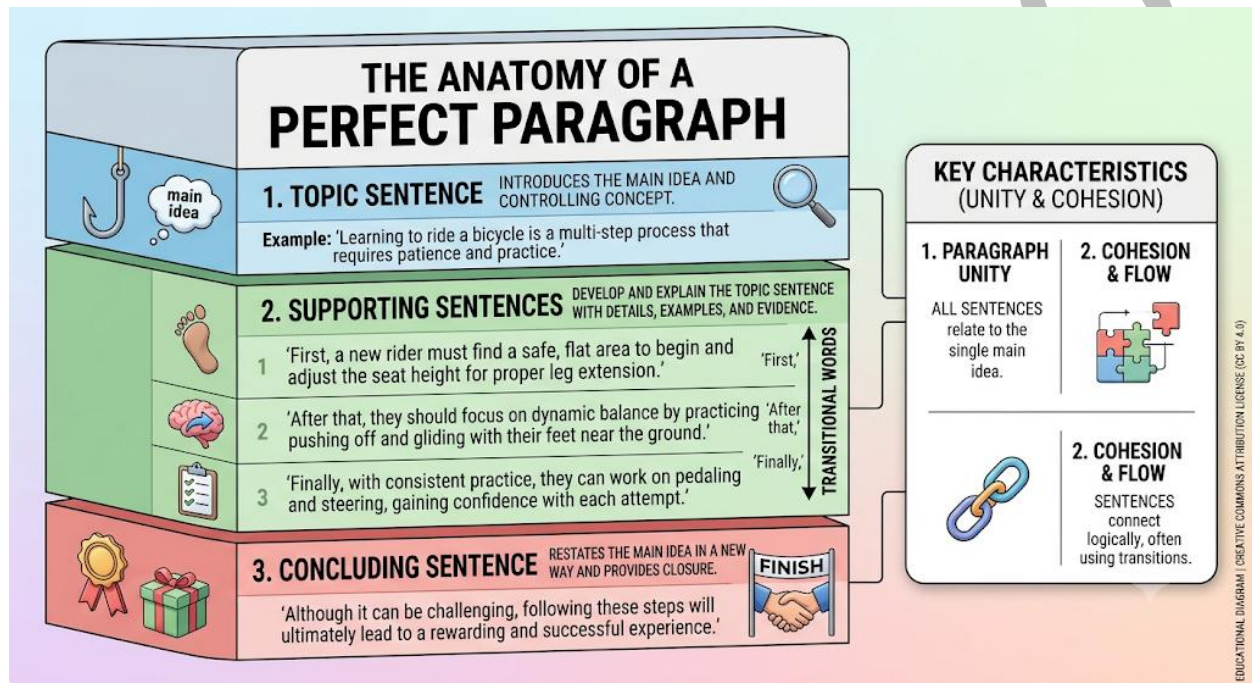


Figure 1.2 – Example of a well-organised paragraph Description: A diagram showing topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence.

Pilot questions 1.3

1. What is a sentence?
2. What is the function of a topic sentence in a paragraph?
3. Name one feature of academic writing.
4. True or False: A paragraph should contain multiple unrelated ideas.
5. Fill in the blank: Academic writing requires _____ and logical organisation.



Series Summary

This Series has introduced you to the foundations of communication in English, highlighting its importance in academic, social, and professional contexts. We began by examining the meaning of communication, its different types, and the barriers that can hinder effective interaction. Then, we explored the fundamentals of spoken English, focusing on pronunciation, articulation, listening, and conversational strategies. Finally, we considered the fundamentals of written English, including sentence construction, paragraph organisation, and the requirements of academic and professional writing.

By engaging with these topics, you should now be able to define communication and explain its relevance, identify types of communication, analyse barriers, demonstrate effective spoken skills, apply conversational strategies, construct clear sentences, organise paragraphs logically, and produce short academic and professional texts. These abilities directly align with the Series Learning Outcomes and provide you with a strong foundation for the rest of the course.

Glossary of Terms

- **Active listening:** Paying full attention to a speaker, interpreting correctly, and responding appropriately.
- **Articulation:** The clarity with which sounds are produced in speech.
- **Communication:** The process of sharing information, ideas, or feelings between individuals or groups.
- **Non-verbal communication:** The use of gestures, facial expressions, and body language to convey meaning.
- **Paragraph:** A collection of sentences that develop a single idea, usually beginning with a topic sentence and ending with a concluding sentence.
- **Pronunciation:** The way words are spoken, including correct sounds and stress patterns.
- **Sentence:** A group of words that expresses a complete thought.
- **Verbal communication:** The use of spoken words to convey meaning.
- **Written communication:** The use of text-based exchanges such as letters, essays, and reports.



Concept Check Questions 1

Objective questions

1. Communication is the process of _____ information, ideas, or feelings between individuals or groups. (Linked to SLO 1.1)
2. Which of the following is not a type of communication: verbal, written, mechanical? (Linked to SLO 1.2)
3. True or False: Non-verbal communication includes gestures and facial expressions. (Linked to SLO 1.2)
4. Which barrier to communication occurs when cultural differences affect understanding? (Linked to SLO 1.3)
5. Fill in the blank: Academic writing requires _____ and logical organisation. (Linked to SLO 1.7)

Short-answer questions

6. Define articulation in spoken English. (Linked to SLO 1.4)
7. Explain what active listening involves. (Linked to SLO 1.4)
8. State one conversational strategy that improves everyday communication. (Linked to SLO 1.5)
9. What is the function of a topic sentence in a paragraph? (Linked to SLO 1.6)
10. Identify one feature of professional writing. (Linked to SLO 1.7)

Long-answer questions

11. Analyse the importance of communication in academic and professional contexts, giving examples of how it supports success. (Linked to SLO 1.1)
 - **Basic response:** Learners should explain that communication enables understanding, cooperation, and progress, and give at least one example such as teamwork in class or clarity in professional reports.
 - **Value-added response:** Outstanding learners may extend their answer by comparing spoken and written communication, discussing barriers, and evaluating how overcoming these barriers enhances academic and workplace performance.
12. Demonstrate how to construct a clear paragraph for academic writing, explaining the role of topic, supporting, and concluding sentences. (Linked to SLO 1.6)
 - **Basic response:** Learners should describe the structure of a paragraph, noting that it begins with a topic sentence, develops with supporting sentences, and ends with a concluding sentence.
 - **Value-added response:** Outstanding learners may provide a sample paragraph, analyse its clarity, and evaluate how logical organisation improves comprehension in academic texts.



Answers to Concept Check Questions 1

1. Sharing
2. Mechanical
3. True
4. Cultural differences
5. Precision
6. Clarity with which sounds are produced in speech
7. Paying full attention, interpreting correctly, and responding appropriately
8. Greeting politely, maintaining eye contact, or using appropriate tone
9. It introduces the main idea of the paragraph
10. Formality and logical organisation
11. Communication enables understanding, cooperation, and progress; example: teamwork in class or clarity in reports. Value-added: compare spoken and written communication, discuss barriers, evaluate overcoming them.
12. A paragraph begins with a topic sentence, continues with supporting sentences, and ends with a concluding sentence. Value-added: provide a sample paragraph, analyse clarity, evaluate logical organisation.

Answers to Pilot Questions 1

Pilot questions 1.1

1. Sharing information, ideas, or feelings
2. Mechanical
3. Noise, poor language skills, cultural differences, or lack of attention
4. True
5. Understanding and progress

Pilot questions 1.2

1. The way words are spoken
2. Clarity with which sounds are produced
3. Paying full attention, interpreting correctly, and responding appropriately
4. Greeting politely, maintaining eye contact, or using appropriate tone
5. False

Pilot questions 1.3

1. A group of words that expresses a complete thought
2. It introduces the main idea of the paragraph
3. Precision, formality, and logical organisation
4. False
5. Precision



References and Attributions I

- **Figure 1.1 – Types of communication (verbal, non-verbal, written)** Suggested AI prompt: “Create a labelled diagram showing verbal, non-verbal, and written communication with examples.” Search string: “types of communication diagram OER” Attribution: Adapted from Open Educational Resources on communication studies.
- **Figure 1.2 – Example of a well-organised paragraph** Suggested AI prompt: “Create a labelled diagram of a paragraph structure with topic, supporting, and concluding sentences.” Search string: “paragraph structure diagram OER” Attribution: Adapted from Open Educational Resources on academic writing.
- **Series content references**
 - General definitions and explanations of communication, spoken English, and written English were adapted from standard academic communication texts and Open Educational Resources (OERs) in language and communication studies.
 - Bloom’s taxonomy verbs applied in learning outcomes are based on Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D. R. (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom’s taxonomy of educational objectives*. New York: Longman.
- **Institutional referencing style** All references have been presented in a clear and consistent manner, following APA style for educational materials.

Series 2: Grammar, Usage, and Sentence Structure

Series Outline

- **Part 2.1: Sentence Structure and Elements**
 - 2.1.1 Components of a sentence
 - 2.1.2 Types of sentences
 - 2.1.3 Common sentence errors
- **Part 2.2: Grammar and Usage**
 - 2.2.1 Parts of speech
 - 2.2.2 Subject-verb agreement
 - 2.2.3 Tense consistency
- **Part 2.3: Effective Language Use**
 - 2.3.1 Word choice and clarity
 - 2.3.2 Avoiding redundancy and ambiguity
 - 2.3.3 Correct usage in academic and professional contexts



Introduction

Grammar and sentence structure form the backbone of effective communication. Without them, spoken and written English can become unclear and confusing. In academic and professional settings, correct usage of grammar and well-structured sentences are essential for credibility and precision.

The aim of this Series is to strengthen your competence in grammar, usage, and sentence construction, enabling you to communicate ideas clearly and accurately.

We shall commence this Series by examining sentence structure and its key elements, including common errors that learners often make. Next, we will move on to grammar and usage, focusing on parts of speech, subject-verb agreement, and tense consistency. Finally, we will conclude with effective language use, where we will explore word choice, clarity, and correct usage in academic and professional contexts.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 2.1** identify and explain the components of a sentence,
- **SLO 2.2** categorise different types of sentences,
- **SLO 2.3** detect and correct common sentence errors,
- **SLO 2.4** define and apply the functions of parts of speech,
- **SLO 2.5** demonstrate correct subject-verb agreement in sentences,
- **SLO 2.6** maintain tense consistency in spoken and written communication,
- **SLO 2.7** evaluate word choice for clarity and precision,
- **SLO 2.8** revise sentences to avoid redundancy and ambiguity, and
- **SLO 2.9** apply correct grammar and usage in academic and professional writing.



