

Open Learning
Translation Department

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First Term

An Introduction to Speaking and Listening

Ms. Waad AL-Zoubi

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Let's study!
English

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D N Z D U B F G V W O M L E
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Hello everyone

We are going to continue lecture {2} from the file; we will start with "Forms of Address" from page 14.

Lecture 2: Forms of Address & Encoding and Decoding

- Forms of address are most of the time *culture-specific*.
- Therefore, they are considered a problematic area in translation. A good illustration of this is seen when Arabs use a certain term to insult the addressee like the term "owl". The term suggests that the addressee is ominous and not welcome as his presence causes pessimism. The same term, however, if translated as it is into English carries, most of the time, exactly the opposite meaning. The term "owl" especially in modern English stands for positive qualities. Allays (1989: 124) explains this idea and argues that:

- Suppose one comes across the occurrence of the English term ((owl)) in a modern literary text which is to be translated into Arabic. The fact that the term ((owl)) refers to a universal creature (or semi-universal creature), i.e., bird does not necessarily mean that it is less difficult for translation. In English, it stands for or carries positive connotations (wisdom, and grace), but in Arabic it is a symbol of pessimism and other negative associations.

The idea of this paragraph is that while communicating with one another, it depends sometimes on the understanding of the conversation, our culture and the background culture.

Ex: As an Arab person, I have a cultural understanding that differs from an English man.

The examples that are given in the paragraph is the "owl" which is in Arab culture presentiment. It has a bad omen in our culture; it implies that someone has a bad omen, but in the western culture, it has positive connotations.

When I say (غراب) it's also connotation for bad luck and that differs from one culture to another.

How can we solve this problem as translators?

One of the suggestions as the paragraph says “to add footnote (ملاحظة) to explain the cultural implication about this thing. That is an example for the difficulties that the translator goes through in cultural context.

Now, let's suppose that you are translating as a consecutive; when you have to translate on spot, how can you solve the problem?

Student: It depends on the target audience.

Instructor: What if it was between Arab and English? How can we translate the word “owl”? We cannot put a foot note in here. So, what can we do? You have to explain this briefly.

You have to be aware of the cultural differences between the source and target language. As Arabic and English in our case, there are some similarities between both cultures just like “evil eye” and “العين السوداء”. Here, we believe in the same idea.

Now, we are going to talk about another form of speech which is *Telephoning*.

Eye to eye communication is the easiest type of communications because you can see my facial expressions and I can see yours. I can see that you do not understand; so, I can repeat my words. I can see that you are bored and alter my style. But in telephone specially, if I'm speaking to someone from another language like English, I will find it hard to understand his talking.

Ex: You have reserved a flying ticket by the phone, and you have to communicate with the company that you have reserved with. You have to make a conversation with a foreigner and you have to understand one another on the phone for a crucial issue.

● In a telephone call, you can ask for repetition if you didn't get the message by using words such as:

Pardon me, excuse me, I did not understand what you said, could you repeat please, or rephrase please.

● Anyway, you have to speak clearly and slowly for the receiver to be able to understand you. Then, you have to wait

Telephoning in a language which is not your own is not easy. You should be aware that the person you are speaking to may have difficulties too. Therefore, keep the following points in mind:

• 1. *Speak clearly.* Use clear articulation and try to avoid difficult words and long sentences if it is not necessary to use them

• 2. *Do not speak too fast.* Keep in mind that many people tend to speak too fast when they are nervous. Hardly anyone ever speaks too slowly.

• 3. *Confirm what you have understood.* This is especially important if the other person gives addresses or dates.

• 4. *Be polite.* Start and end the conversation politely. Try to avoid being too direct. In English this is often done by using would.

Compare: I want some more information -I would like to have some more information.

• 5. *Be efficient.* Make sure that you have prepared the call and know what you want to say and how you want to say it in advance.

• 6. *Know frequently used expressions.*

• 7. *Listen carefully,* so that you do not need to ask the other person to repeat information.

• If I do not understand what is said, I use these words:

• Pardon me -excuse me -I did not understand what you said, could you repeat please (or rephrase please).

• If you were giving someone an address or a date, or giving him a phone number, if he understands, he says, for example:

I got it, understood

for his responding to be sure that he has got your message clearly and in the right way.

Now let's talk about terminology which is a little bit hard:

Encoding and Decoding:

• **Encoding** refers to the process of taking an idea or mental image, associating that image with words, and then speaking those words in order to convey a message. So, if you wanted to explain to your aunt the directions to your new apartment, you would picture in your mind the landscape, streets and buildings, and then you would select the best words that describe the route so your aunt could find you.

Encoding refers to the mental process that takes place in my mind in order to give you a message. It's what happens in my mind.

Ex: You want to tell me something special that happened to you this morning; you will picture what happened in your mind before telling me that. So, you are encoding then phrasing your words or it will be chaotic. You have to imagine the situation before putting it in words.