2.1 Sentence Structure And Elements

2.1.1 Components of a sentence

A **sentence** is a group of words that expresses a complete thought. The main components of a sentence are the **subject** (who or what the sentence is about) and the **predicate** (what is said about the subject). Sentences may also include objects, complements, and modifiers that add detail and meaning.

Fill-in-the-blank: A sentence must contain a _____ and a predicate to be complete.

2.1.2 Types of sentences

Sentences can be classified into four types: **declarative** (statements), **interrogative** (questions), **imperative** (commands), and **exclamatory** (expressions of strong feeling). Each type serves a different communicative purpose.

2.1.3 Common sentence errors

Errors such as **fragments** (incomplete sentences), **run-on sentences** (two or more sentences joined incorrectly), and **comma splices** (two sentences joined only by a comma) reduce clarity. Identifying and correcting these errors improves writing quality.



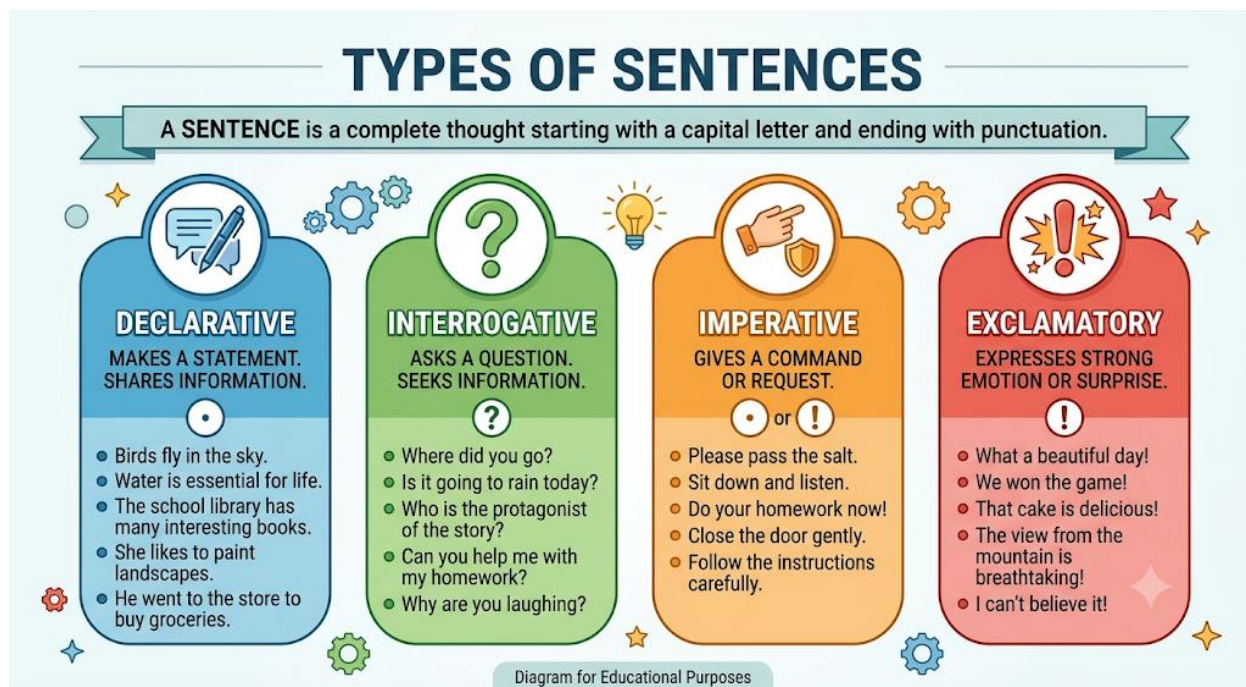


Figure 2.1 – Types of sentences with examples

A diagram showing declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences.

Pilot questions 2.1

1. What are the two main components of a sentence?
2. Which type of sentence expresses strong emotion?
3. True or False: A fragment is a complete sentence.
4. What is a run-on sentence?
5. Fill in the blank: A comma splice occurs when two sentences are joined only by a _____.

2.2 Grammar And Usage

2.2.1 Parts of speech

Parts of speech are categories of words based on their function in a sentence. The main ones include nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections. Recognising these helps in constructing grammatically correct sentences.



2.2.2 Subject-verb agreement

Subject-verb agreement means that the verb must match the subject in number and person. For example, “She runs” is correct, while “She run” is incorrect.

Fill-in-the-blank: Subject-verb agreement requires that the verb must match the _____ in number and person.

2.2.3 Tense consistency

Tense consistency ensures that verbs in a sentence or paragraph remain in the same tense unless a change is required by context. Shifting tenses unnecessarily confuses readers.

Pilot questions 2.2

1. Name two parts of speech.
2. What does subject-verb agreement mean?
3. True or False: “They is happy” is correct subject-verb agreement.
4. Why is tense consistency important?
5. Fill in the blank: Verbs must remain in the same _____ unless context requires a change.

2.3 Effective Language Use

2.3.1 Word choice and clarity

Word choice refers to selecting words that convey meaning precisely. Clear word choice avoids vague or confusing expressions.

2.3.2 Avoiding redundancy and ambiguity

Redundancy occurs when unnecessary repetition weakens writing, while **ambiguity** arises when meaning is unclear. Effective communication requires avoiding both.



2.3.3 Correct usage in academic and professional contexts

In academic and professional writing, correct usage involves formal tone, precise vocabulary, and logical organisation. This ensures credibility and clarity.

[Insert figure here] Caption: Figure 2.2 – Example of redundancy and clarity in sentences

Description: A diagram showing a redundant sentence and its improved version. AI prompt

suggestion: “Create a diagram comparing a redundant sentence with a clear, concise version.”

Search string: “redundancy in writing examples OER”

Pilot questions 2.3

1. What does word choice mean?
2. Define redundancy in writing.
3. True or False: Ambiguity makes meaning clearer.
4. Mention one feature of academic writing.
5. Fill in the blank: Effective communication requires avoiding _____ and ambiguity.



Series Summary

This Series has focused on grammar, usage, and sentence structure, which are essential for clear and accurate communication. We began by exploring sentence structure and its elements, including the components of a sentence, the different types of sentences, and common errors that can reduce clarity. Then, we examined grammar and usage, paying attention to parts of speech, subject-verb agreement, and tense consistency. Finally, we considered effective language use, where we discussed word choice, avoiding redundancy and ambiguity, and applying correct usage in academic and professional contexts.

By engaging with these topics, you should now be able to identify sentence components, categorise sentence types, detect and correct errors, apply parts of speech, demonstrate subject-verb agreement, maintain tense consistency, evaluate word choice, revise sentences for clarity, and apply correct grammar in academic and professional writing. These abilities directly align with the Series Learning Outcomes and strengthen your foundation for effective communication in English.

Glossary of Terms

- **Ambiguity:** A lack of clarity in meaning, often caused by vague or confusing language.
- **Declarative sentence:** A sentence that makes a statement.
- **Exclamatory sentence:** A sentence that expresses strong emotion.
- **Fragment:** An incomplete sentence that lacks either a subject or a predicate.
- **Imperative sentence:** A sentence that gives a command or instruction.
- **Parts of speech:** Categories of words based on their function in a sentence, such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives.
- **Predicate:** The part of a sentence that tells what the subject does or is.
- **Redundancy:** Unnecessary repetition of words or ideas in writing.
- **Run-on sentence:** Two or more sentences joined incorrectly without proper punctuation or conjunctions.
- **Sentence:** A group of words that expresses a complete thought.
- **Subject:** The person, place, thing, or idea that a sentence is about.



- **Subject-verb agreement:** The rule that the verb must match the subject in number and person.
- **Tense consistency:** The use of verbs in the same tense throughout a sentence or paragraph unless context requires a change.
- **Word choice:** The selection of words that convey meaning precisely and clearly.



Concept Check Questions 2

Objective questions

1. A sentence must contain a _____ and a predicate to be complete. (Linked to SLO 2.1)
2. Which type of sentence expresses strong emotion? (Linked to SLO 2.2)
3. True or False: A run-on sentence is grammatically correct. (Linked to SLO 2.3)
4. Which part of speech describes a noun? (Linked to SLO 2.4)
5. Fill in the blank: Subject-verb agreement requires that the verb must match the _____ in number and person. (Linked to SLO 2.5)

Short-answer questions

6. Define tense consistency. (Linked to SLO 2.6)
7. Explain what redundancy in writing means. (Linked to SLO 2.8)
8. State one feature of academic writing. (Linked to SLO 2.9)
9. What is the function of a predicate in a sentence? (Linked to SLO 2.1)
10. Give one example of an interrogative sentence. (Linked to SLO 2.2)

Long-answer questions

11. Analyse the importance of subject-verb agreement in effective communication, giving examples of correct and incorrect usage. (Linked to SLO 2.5)
 - **Basic response:** Learners should explain that subject-verb agreement ensures clarity and correctness, with examples such as “She runs” versus “She run”.
 - **Value-added response:** Outstanding learners may extend their answer by evaluating how errors in subject-verb agreement affect credibility in academic and professional writing.
12. Demonstrate how to revise a paragraph to avoid redundancy and ambiguity, explaining why clarity is essential in academic contexts. (Linked to SLO 2.8, SLO 2.9)
 - **Basic response:** Learners should show how removing repeated words and unclear phrases improves clarity.



- **Value-added response:** Outstanding learners may provide a sample paragraph, revise it, and evaluate how clarity enhances comprehension and professionalism.

Answers to Concept Check Questions 2

1. Subject
2. Exclamatory sentence
3. False
4. Adjective
5. Subject
6. Keeping verbs in the same tense unless context requires a change
7. Unnecessary repetition of words or ideas in writing
8. Formal tone, precision, and logical organisation
9. It tells what the subject does or is
10. Example: "What is your name?"
11. Subject-verb agreement ensures clarity and correctness; example: "She runs" versus "She run". Value-added: errors reduce credibility in academic and professional writing.
12. Removing repeated words and unclear phrases improves clarity. Value-added: provide a sample paragraph, revise it, and evaluate how clarity enhances comprehension and professionalism.

Answers to Pilot Questions 2

Pilot questions 2.1

1. Subject and predicate
2. Exclamatory sentence
3. False
4. Two or more sentences joined incorrectly
5. Comma

Pilot questions 2.2

1. Nouns, verbs (any two parts of speech)



2. Verb must match subject in number and person
3. False
4. It prevents confusion and maintains clarity
5. Tense

Pilot questions 2.3

1. Selecting words that convey meaning precisely
2. Unnecessary repetition in writing
3. False
4. Formal tone, precision, logical organisation
5. Redundancy



- **Figure 2.1 – Types of sentences with examples** Suggested AI prompt: “Create a labelled diagram showing four types of sentences with examples.” Search string: “sentence types diagram OER” Attribution: Adapted from Open Educational Resources on English grammar and sentence structure.
- **Figure 2.2 – Example of redundancy and clarity in sentences** Suggested AI prompt: “Create a diagram comparing a redundant sentence with a clear, concise version.” Search string: “redundancy in writing examples OER” Attribution: Adapted from Open Educational Resources on academic writing and communication.
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Series 3: Comprehension, Summary, and Critical Analysis

Series Outline

- **Part 3.1: Reading Comprehension Skills**
 - 3.1.1 Techniques for active reading
 - 3.1.2 Identifying main ideas and supporting details
 - 3.1.3 Understanding context and inference
- **Part 3.2: Writing Effective Summaries**
 - 3.2.1 Characteristics of a good summary



- 3.2.2 Steps in summarising texts
- 3.2.3 Common errors in summarising
- **Part 3.3: Critical Analysis of Texts**
 - 3.3.1 Distinguishing facts from opinions
 - 3.3.2 Evaluating arguments and evidence
 - 3.3.3 Developing critical responses

Introduction

Comprehension, summary, and critical analysis are central to academic success. They enable learners to engage deeply with texts, extract meaning, and respond thoughtfully. In everyday life and professional contexts, these skills also enhance decision-making and communication.

The aim of this Series is to equip you with strategies for reading comprehension, summarising texts effectively, and critically analysing written material.

We shall commence this Series by exploring reading comprehension skills, focusing on active reading, identifying main ideas, and making inferences. Next, we will move on to writing effective summaries, examining their characteristics, steps, and common pitfalls. Finally, we will conclude with critical analysis, where we will learn to distinguish facts from opinions, evaluate arguments, and develop critical responses.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 3.1** apply active reading techniques to improve comprehension,
- **SLO 3.2** identify main ideas and supporting details in texts,
- **SLO 3.3** interpret meaning through context and inference,
- **SLO 3.4** define the characteristics of a good summary,
- **SLO 3.5** demonstrate the steps involved in summarising texts,
- **SLO 3.6** detect and correct common errors in summaries,
- **SLO 3.7** distinguish between facts and opinions in written material,
- **SLO 3.8** evaluate arguments and evidence critically, and



- **SLO 3.9** construct well-reasoned critical responses to texts.



3.1 Reading Comprehension Skills

3.1.1 Techniques for active reading

Active reading means engaging with a text rather than passively scanning it. Techniques include previewing headings, highlighting key points, asking questions while reading, and making notes. These strategies help you retain information and understand the author's message.

Fill-in-the-blank: Active reading involves _____ with a text rather than passively scanning it.

3.1.2 Identifying main ideas and supporting details

The **main idea** is the central point of a passage, while **supporting details** provide evidence or explanation. Recognising these helps you summarise accurately and avoid misinterpretation.

3.1.3 Understanding context and inference

Context refers to the surrounding words or situation that give meaning to a passage. **Inference** is drawing a logical conclusion based on evidence in the text. Together, they enable deeper comprehension.

[Insert figure here] Caption: Figure 3.1 – Active reading strategies Description: A diagram showing previewing, highlighting, questioning, and note-taking as active reading techniques. AI prompt suggestion: “Create a diagram showing active reading strategies: previewing, highlighting, questioning, note-taking.” Search string: “active reading strategies diagram OER”

Pilot questions 3.1

1. What does active reading mean?
2. Define main idea.
3. True or False: Supporting details explain or prove the main idea.
4. What is inference?
5. Fill in the blank: Context refers to the surrounding _____ that give meaning to a passage.



3.2 Writing Effective Summaries

3.2.1 Characteristics of a good summary

A **summary** is a shortened version of a text that captures its main ideas. A good summary is concise, accurate, objective, and written in your own words.

3.2.2 Steps in summarising texts

Steps include reading the text carefully, identifying the main idea and supporting details, removing repetition, and rewriting the content in a shorter form.

Fill-in-the-blank: A good summary must be concise, accurate, and _____.

3.2.3 Common errors in summarising

Errors include copying text word-for-word, omitting key ideas, adding personal opinions, or making the summary too long. Avoiding these ensures clarity and reliability.

Pilot questions 3.2

1. What is a summary?
2. Mention one characteristic of a good summary.
3. True or False: A summary should include personal opinions.
4. What is the first step in summarising a text?
5. Fill in the blank: Errors in summarising include copying text _____.

3.3 Critical Analysis Of Texts

3.3.1 Distinguishing facts from opinions

A **fact** is a statement that can be proven true or false, while an **opinion** expresses personal belief or judgement. Critical analysis requires recognising the difference.



3.3.2 Evaluating arguments and evidence

Evaluating involves checking whether arguments are logical and whether evidence is reliable, relevant, and sufficient. This helps you judge the strength of a text.

3.3.3 Developing critical responses

A **critical response** is a reasoned reaction to a text. It involves summarising the author's ideas, assessing their strengths and weaknesses, and presenting your own perspective supported by evidence.

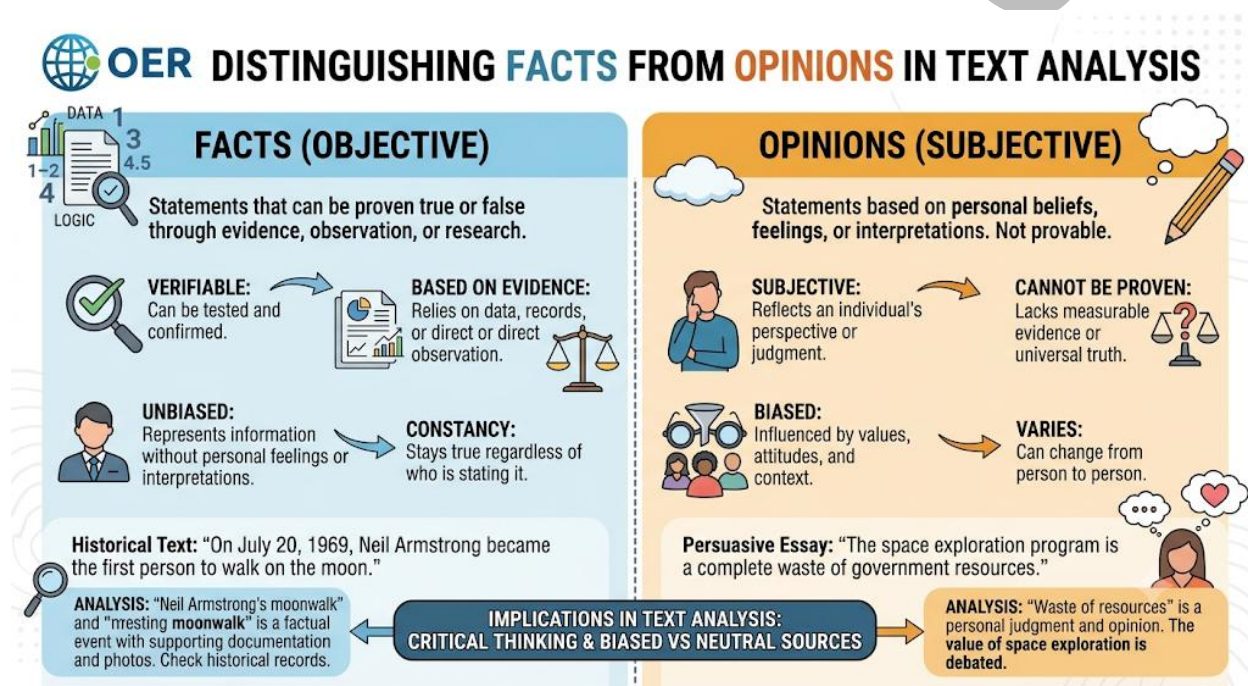


Figure 3.2 – Distinguishing facts from opinions

A diagram comparing examples of facts and opinions.

Pilot questions 3.3

1. Define fact.
2. What is an opinion?
3. True or False: Evidence must be reliable and relevant.



4. What is a critical response?
5. Fill in the blank: Evaluating arguments involves checking whether they are _____ and supported by evidence.



Series Summary

This Series has guided you through comprehension, summary, and critical analysis, which are vital skills for academic success and informed communication. We began with reading comprehension, where you learned active reading techniques, how to identify main ideas and supporting details, and how to use context and inference to deepen understanding. We then moved on to writing effective summaries, focusing on their characteristics, the steps involved, and common errors to avoid. Finally, we explored critical analysis, distinguishing facts from opinions, evaluating arguments and evidence, and developing reasoned responses to texts.

By engaging with these topics, you should now be able to apply active reading strategies, identify and interpret key ideas, produce concise and accurate summaries, and critically evaluate texts. These abilities directly align with the Series Learning Outcomes and provide you with the tools to read, write, and think more effectively in both academic and professional contexts.

Glossary of Terms

- **Active reading:** Engaging with a text by previewing, highlighting, questioning, and note-taking.
- **Context:** The surrounding words or situation that give meaning to a passage.
- **Critical response:** A reasoned reaction to a text that summarises, evaluates, and presents a perspective.
- **Fact:** A statement that can be proven true or false.
- **Inference:** A logical conclusion drawn from evidence in a text.
- **Main idea:** The central point or message of a passage.
- **Opinion:** A personal belief or judgement that cannot be proven true or false.
- **Summary:** A shortened version of a text that captures its main ideas concisely and objectively.
- **Supporting details:** Evidence or explanations that clarify or prove the main idea.