• **Decoding** is the process of listening to words, thinking about them, and turning those words into mental images. If your aunt were trying to find her way to your apartment, she would listen to your words, associate these words with streets and landmarks that she knows, and then she would form a mental map of the way to get to you.

So, encoding is the mental process in the speaker's mind while decoding is the mental process in the listener's mind.

Ex: When you tell me about your morning routine (brushing your teeth, combing your hair...etc.), I will imagine your bedroom, you brushing your teeth in front of your mirror and so on. That's the way I decode your words.

Communicator

• The term **communicator** refers to all of the people in the interaction or speech setting. It is used instead of sender and receiver, because when we are communicating with other people, we are not only sending a message, we are receiving messages from others simultaneously.

• When we speak, we observe others' nonverbal behavior to see if they understand us and we gauge their emotional state. The information we gain from these observations is known as feedback.

• Over the telephone, we listen to paralinguistic cues, such as pitch, tone, volume and fillers (i.e., "um," "uh," "er," "like," and so on). This means that communication is not a one-way process.

Sometimes when I speak to you, you won't understand my message correctly. You may understand it differently; so, I would be waiting for you to respond for me to check if you are understanding my speaking and what I actually mean.

The conversation is like a dialogue to make sure that my message and intention is well understood.

● **Paralinguistic cues:** It's the body language or the tone. It's something other of oral language that we are using.

Ex: When I see you rolling your eyes through the lecture, I will know that you are not understanding my speech or maybe you are bored, not interested in my speech. That gives me feedback from facial expression.

• In a public speaking situation, we watch and listen to audience members' responses. If audience members are interested, agree, and understand us, they may lean forward in their seats, nod their heads, have positive or neutral facial expressions, and provide favorable vocal cues (such as laughter, "That's right," "Uh huh").

• If audience members are bored, disagree, or are confused by our message, they may be texting or looking away from us, shake their heads, have unhappy or confused expressions on their faces, or present oppositional vocal cues (like groans, "I don't think so," "That doesn't make sense," or "You're crazy!"). Thus, communication is always a transactional process—a give and take of messages.

• The message involves those verbal and nonverbal behaviors, enacted by communicators, that are interpreted with meaning by others.

• The verbal portion of the message refers to the words that we speak.

• The nonverbal portion includes our tone of voice and other non-vocal components such as personal appearance, posture, gestures and body movements, eye behavior.

• If there is ever a conflict between the verbal and the nonverbal aspects of a message, people will generally believe the nonverbal portion of the message.

• The message can also be intentional or unintentional.

• When the message is intentional, this means that we have an image in our mind that we wish to communicate to an audience or a person in a conversation, and we can successfully convey the image from our mind to others' minds with relative accuracy.

• An unintentional message is sent when the message that we wish to convey is not the same as the message the other person receives.

• Thus as communicators, we cannot always be sure that the message we wish to communicate is interpreted as we intended.

● The intentional message is when I have intention that I want to give a certain message to you.

Ex: In this lecture, I have prepared my words, ideas and hopefully try to get it for you, But you may not get my intention (what I really mean). This may happen when we communicate together and I say bad words or words that you may interpret in different meaning.

Ex: When we set together as girls, I may say for my friend, "It's a nice shirt that you're wearing." I may mean that or I may mean the opposite like (I'm mocking her or laughing at her).

I may mean that I like her shirt but she may think that I'm mocking her.

● The tone helps with the intention.

Ex: if I'm talking about some sad story, I have to speak in a low tone.

Channel

• The channel is very simply the means through which the message travels.

• In face-to-face communication the channel involves all of our senses, so the channel is what we see, hear, touch, smell and perhaps what we taste.

• When we're communicating with someone online, the channel is the computer; when texting the channel is the cell phone; and when watching a movie on cable, the channel is the TV.

• The channel can have a profound impact on the way a message is interpreted. Listening to a recording of a speaker does not have the same psychological impact as listening to the same speech in person or watching that person on television.

Channel: is the medium that we are conversing through, like now I'm conversing you face to face.

We may converse on line by Whatsapp.

When we are watching T.V. the medium is: Satellite.

These channels affect our understanding.

Noise

• Noise refers to anything that interferes with message transmission or reception (i.e., getting the image from your head into others' heads).

• There are several different types of noise:

1. *Physiological Noise:* this refers to bodily processes and states that interfere with a message.

For instance, if a speaker has a headache or the flu, or if audience members are hot or they're hungry, these conditions may interfere with message accuracy.

2. Psychological Noise: this refers to mental states or emotional states that impede message transmission or reception. For example, if someone is worried about his/her grandmother who is in the hospital, or if they are thinking about their shopping list, this may interfere with communication processes as well.

3. Physical Noise: this would be simply the actual sound level in a room. Loud music playing at a party, a number of voices of people talking excitedly, a lawnmower right outside the window, or anything that is overly loud will interfere with communication.