Concept Check Questions 3

Objective questions

1. Active reading involves _____ with a text rather than passively scanning it. (Linked to SLO 3.1)
2. Which of the following is not a characteristic of a good summary: concise, accurate, opinionated? (Linked to SLO 3.4)
3. True or False: Supporting details provide evidence or explanation for the main idea. (Linked to SLO 3.2)
4. A statement that can be proven true or false is called a _____. (Linked to SLO 3.7)
5. Fill in the blank: Evaluating arguments involves checking whether they are _____ and supported by evidence. (Linked to SLO 3.8)

Short-answer questions

6. Define inference in reading comprehension. (Linked to SLO 3.3)
7. What is the first step in summarising a text? (Linked to SLO 3.5)
8. State one common error in summarising. (Linked to SLO 3.6)
9. What is an opinion? (Linked to SLO 3.7)
10. Explain what a critical response involves. (Linked to SLO 3.9)

Long-answer questions

11. Analyse the importance of active reading strategies in improving comprehension, giving examples of techniques learners can use. (Linked to SLO 3.1)
 - **Basic response:** Learners should explain that active reading helps retain information and mention techniques such as highlighting or note-taking.
 - **Value-added response:** Outstanding learners may extend their answer by evaluating how active reading improves critical thinking and comparing passive versus active approaches.



12. Demonstrate how to write a concise summary of a passage, explaining why objectivity and accuracy are essential. (Linked to SLO 3.4, SLO 3.5)

- **Basic response:** Learners should describe the steps of summarising and note that summaries must be concise and accurate.
- **Value-added response:** Outstanding learners may provide a sample summary, analyse its strengths, and evaluate how objectivity enhances credibility in academic contexts.

Answers to Concept Check Questions 3

1. Engaging
2. Opinionated
3. True
4. Fact
5. Logical
6. Drawing a logical conclusion based on evidence in a text
7. Reading the text carefully
8. Copying text word-for-word, omitting key ideas, or adding personal opinions
9. A personal belief or judgement that cannot be proven true or false
10. Summarising the author's ideas, assessing strengths and weaknesses, and presenting your own perspective supported by evidence
11. Active reading helps retain information; techniques include highlighting or note-taking.
Value-added: improves critical thinking, contrasts passive versus active approaches.
12. Summaries must be concise and accurate; steps include identifying main ideas and rewriting. Value-added: provide a sample summary, analyse strengths, and evaluate objectivity for credibility.

Answers to Pilot Questions 3

Pilot questions 3.1

1. Engaging with a text
2. The central point of a passage



3. True
4. Drawing a logical conclusion based on evidence
5. Words or situation

Pilot questions 3.2

1. A shortened version of a text capturing main ideas
2. Concise, accurate, objective, written in own words
3. False
4. Reading the text carefully
5. Word-for-word

Pilot questions 3.3

1. A statement that can be proven true or false
2. A personal belief or judgement
3. True
4. A reasoned reaction to a text
5. Logical



- **Figure 3.1 – Active reading strategies** Suggested AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing active reading strategies: previewing, highlighting, questioning, note-taking.” Search string: “active reading strategies diagram OER” Attribution: Adapted from Open Educational Resources on reading comprehension and study skills.
- **Figure 3.2 – Distinguishing facts from opinions** Suggested AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing examples of facts versus opinions in text analysis.” Search string: “facts vs opinions diagram OER” Attribution: Adapted from Open Educational Resources on critical thinking and text analysis.
- **Series content references**
 - Definitions and explanations of comprehension, summarising, and critical analysis were adapted from standard academic writing and communication texts, as well as Open Educational Resources (OERs) in literacy and study skills.
 - Bloom’s taxonomy verbs applied in learning outcomes are based on Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D. R. (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom’s taxonomy of educational objectives*. New York: Longman.
- **Institutional referencing style** All references have been presented in a clear and consistent manner, following APA style for educational materials.

Course code: ARA 111

Course title: Communication in English

Course credit load: 2 Units

List of Series:

- **Series 1:** Foundations of Communication in English
- **Series 2:** Grammar, Usage, and Sentence Structure
- **Series 3:** Comprehension, Summary, and Critical Analysis
- **Series 4:** Academic and Professional Writing Skills
- **Series 5:** Oral Communication and Global Contexts



Series 4: Academic and Professional Writing Skills

Series Outline

This Series will be organised into three main Parts, each with relevant sub-Parts:

- **Part 1 (4.1): The Academic Essay**
 - 4.1.1 Structure and features of the academic essay
 - 4.1.2 The introduction, body, and conclusion
 - 4.1.3 Argument, evidence, and coherence
- **Part 2 (4.2): Professional Writing Formats**
 - 4.2.1 Letter writing: formal and informal
 - 4.2.2 Report writing: structure and style
 - 4.2.3 Memos, emails, and other professional documents
- **Part 3 (4.3): Referencing, Citation, and Academic Integrity**
 - 4.3.1 The importance of referencing in academic writing
 - 4.3.2 Common referencing styles
 - 4.3.3 Plagiarism and academic integrity



Introduction

Writing is one of the most powerful tools available to students and professionals alike. In academic settings, the ability to construct a well-argued essay or a clearly structured report determines how effectively your ideas are received. In professional life, the quality of your letters, emails, and memos reflects your competence and attention to detail. Mastering academic and professional writing is therefore not just an academic requirement — it is a life skill.

The aim of this Series is to equip you with the knowledge and practical skills needed to write clearly, accurately, and appropriately across academic and professional contexts.

We shall commence this Series by examining the academic essay — its structure, key features, and the role of argument and evidence in building a coherent piece of writing. Next, we will explore the major formats of professional writing, including formal and informal letters, reports, memos, and emails. Finally, we will address the important topics of referencing, citation styles, and academic integrity, equipping you with the tools to acknowledge sources correctly and avoid plagiarism.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 4.1** identify the structure and key features of an academic essay,
- **SLO 4.2** construct a well-organised academic essay with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion,
- **SLO 4.3** develop and support an argument using appropriate evidence,
- **SLO 4.4** produce formal and informal letters, reports, memos, and emails that meet professional standards,
- **SLO 4.5** apply common referencing styles accurately in academic writing, and
- **SLO 4.6** explain the importance of academic integrity and identify and avoid plagiarism.

4.1 The Academic Essay

4.1.1 Structure and features of the academic essay

An **academic essay** is a structured piece of writing that presents and defends a position or argument on a given topic, drawing on evidence and reasoning. It is characterised by a **formal tone**, clear **logical organisation**, and the use of credible sources to support claims. Unlike informal writing, an academic essay avoids personal anecdotes, slang, and unsupported opinions. Instead, it demands that every claim be backed by evidence and that ideas be developed in an orderly, coherent manner.



Fill-in-the-blank: An academic essay is characterised by a formal tone, logical organisation, and the use of credible _____ to support claims.

4.1.2 The introduction, body, and conclusion

Every academic essay follows a three-part structure. The **introduction** opens the essay by providing background information, narrowing down to the topic, and presenting the **thesis statement** — the central argument of the essay. The **body** consists of several paragraphs, each developing a single point that supports the thesis, with evidence and analysis. The **conclusion** brings the essay to a close by restating the thesis (in different words), summarising the key points, and offering a final reflection or recommendation. This structure ensures that the reader can follow the writer's reasoning from beginning to end.

Fill-in-the-blank: The _____ statement, found in the introduction, presents the central argument of the essay.

4.1.3 Argument, evidence, and coherence

A strong academic essay depends on a well-constructed **argument** — a position supported by logical reasoning and relevant evidence. Evidence may take the form of statistics, quotations from scholarly sources, examples, or case studies. **Coherence** refers to the smooth flow of ideas within and between paragraphs, achieved through the use of **transition words and phrases** such as 'however', 'therefore', 'in addition', and 'for example'. A coherent essay does not merely present information but guides the reader through a logical progression of ideas towards a well-supported conclusion.



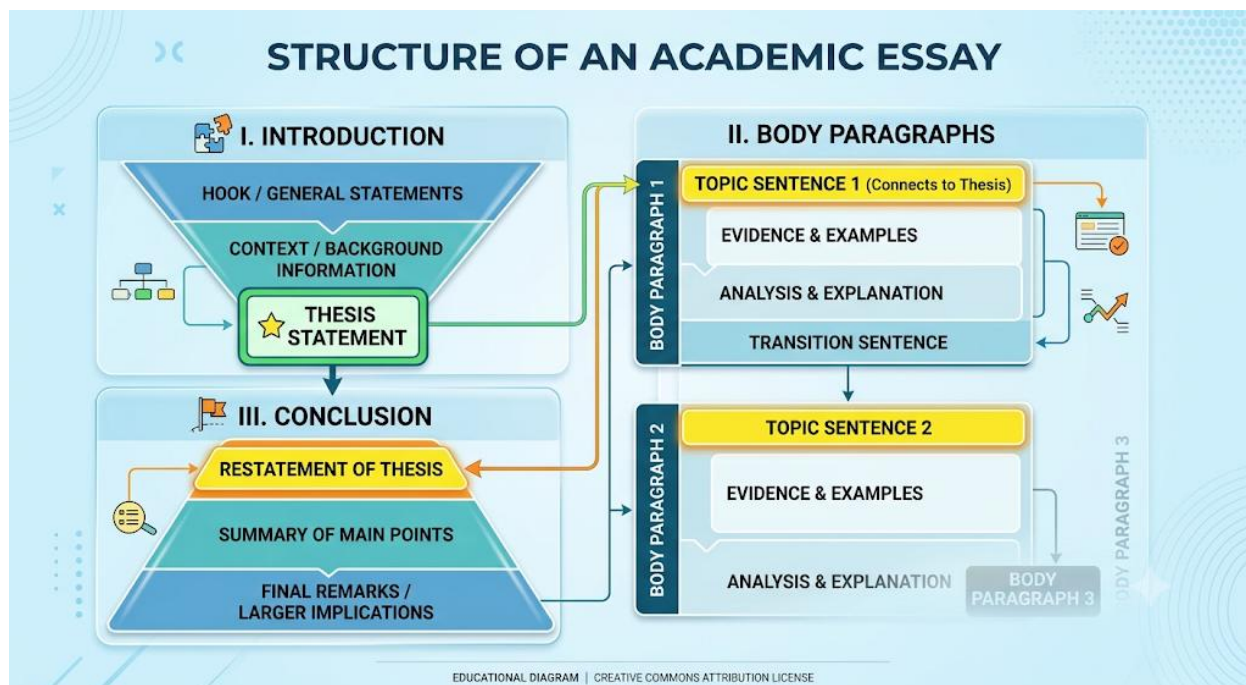


Figure 4.1 — Structure of an academic essay

Description: A diagram showing the three-part structure of an academic essay: introduction (with thesis statement), body paragraphs (with topic sentence, evidence, and analysis), and conclusion (with restatement and summary).

Pilot questions 4.1

1. An academic essay is characterised by formal tone, logical organisation, and credible _____.
2. What is the purpose of the thesis statement in an academic essay?
3. Name the three structural parts of an academic essay.
4. True or False: Each body paragraph in an academic essay should develop a single point supported by evidence.
5. Give one example of a transition word or phrase that improves coherence in an essay.

4.2 Professional Writing Formats

4.2.1 Letter writing: formal and informal

Letters remain one of the most important forms of written communication in professional life. A **formal letter** — used in business, academic, and official contexts — follows a strict format that includes the sender's address, date, recipient's address, salutation (e.g., 'Dear Sir/Madam'), body paragraphs, a formal closing (e.g., 'Yours faithfully' or 'Yours sincerely'), and the writer's signature and name. An **informal**



letter, written to friends or family, is more relaxed in tone and structure, though it still includes a greeting and a closing. Understanding which format to use in a given situation is a key professional skill.

Fill-in-the-blank: A formal letter ends with a closing such as 'Yours faithfully' or 'Yours _____'.

4.2.2 Report writing: structure and style

A **report** is a formal document that presents the findings, analysis, and recommendations resulting from an investigation or project. Reports are used widely in academic, business, scientific, and government contexts. A standard report includes a **title page, executive summary or abstract, introduction, methodology, findings, discussion, conclusion, and recommendations**. The writing style of a report is objective, precise, and impersonal — using the passive voice where appropriate and avoiding personal opinions unless specifically requested.

Fill-in-the-blank: A report presents the findings, analysis, and _____ resulting from an investigation or project.

4.2.3 Memos, emails, and other professional documents

A **memo** (memorandum) is an internal document used within an organisation to communicate information, instructions, or decisions. It typically includes the headings TO, FROM, DATE, and SUBJECT, followed by a concise body. An **email** is the digital equivalent of a formal letter and should maintain a professional tone, a clear subject line, a polite greeting, a focused body, and an appropriate sign-off. Other professional documents include **minutes of meetings** (a record of what was discussed and decided), **notices**, and **circulars**. In all cases, clarity, brevity, and correct grammar are essential.



PROFESSIONAL WRITING FORMATS: COMPARISON TABLE				
KEY FEATURES: PURPOSE, AUDIENCE, STRUCTURE, AND TONE				
FORMAT	PURPOSE	AUDIENCE	STRUCTURE	TONE
 FORMAL LETTERS	 Formal requests, official inquiries, contractual agreements, high-level correspondence.	 EXTERNAL Clients, stakeholders, government agencies, executives, individuals outside the organization.	 Detailed header (Date, Inside Address), Salutation, Body, Complimentary Close, Signature Block. Standard block or modified block format.	 Highly professional, respectful, concise, and structured. Often persuasive or official.
 REPORTS	 To inform, analyze, and present findings, propose solutions, or provide project updates.	 DECISION MAKERS Management, teams, clients, colleagues needing in-depth information or data.	 Can be formal (Title Page, Abstract, Table of Contents, Intro, Findings, Recs) or informal. Use of headings, lists, and visuals.	 Objective, analytical, factual, comprehensive, and focused on clear information transfer. Professional and neutral.
 MEMOS	 Internal communication for announcements, policy updates, instructions, and brief reports.	 INTERNAL Employees, team members, management, or specific departments within an organization.	 Header with "TO," "FROM," "DATE," "SUBJECT" lines. Introduction, details in body, concluding call to action.	 Direct, concise, informal to formal, focused, and efficient. Avoids excessive pleasantries.
 EMAILS	 Rapid, informal or formal internal and external communication for inquiries, responses, and quick updates.	 GLOBAL VERSATILE Colleagues, clients, vendors, external contacts. Very broad.	 Clear Subject Line, Salutation, Body, Closing, Signature Block. Often short and direct. Use of threads.	 Adaptable: casual and conversational for colleagues; more formal for clients. Professionalism is key.

Figure 4.2 — Comparison of professional writing formats

Description: A table comparing the key features of formal letters, reports, memos, and emails, showing their purpose, audience, structure, and tone.

Pilot Questions 4.2

1. Name two features that distinguish a formal letter from an informal letter.
2. What is the purpose of the executive summary in a report?
3. A memo typically includes four headings: TO, FROM, DATE, and _____.
4. True or False: A professional email may use slang and informal language if the recipient is a colleague.
5. Name one other type of professional document besides letters, reports, and emails.

4.3 Referencing, Citation, And Academic Integrity

4.3.1 The importance of referencing in academic writing

Referencing is the practice of acknowledging the sources of information, ideas, and quotations used in academic writing. It serves three important purposes: it gives **credit** to the original authors whose work you have drawn on; it allows readers to **verify and locate** the sources you have used; and it demonstrates that your argument is grounded in **credible evidence**. Failing to reference sources not only misleads



readers but also constitutes plagiarism — a serious academic offence. Referencing is therefore not merely a formality but a fundamental aspect of academic honesty and intellectual responsibility.

Fill-in-the-blank: Referencing gives credit to original authors and allows readers to _____ and locate the sources used.

4.3.2 Common referencing styles

Different academic disciplines use different referencing styles. The most widely used include **APA (American Psychological Association)** style, commonly used in the social sciences, which uses an author-date system (e.g., Smith, 2020); **MLA (Modern Language Association)** style, used in humanities, which uses an author-page system (e.g., Smith 45); and **Chicago style**, used in history and some other disciplines, which may use footnotes or an author-date system. In all styles, an in-text citation is accompanied by a full reference entry in a **reference list** or **bibliography** at the end of the document. You should always follow the referencing style required by your institution or lecturer.

Fill-in-the-blank: APA referencing style uses an _____ system, placing the author's name and year of publication in the text.

4.3.3 Plagiarism and academic integrity

Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person's words, ideas, or work as your own without proper acknowledgement. It includes copying text without quotation marks, paraphrasing without citation, submitting another student's work, and using AI-generated content without disclosure where prohibited. **Academic integrity** requires you to be honest, fair, and responsible in all your academic work. To avoid plagiarism, always cite your sources, paraphrase ideas in your own words and cite the original author, and use quotation marks when reproducing exact words. Developing good referencing habits from the outset of your studies will protect your academic reputation throughout your career.



GUIDE TO AVOIDING PLAGIARISM IN ACADEMIC WRITING

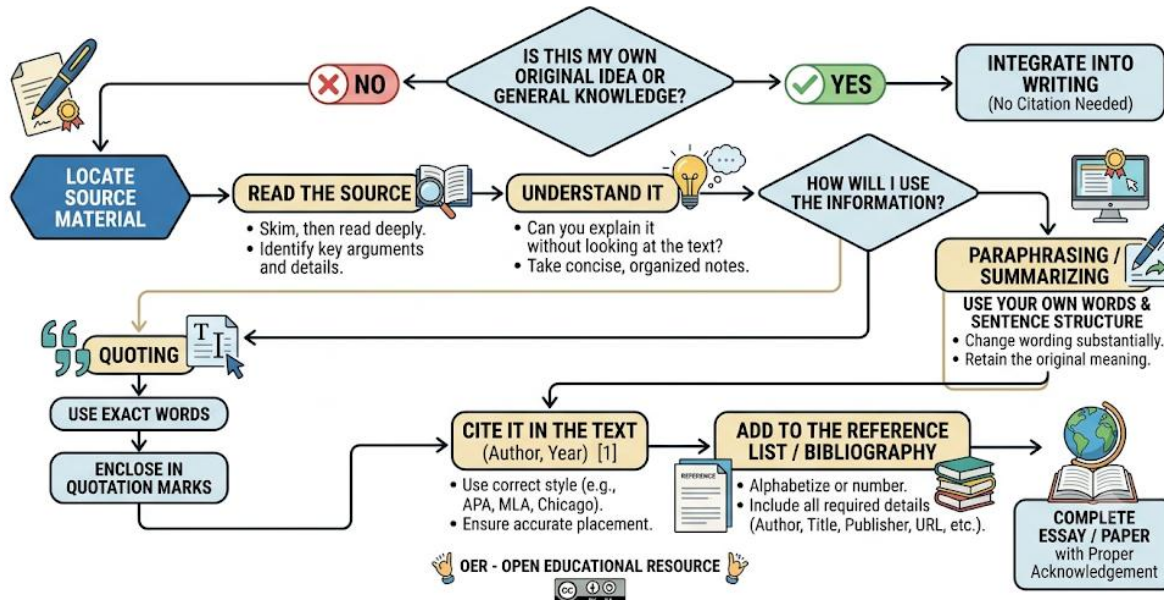


Figure 4.3 — Avoiding plagiarism: a practical guide

Description: A flowchart showing the steps a student should take when using a source: read and understand → paraphrase or quote → cite in the text → add to the reference list.

Pilot Questions 4.3

1. What are the three purposes of referencing in academic writing?
2. Which referencing style uses an author-date system and is common in the social sciences?
3. Fill in the blank: Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person's words or ideas as your own without proper _____.
4. True or False: Paraphrasing an idea from a source without citing it is a form of plagiarism.
5. Name one practical step you can take to avoid plagiarism in your academic work.



Series Summary

This Series has equipped you with the essential skills of academic and professional writing. We began by examining the academic essay, exploring its three-part structure — introduction, body, and conclusion — and the role of the thesis statement, evidence, and coherence in building a persuasive piece of writing. We then moved on to professional writing formats, covering formal and informal letters, reports, memos, and emails, and identifying the key features that make each type of document effective in its context. Finally, we addressed the important topics of referencing, citation styles, and academic integrity, emphasising why acknowledging your sources is not just a technical requirement but an ethical responsibility.

By engaging with these topics, you should now be able to identify and apply the structure of an academic essay, construct a well-supported argument, produce professional documents in the correct format, apply referencing styles accurately, and understand and uphold academic integrity. These abilities directly align with the Series Learning Outcomes and prepare you for the writing demands of your academic programme and future professional life.

Glossary of Terms

- **Academic essay:** A structured piece of formal writing that presents and defends a position or argument on a given topic, supported by credible evidence.
- **Academic integrity:** The commitment to honesty, fairness, and responsibility in all academic work, including proper acknowledgement of sources.
- **APA style:** A referencing format developed by the American Psychological Association, using an author-date system for in-text citations.
- **Bibliography:** A list of all sources consulted during the preparation of an academic work, whether cited in the text or not.
- **Chicago style:** A referencing format that may use footnotes or an author-date system, commonly used in history and some other disciplines.
- **Coherence:** The quality of logical and smooth flow of ideas within and between paragraphs, supported by the use of transition words and phrases.
- **Conclusion:** The final section of an essay or report, which restates the thesis, summarises key points, and offers a final reflection or recommendation.
- **Executive summary:** A brief overview of a report's key findings, conclusions, and recommendations, placed at the beginning of the document.
- **Formal letter:** A letter written for official, business, or academic purposes, following a strict conventional format including addresses, salutation, and formal closing.
- **Introduction:** The opening section of an essay or report, providing background information and presenting the thesis statement or purpose of the document.
- **Memo:** A short internal document used within an organisation to communicate information, instructions, or decisions, typically headed with TO, FROM, DATE, and SUBJECT.
- **MLA style:** A referencing format developed by the Modern Language Association, using an author-page system for in-text citations, common in humanities disciplines.