4. Cultural Noise: refers to message interference that results from differences in peoples' worldviews. The greater the difference in worldview, the more difficult it is to understand one another and communicate effectively.

- When something wrong with my body (I'm sick, or hungry or even nervous.... etc.), I won't get your message correctly. I will be concerned with my pain or what distracts me. This is what we mean with physiological noise.

- Sometimes we feel depressed with no apparent reason or for some reason; that will cause a distraction for us and it will lead to misunderstanding. This is what we mean with Psychological Noise.

- Physical Noise is what we understand; it's like: music, students talking during the lecture and distracting others.

- The culture noise is the cultural background that makes difficulties in understanding.

Ex: Japanese wear white clothes for funeral; It's their culture. While for us as Syrian, white is the color for marriage.

Have you seen the black men band dancing in the funerals when they are carrying the tomb? Well, it's a tradition. They believe that the dead person will live with his loved ones; that's why they are happy for him.

Worldview

- Although the encoding and decoding process may appear to be fairly straightforward, it is actually much more complicated than it seems.

- The reason for this is because we all have different worldviews. Worldview is the overall framework through which an individual sees, thinks about, and interprets the world and interacts with it.

- It is important to understand worldview because it has a profound impact on the encoding and decoding process, and consequently on our ability to be understood by others.

- Abstract words (words that refer to ideas or concepts that are removed from material reality) like “peace,” “love,” “immoral,” “justice,” “freedom,” “success,” and “honor” can have a number of different meanings; each of which is predicated on one’s worldview.

- Communicators have their own unique worldviews that shape both the encoding and decoding processes, which means that we can never be completely understood by another person.

- Never take communication for granted, and never assume your listener will understand you. It takes hard work to make yourself understood by an audience.

- There are five core components to our worldview:

- *1. Epistemology* is the way that we acquire knowledge and/or what counts as knowledge. Epistemology is linked to public speaking because it governs audience members’ preferred learning styles and who or what they consider to be credible sources.

- *2. Ontology* refers to our belief system, how we see the nature of reality or what we see as true or false. Speech writers should be careful not to presume that audience members share the same beliefs.

- *3. Axiology* represents our value system, or what we see as right or wrong, good or bad, and fair or unfair. Our values

represent the things that we hope for—they do not represent reality. Values can have an impact on multiple levels of the public speaking process, but in particular values impact speaker credibility and effectiveness in persuasion.

• *4. Cosmology* signifies the way that we see our relationship to the universe and to other people.

Cosmology dictates our view of power relationships and may involve our religious or spiritual beliefs.

Cosmology would also play a role in such logistical points as who is allowed to speak, the order of speakers on a schedule (e.g., from most to least important), the amount of time a speaker has to speak, the seating arrangement on the dais, and who gets the front seats in the audience.

• *5. Praxeology* denotes our preferred method of completing everyday tasks or our approach to solving problems. Some speech writers may begin working on their outlines as soon as they know they will need to give a speech, while others may wait until a few days before their speech to begin preparing.

Praxeology may also have an impact on a speaker's preference of delivery style and methods of arranging main points.

● Worldview is the way of seeing things.

● Some morals differ from one culture to another such as (honor\ honesty). They don't see it in the western world just like we do.

● *Epistemology*: It's the background knowledge that I have.

Ex: If I'm speaking to electrical engineer, I will find that his epistemology is about that domain (his vocabulary, ideas are sophisticated in this field). As for me, I'm ignorant in this field; so, I may not understand most of his talking. He has to simplify his ideas for me.

● *Ontology*: refers to my belief system; so, it's the way things concern my existence.

Ex: Do I believe in God? Am I an ethnic? This is ontology.

● *Axiology*: It's our value system; it's what I consider good or bad.

Ex: Is it ok for me to steal?

● *Cosmology*: is the way I see my relationship to the universe and people around me. I may be arrogant and speak rudely to others. I may be bad to animals. That reflects the way of my speaking.

● *Praxeology*: is the way I do things.

Ex: When you study for your final exam, you have methodology that you do (like a routine, a way of doing things). Do you study by memorizing, with handwriting, in the night of the exam, during the semester, with a big jar of coffee, etc.

Context

- Context is where the speech or interaction takes place.
 - In the 1980's context was taught as the actual physical setting where communication occurred, such as in a place of worship, an apartment, a workplace, a noisy restaurant, or a grocery store.
 - People communicate differently in each one of these places as there are unwritten rules of communication (called norms) that govern these settings.
 - More recently the concept of context has evolved and expanded to include the type of relationships we have with others and the communicative rules that govern those relationships.
 - In sum, the context refers to the norms that govern communication in different situations.

● Context is very crucial. It's the physical environment that the dialogue or the speaking and listening takes place.

It gives us certain rules or roads to follow when we converse.

● Norms: It's like habits, standards (أعراف)

There are rules in the context; each context has its own norms that we have to follow.

See you next lecture
Study well