- **Plagiarism:** The act of presenting another person's words, ideas, or work as your own without proper acknowledgement.
- **Reference list:** A list of all sources cited within an academic document, presented in a specified referencing style at the end of the text.
- **Report:** A formal document that presents the findings, analysis, and recommendations resulting from an investigation or project.
- **Thesis statement:** A sentence in the introduction of an essay that presents the central argument or position that the essay will develop and defend.
- **Transition words:** Words and phrases such as 'however', 'therefore', and 'in addition' that link ideas and improve the coherence of written texts.



Objective Questions

1. An academic essay is characterised by a formal tone, logical organisation, and the use of credible **sources** to support claims.
2. Which of the following is not a standard section of a report: findings, methodology, bibliography, **poetry**.
3. **False** – The thesis statement is found in the introduction, not the conclusion.
4. The referencing style that uses an author-date system and is common in the social sciences is **APA**.
5. Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person's words or ideas as your own without proper **acknowledgement**.

Short-Answer Questions

6. The thesis statement presents the central argument or position of the essay; it gives direction and tells the reader what to expect.
7. A formal letter uses strict conventions (addresses, formal salutation, closing) and an impersonal tone; an informal letter is relaxed in tone and structure.
8. Coherence refers to the smooth, logical flow of ideas; it is achieved through transitions and clear connections between paragraphs.
9. APA – Social Sciences; MLA – Humanities (or Chicago – History).
10. Practical steps: cite all sources used, paraphrase properly with citation, use quotation marks for direct quotes, keep records of consulted sources.

Long-Answer Questions

11. Structure of an Academic Essay

- *Basic response*: Introduction provides background and thesis; body develops arguments with evidence; conclusion restates thesis and summarises.
- *Value-added response*: Thesis directs the essay; topic sentences link body paragraphs to thesis; conclusion reinforces argument and leaves lasting impression.

12. Importance of Academic Integrity

- *Basic response*: Academic integrity requires honesty; plagiarism is using another's work without acknowledgement; proper citation is essential.
- *Value-added response*: Consequences include damage to reputation and credibility; forms of plagiarism compared (direct copying, paraphrasing without citation, self-plagiarism); good referencing habits build intellectual honesty and confidence.



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Pilot Questions 4.1 – Answers

1. Sources (credible sources)
2. It presents the central argument of the essay and gives the essay direction
3. Introduction, body, and conclusion
4. True
5. However, therefore, in addition, for example (any one acceptable)

Pilot Questions 4.2 – Answers

1. Any two of: formal letter uses strict format with addresses and formal salutation; uses a formal closing such as *Yours faithfully*; uses formal, impersonal language; is used for official purposes
2. To provide a brief overview of the report's key findings, conclusions, and recommendations at the beginning of the document
3. SUBJECT
4. False
5. Minutes of meetings, notices, or circulars (any one acceptable)

Pilot Questions 4.3 – Answers

1. To give credit to original authors; to allow readers to verify and locate sources; to demonstrate that the argument is grounded in credible evidence
2. APA (American Psychological Association)
3. Acknowledgement
4. True
5. Any one of: always cite sources used; paraphrase in your own words and cite; use quotation marks when quoting directly; keep a record of all sources



References and Attributions 4

- **Figure 4.1 — Structure of an academic essay** Suggested AI prompt: "Create a labelled diagram showing the structure of an academic essay with introduction (thesis statement), body paragraphs (topic sentence, evidence, analysis), and conclusion (restatement and summary)." Search string: "academic essay structure diagram OER" Attribution: Adapted from Open Educational Resources on academic writing.
- **Figure 4.2 — Comparison of professional writing formats** Suggested AI prompt: "Create a comparison table showing the key features of formal letters, reports, memos, and emails in professional writing, with columns for purpose, audience, structure, and tone." Search string: "professional writing formats comparison table OER" Attribution: Adapted from Open Educational Resources on professional communication.
- **Figure 4.3 — Avoiding plagiarism: a practical guide** Suggested AI prompt: "Create a flowchart showing how to avoid plagiarism in academic writing: read the source, understand it, paraphrase or quote, cite it in the text, and add it to the reference list." Search string: "avoiding plagiarism academic writing flowchart OER" Attribution: Adapted from Open Educational Resources on academic integrity.
- **Series content references**
 - Explanations of academic essay structure, professional writing formats, and referencing conventions were adapted from standard academic communication texts and Open Educational Resources (OERs) in language, writing, and communication studies.
 - American Psychological Association. (2020). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.). APA.
 - Modern Language Association. (2021). MLA handbook (9th ed.). MLA.
 - **Bloom's taxonomy** Verbs applied in learning outcomes are based on Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D. R. (2001). A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives. New York: Longman.
 - **Institutional referencing style** All references have been presented in a clear and consistent manner, following APA style for educational materials.

Course code: ARA 111

Course title: Communication in English

Course credit load: 2 Units



List of Series:

- Series 1: Foundations of Communication in English
- Series 2: Grammar, Usage, and Sentence Structure
- Series 3: Comprehension, Summary, and Critical Analysis
- Series 4: Academic and Professional Writing Skills
- **Series 5: Oral Communication and Global Contexts**

Series 5: Oral Communication and Global Contexts

Series Outline

This Series will be organised into three main Parts, each with relevant sub-Parts:

Part 1 (5.1): Oral Communication Skills

- **5.1.1** Features of Effective Oral Communication
- **5.1.2** Public Speaking and Presentations
- **5.1.3** Discussion, Debate, and Group Communication

Part 2 (5.2): English in Global and Multicultural Contexts

- **5.2.1** English as a Global Language
- **5.2.2** Varieties of English and Accent Awareness
- **5.2.3** Cross-Cultural Communication Strategies

Part 3 (5.3): Digital and Contemporary Communication

- **5.3.1** Communication in the Digital Age
- **5.3.2** Netiquette and Professional Online Interaction
- **5.3.3** Integrating Communication Skills for Lifelong Success



Introduction

Effective oral communication is one of the most valuable skills you can develop in any language, and English is no exception. Whether you are presenting a research paper, participating in a group discussion, delivering a speech, or interacting with colleagues from different parts of the world, your ability to speak clearly, listen actively, and adapt to different communicative contexts directly shapes your academic and professional outcomes. In today's interconnected world, English serves not just as a national or regional tool, but as the primary medium of global communication—spoken in diverse forms across every continent.

The aim of this Series is to consolidate and extend your communication skills in English, with a focus on oral expression and its contemporary global contexts. We shall commence by exploring the key features of effective oral communication, including public speaking and group interaction. Next, we will examine how English functions as a global language and how different cultural contexts shape communication. Finally, we will consider how communication is evolving in the digital age, and how you can integrate all the skills developed throughout this course to become a confident, adaptable communicator for life.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 5.1** demonstrate the features of effective oral communication in academic and professional settings,
- **SLO 5.2** plan and deliver a structured oral presentation with clarity and confidence,
- **SLO 5.3** participate constructively in discussions, debates, and group communication,
- **SLO 5.4** analyse the role of English as a global language and recognise its major varieties,
- **SLO 5.5** apply cross-cultural communication strategies to diverse contexts,
- **SLO 5.6** practise appropriate digital communication and netiquette, and
- **SLO 5.7** integrate oral, written, and digital communication skills for lifelong academic and professional success.



5.1 Oral Communication Skills

5.1.1 Features of effective oral communication

Oral communication is the use of spoken words to convey ideas, information, and feelings. It involves both speaking and listening, and its effectiveness depends on several key features. **Clarity** means expressing ideas in a way that is easy to understand, avoiding unnecessary jargon or ambiguity. **Fluency** refers to the ability to speak smoothly and confidently, without excessive hesitation. **Appropriate tone** means matching the register and emotional quality of your speech to the situation — formal in a lecture hall, conversational with a friend. **Volume and pace** are equally important: speaking too softly or too quickly can undermine even the best content. In addition, **non-verbal cues** such as eye contact, posture, and gestures reinforce spoken messages and make communication more effective.

Fill-in-the-blank: The feature of oral communication that refers to speaking smoothly and confidently without excessive hesitation is called _____.

5.1.2 Public speaking and presentations

Public speaking is a formal mode of oral communication in which one person addresses an audience. Whether in a seminar, a conference, or a classroom, effective public speaking requires careful preparation. A well-structured presentation typically includes an **introduction** (to capture attention and state the purpose), a **body** (to develop key points logically), and a **conclusion** (to summarise and leave the audience with a clear message). **Delivery skills** such as maintaining eye contact, using appropriate gestures, modulating your voice, and managing time all contribute to a successful presentation. Practice and preparation are the most reliable tools for overcoming **stage fright** — the anxiety that often accompanies public speaking.

Fill-in-the-blank: A well-structured oral presentation has three parts: an introduction, a _____, and a conclusion.

5.1.3 Discussion, debate, and group communication

Discussion is an open exchange of ideas in which participants share views and build understanding together. **Debate** is a more formal mode of group communication in which speakers argue opposing positions on a topic, following specific rules of turn-taking and evidence. In both contexts, effective communicators practise **active listening**, respond respectfully to opposing views, and support their points



with reasons and examples. **Group communication** also involves understanding roles: some participants lead, others facilitate, and all must contribute constructively. The ability to disagree without being disagreeable — maintaining **civility** — is essential in academic and professional group settings.

Fill-in-the-blank: In a debate, speakers argue _____ positions on a topic, following rules of turn-taking and _____.

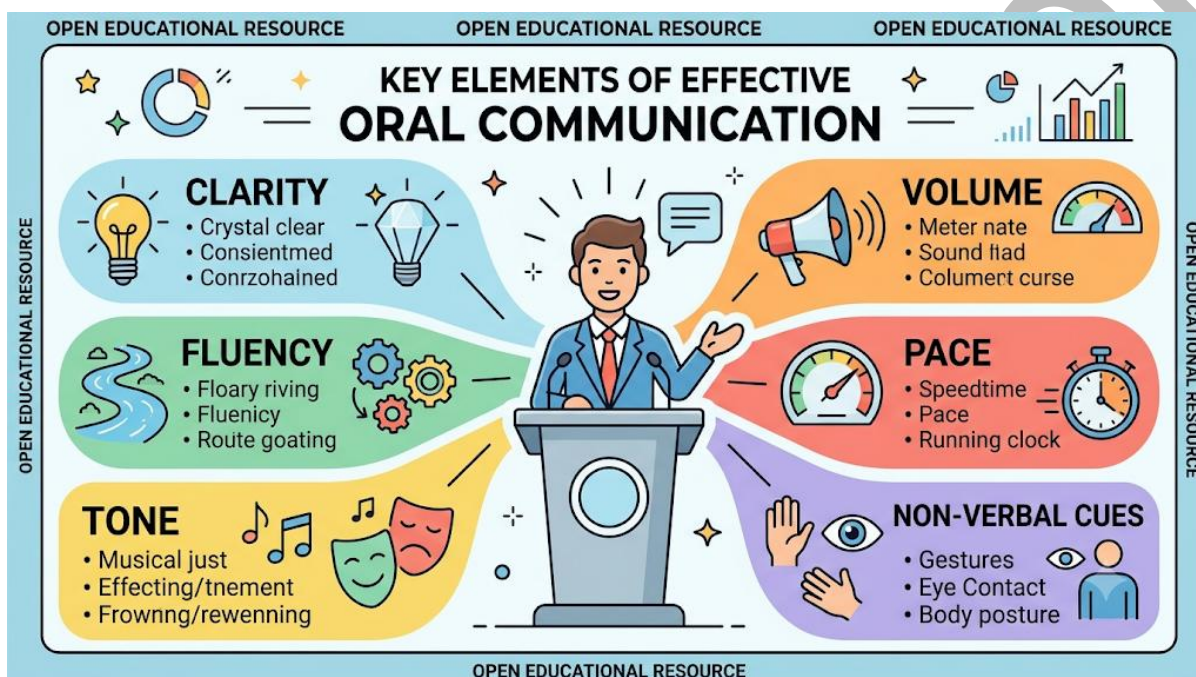


Figure 5.1 — Elements of effective oral communication

A labelled diagram showing clarity, fluency, tone, volume, pace, and non-verbal cues as components of oral communication.

Pilot questions 5.1

1. Oral communication is best defined as _____.
2. Which of the following is not a feature of effective oral communication: clarity, fluency, ambiguity?
3. Name one strategy for overcoming stage fright in public speaking.
4. True or False: In a debate, all participants must agree on the topic.
5. Fill in the blank: Good public speaking requires careful _____ and structured delivery.



5.2 English In Global And Multicultural Contexts

5.2.1 English as a global language

English is today the most widely used language in international communication, serving as a **lingua franca** — a shared language between speakers of different mother tongues. It is the dominant language of global science, business, diplomacy, technology, and education. This global status means that English is spoken in many forms: as a native language in countries like the United Kingdom and the United States, as an official language in countries like Nigeria and India, and as a foreign language in many others. Understanding this role helps you to appreciate why proficiency in English extends your reach beyond local and national boundaries and positions you for global academic and professional opportunities.

Fill-in-the-blank: A _____ is a shared language used for communication between people who have different mother tongues.

5.2.2 Varieties of English and accent awareness

Because English is spoken across many countries and communities, it has developed numerous **varieties** — regional and national forms with distinct vocabulary, pronunciation, and sometimes grammar. **Nigerian English**, for instance, reflects the country's linguistic diversity and cultural context, and is a fully legitimate form of English communication. **British English** and **American English** differ in spelling, vocabulary, and certain grammatical preferences. Being aware of these varieties helps you communicate across different English-speaking contexts without misunderstanding. **Accent** refers to the pronunciation patterns associated with a particular region or social group. No accent is inherently superior; what matters is clarity and mutual intelligibility.

Fill-in-the-blank: _____ refers to the pronunciation patterns associated with a particular region or social group, and no accent is inherently _____.

5.2.3 Cross-cultural communication strategies

Cross-cultural communication refers to communication between people from different cultural backgrounds. Cultural differences can affect communication in subtle but important ways: what counts as polite or direct in one culture may seem rude or vague in another. Effective cross-cultural communicators develop several key strategies: **cultural sensitivity** (awareness of and respect for cultural difference), **flexibility** (willingness to adjust communication style), **patience** (allowing space for misunderstanding to



be clarified), and **openness** (genuine interest in understanding other perspectives). In Nigerian and broader African contexts, recognising how oral tradition, respect for elders, and communal values shape communication styles is particularly important for authentic interaction.

Fill-in-the-blank: _____ communication refers to interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds and requires strategies such as _____ sensitivity and flexibility.

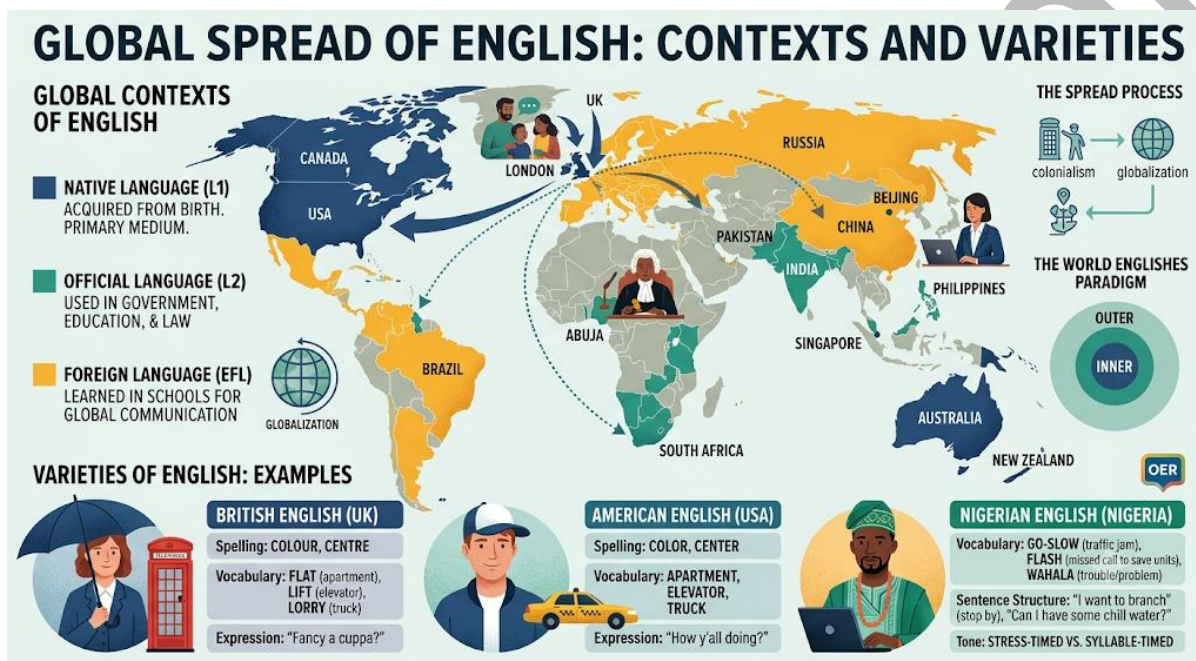


Figure 5.2 — English as a global language: varieties and spread Description: A world map or diagram showing regions where English functions as a native, official, or foreign language, with examples of major varieties.

Pilot questions 5.2

1. What is a lingua franca?
2. Name two varieties of English mentioned in this sub-Part.
3. True or False: Nigerian English is a less legitimate form of English than British English.
4. Mention one strategy for effective cross-cultural communication.
5. Fill in the blank: No accent is inherently _____; what matters is clarity and mutual _____.



5.3 Digital And Contemporary Communication

5.3.1 Communication in the digital age

The digital revolution has transformed how people communicate. **Digital communication** refers to the use of electronic platforms and devices to send and receive messages, including email, social media, messaging applications, video conferencing, and online forums. These tools have made communication faster, broader in reach, and increasingly multimodal — combining text, images, audio, and video. However, digital communication also presents challenges: messages can be misread without tone of voice or facial expressions; **misinformation** spreads quickly online; and the boundary between personal and professional communication can blur. Being a competent digital communicator requires not only technical skill but also critical judgement about what, when, and how to communicate online.

Fill-in-the-blank: _____ communication refers to the use of electronic platforms and devices to send and receive messages.

5.3.2 Netiquette and professional online interaction

Netiquette — a blend of "net" and "etiquette" — refers to the accepted standards of polite and professional behaviour in online communication. These standards include: using appropriate greetings and sign-offs in emails, avoiding the use of all capital letters (which can appear aggressive), proofreading messages before sending, respecting others' privacy, and refraining from sharing unverified information. In professional and academic settings, emails and messages should maintain a **formal register**, clear subject lines, and concise, well-organised content. Treating others online with the same respect you would show in a face-to-face interaction is the foundation of effective netiquette.

Fill-in-the-blank: _____ refers to accepted standards of polite and professional behaviour in online communication.

5.3.3 Integrating communication skills for lifelong success

The communication skills you have developed throughout this course — clarity in speech, accuracy in writing, sensitivity to audience and context, and appropriate digital conduct — are not separate abilities but complementary dimensions of a single, holistic competence. In the workplace, in postgraduate study, and in community life, you will constantly draw on all of these skills together. A research presentation, for instance, calls on oral fluency, written preparation, visual design, and awareness of audience. A



professional email requires grammatical accuracy, tone awareness, and netiquette. Becoming a lifelong communicator means continuing to reflect on and develop these skills beyond the classroom, seeking feedback, practising regularly, and remaining open to the evolving forms that communication takes in a changing world.

Fill-in-the-blank: The communication skills developed throughout this course — oral, written, and digital — are best understood as _____ dimensions of a single, holistic _____.

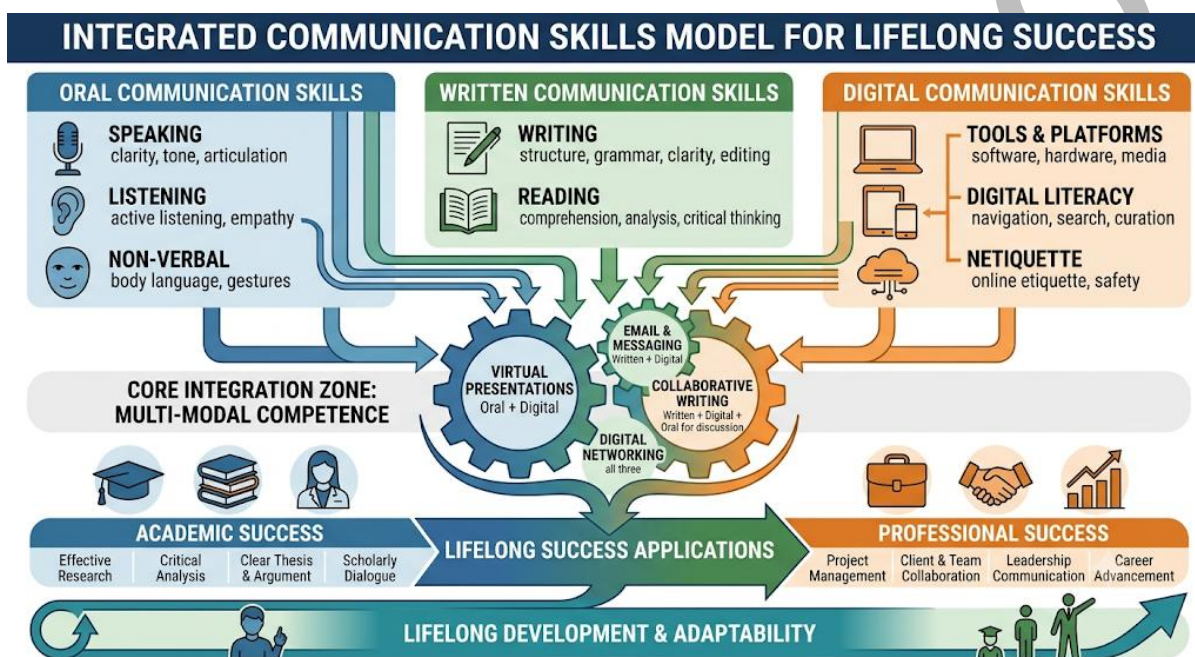


Figure 5.3 — Integration of communication skills for lifelong success

A diagram showing how oral, written, and digital communication skills connect and reinforce each other in academic and professional contexts.

Pilot questions 5.3

1. What does the term 'netiquette' mean?
2. Mention one challenge of digital communication.
3. True or False: Using all capital letters in an online message is considered good netiquette.
4. Identify one feature of a professional email.



5. Fill in the blank: Becoming a lifelong communicator requires practising regularly and remaining open to _____ forms of communication.



Series Summary

This Series has brought together and extended the communication skills explored throughout ARA 111, with a focus on oral expression and its broader global and digital contexts. We began by examining the key features of effective oral communication, developing your understanding of public speaking and structured presentations, and exploring how to participate constructively in discussions and debates. We then turned to the global dimensions of English, recognising its role as a lingua franca, appreciating the variety and legitimacy of different forms of English including Nigerian English, and developing cross-cultural communication strategies. Finally, we considered how digital platforms have transformed communication, established the principles of netiquette, and brought the course full circle by showing how oral, written, and digital skills integrate into a holistic communicative competence.

By engaging with these topics, you should now be able to demonstrate effective oral communication skills, plan and deliver presentations, participate in group discussions, analyse English in global and multicultural contexts, practise appropriate digital communication, and integrate all the skills developed in this course for lifelong success. These abilities directly align with the Series Learning Outcomes and complete the framework introduced in Series 1.

Glossary of Terms

- **Accent:** Pronunciation patterns associated with a particular region or social group.
- **Civility:** Polite and respectful behaviour in communication, especially when disagreements arise.
- **Clarity:** The quality of expressing ideas in a way that is easy to understand.
- **Cross-cultural communication:** Communication between people from different cultural backgrounds, requiring sensitivity and flexibility.
- **Cultural sensitivity:** Awareness of and respect for differences in cultural practices, values, and communication styles.
- **Debate:** A formal mode of group communication in which speakers argue opposing positions following structured rules.
- **Digital communication:** The use of electronic platforms and devices to send and receive messages.
- **Discussion:** An open exchange of ideas among participants aimed at building shared understanding.
- **Fluency:** The ability to speak smoothly and confidently without excessive hesitation.



- **Lingua franca:** A language used as a common medium of communication between people who have different mother tongues.
- **Misinformation:** False or inaccurate information that spreads, especially through digital platforms.
- **Netiquette:** Accepted standards of polite and professional behaviour in online communication.
- **Oral communication:** The use of spoken words to convey ideas, information, and feelings.
- **Public speaking:** A formal mode of oral communication in which one person addresses an audience.
- **Stage fright:** Anxiety or nervousness experienced when speaking in front of an audience.
- **Variety (of English):** A regional or national form of English with distinct vocabulary, pronunciation, and sometimes grammar.



Concept Check Questions 5

Objective questions

1. Oral communication is the use of spoken words to convey ideas, information, and _____. (Linked to SLO 5.1)
2. Which of the following is not a feature of effective oral communication: clarity, ambiguity, fluency? (Linked to SLO 5.1)
3. True or False: Nigerian English is a less legitimate form of English than British or American English. (Linked to SLO 5.4)
4. A language used as a common medium between people of different mother tongues is called a _____. (Linked to SLO 5.4)
5. Fill in the blank: Accepted standards of polite and professional online behaviour are known as _____. (Linked to SLO 5.6)

Short-answer questions

6. Describe three features of effective oral communication. (Linked to SLO 5.1)
7. Explain the structure of an effective oral presentation. (Linked to SLO 5.2)
8. State two strategies for effective cross-cultural communication. (Linked to SLO 5.5)
9. Identify two rules of netiquette that apply to professional emails. (Linked to SLO 5.6)
10. Explain what is meant by 'English as a global language.' (Linked to SLO 5.4)

Long-answer questions

11. Analyse the importance of oral communication skills in academic and professional contexts, explaining how features such as clarity, tone, and non-verbal cues contribute to effective interaction. (Linked to SLO 5.1 and SLO 5.2)

- **Basic response:** Learners should identify at least three features of oral communication — such as clarity, fluency, and appropriate tone — and explain how they support interaction in academic or professional settings, with at least one example.



- **Value-added response:** Outstanding learners may extend their answer by discussing how non-verbal cues reinforce spoken messages, analysing the role of active listening, and evaluating how stage fright can be managed to improve public presentations.

12. Evaluate the role of English in global communication, discussing how its spread into multiple varieties affects cross-cultural interaction and what strategies a communicator should develop to navigate diverse English-speaking contexts. (Linked to SLO 5.4 and SLO 5.5)

- **Basic response:** Learners should explain the concept of English as a lingua franca, name at least two varieties of English, and suggest one cross-cultural communication strategy.
- **Value-added response:** Outstanding learners may compare the status of varieties such as Nigerian English and British English, reflect on how accent awareness supports mutual intelligibility, and evaluate specific strategies — flexibility, cultural sensitivity, openness — with reference to real-world or Nigerian contexts.

Answers to Concept Check Questions 5

1. Feelings
2. Ambiguity
3. False
4. Lingua franca
5. Netiquette
6. Any three of: clarity, fluency, appropriate tone, volume and pace, non-verbal cues
7. An effective presentation has an introduction (captures attention and states purpose), a body (develops key points logically), and a conclusion (summarises and leaves a clear message)
8. Any two of: cultural sensitivity, flexibility, patience, openness
9. Any two of: using appropriate greetings and sign-offs; avoiding all capitals; proofreading before sending; respecting privacy; using a clear subject line; maintaining a formal register
10. English functions as a lingua franca — a shared medium of communication for people of different mother tongues — and is the dominant language of global science, business, diplomacy, and education



11. Basic: identify at least three features (clarity, fluency, tone) and show how they support interaction, with one example. Value-added: discuss non-verbal cues, active listening, and stage fright management.

12. Basic: explain lingua franca, name two varieties, suggest one cross-cultural strategy. Value-added: compare varieties, discuss accent awareness and mutual intelligibility, evaluate strategies with reference to Nigerian/real-world contexts.

Answers to Pilot Questions 5

Pilot questions 5.1

1. The use of spoken words to convey ideas, information, and feelings
2. Ambiguity
3. Practice and preparation (also acceptable: deep breathing, focusing on the message, rehearsing with peers)
4. False
5. Preparation

Pilot questions 5.2

1. A shared language used for communication between people who have different mother tongues
2. Any two of: Nigerian English, British English, American English
3. False
4. Any one of: cultural sensitivity, flexibility, patience, openness
5. Superior; intelligibility

Pilot questions 5.3

1. Accepted standards of polite and professional behaviour in online communication
2. Any one of: messages can be misread without tone or facial expressions; misinformation spreads quickly; blurring of personal and professional boundaries
3. False



4. Any one of: formal register; clear subject line; appropriate greeting and sign-off; concise and well-organised content

5. Evolving



References and Attributions 5

- **Figure 5.1 — Elements of effective oral communication** Suggested AI prompt: "Create a labelled diagram of the key elements of effective oral communication, including clarity, fluency, tone, volume, pace, and non-verbal cues." Search string: "oral communication elements diagram OER" Attribution: Adapted from Open Educational Resources on spoken language and communication studies.
- **Figure 5.2 — English as a global language: varieties and spread** Suggested AI prompt: "Create a diagram or map showing the global spread of English, distinguishing native, official, and foreign language contexts, with examples of varieties such as Nigerian English, British English, and American English." Search string: "English global language varieties map OER" Attribution: Adapted from Open Educational Resources on world Englishes and language education.
- **Figure 5.3 — Integration of communication skills for lifelong success** Suggested AI prompt: "Create a diagram showing how oral communication, written communication, and digital communication skills integrate to support lifelong academic and professional success." Search string: "integrated communication skills diagram OER" Attribution: Adapted from Open Educational Resources on communication competence.
- **Series content references**
 - Content on oral communication, public speaking, and discussion draws on standard academic communication and English language texts, including open-access resources in speech communication and English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESFL) pedagogy.
 - Content on English as a global language and world Englishes draws on Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a global language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press; and Kachru, B. B. (1985). Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: The English language in the outer circle. In R. Quirk & H. Widdowson (Eds.), *English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literatures* (pp. 11–30). Cambridge University Press.
 - Bloom's taxonomy verbs applied in learning outcomes are based on Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D. R. (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives*. Longman.
- **Institutional referencing style** All references have been presented in a clear and consistent manner, following APA style for educational materials.

