

**Public Speaking**  
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**Lecture: 28**  
**Conversation**

Good morning friends and welcome back to NPTEL online certification course on Public Speaking. Friends, we have already completed the lectures till week five and today we are going to start week six. Now before we start week six, let me tell you that till now we had been discussing as to what are the requisites of public speaking, what actually are the ingredients, what is the importance of non-verbals, that we discussed in the previous week.

And now is the time that we discussed the various types of public speaking and in this regard today we are going to start with a very basic and the most fundamental type of public speaking, which, of course, over the years in the whirlwind of technology has lost its relevance. And many of us often think that it has actually become a decayed art yet it is very important. And the first topic in this regard that we are going to take up today is conversation.

And you might be thinking ----Is conversation a sort of public speaking? Do we really need to know about conversation, what actually are the advantages of communication? Do people have time nowadays to converse with each other, my dear friends, of course if you really go into the depth of this topic you will find that conversation is still one of the most pleasurable experiences of mankind.

We will also discuss what are its advantages and how one can get a lot from an effective conversation and how one should also keep into consideration while making a sort of conversation that at the end of the conversation you feel like something as a sort of achievement. Are we really going to practice all these in our day- to- day affairs when we are flooded with emails chats WhatsApp messages and all? We, of course, do not have much time but once you realize the beauty and benignity of this beautiful art, you will, of course next time think of having a sort of conversation to help you get a lot of dividends. Now, the very first question that you might all have is ---conversation like any other public speaking say, for example, because we have been saying that all sorts of public speaking actually require a sort of persuasion.

So, I think it is quite important that we understand what actually can differ conversation from persuasion we have already seen in the previous lectures that whether you are going to give a talk or a presentation you actually need to persuade your audience. And conversation also is a sort of communication. Of course, it is sometimes between two people ,sometimes between more people, fine.

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**PERSUASION VERSUS CONVERSATION**

□ Human communicative interaction involves an expression of attitudes, behaviour, needs, reasoning, feelings and viewpoints.

**Persuasion** is the art of convincing others to give favourable attention to our point of view. It intends to influence the beliefs, attitudes, values and acts of others.

**Conversation** can be defined as oral and usually informal exchange of views, ideas and emotions. It is the most common form of dyadic communication

**Persuasion** has become a pervasive part of our everyday life – finds application in advertising, marketing, sales, political campaigns

**PERSUASION                      CONVERSATION                      PERSUASION**

←-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----→

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Strongly Disagree                      Neutral                      Strongly Agree

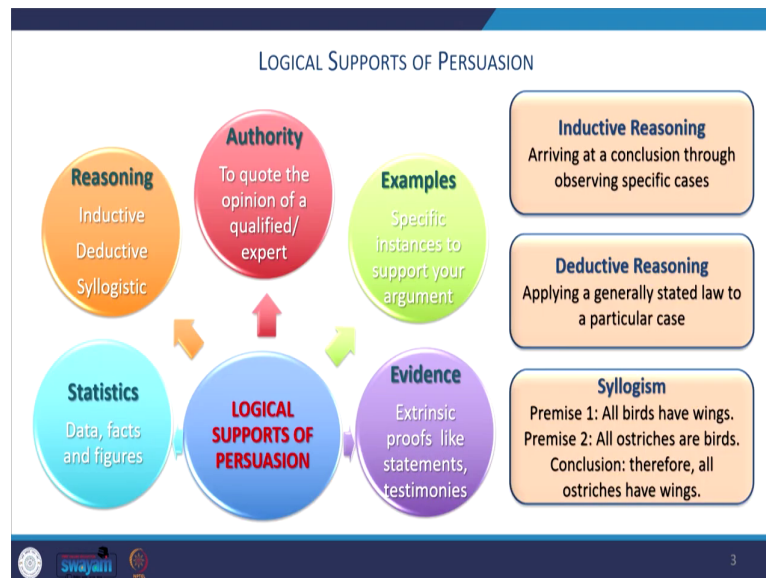
So, human communicative interaction involves an expression of attitudes in almost all the sorts of communicative situations. You will find that you express your attitude, your behaviour needs reasoning, feelings, and viewpoints. In this regard when we talk about persuasion what we say is through persuasion we try to convince others to give favourable attention to our point of view because in conversation also you are going to talk to some other person, between two people.

So, do we really feel the same amount of persuasion in conversation? Persuasion intends to influence the beliefs, attitudes, values and acts of others. But when it comes to conversation, it can actually be defined as a face- to- face communication as a sort of oral, is not it? And, usually most of the time people consider it as a sort of informal exchange of views but here I have a note of this agreement because nowadays in a world which is so much dominated by technology.

Conversation also is getting its entry in our professional lives to get a deal carved, to get a deal struck. So, conversation is the most common form of dyadic communication meaning

thereby between two people. And persuasion has become a pervasive part of our everyday life you can find everyone persuading the other person fine. It finds application in advertising marketing, sales and, of course, political campaigns are the burning examples for persuasion.

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Before we go to the conversation let us spend some time on the several logical facts which can help persuade the others. Because in conversation also you try to persuade to some extent, of course, at a later stage you will find that if you simply want to pursue it, that cannot be a sort of communication. So, when we try to persuade several factors that support persuasion is reasoning. Reasoning either it may be inductive or it may be deductive it may be syllogistic.

There may be a structure and through words as we had been saying in the previous lecture about meta- communication, how you try to involve a person through the web of your words. So, in persuasion also you have to be very selective because you are going to present your readers or your listeners data, facts and figures. But in persuasion what you exercise is your authority, you perhaps in order to win the other person actually make a mention of the quote or the opinions of others, you provide them the examples also and then not only examples but through examples you give them a sort of evidence. So, most of the time you find that when you are trying to win the person to your side, you are providing them evidences. So, when we are going for inductive reasoning, we actually arrive at a conclusion through certain case studies through certain specific cases.

Whereas in deductive you state law to a particular case you provide one rule and then based on that but when you become syllogistic the examples become different. For example, from the generalization to the particular, from the general to the particular, saying that all teachers are good speakers, fine, all teachers are good speakers. All teachers have a good amount of knowledge and you draw the conclusion. Based on that and then you say, so, all teachers are good speakers and the reason is that they have good knowledge.

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The slide is titled "What is Conversation?". It contains three bullet points, each with a quote and its source:

- "[...]a talk, especially an informal one, between two or more people, in which news and ideas are exchanged." (OED)
- "The most fruitful and natural exercise for our minds is, in my opinion, conversation. I find the practice of it pleasanter than anything else in life; and that is the reason why, if I were at this moment forced to choose, I would, I believe, rather consent to lose my sight than my hearing or speech." (Montaigne)
- "Preserve me from the thing I dread and hate, A duel in the form of a debate". (William Cowper)

On the right side of the slide, there is a circular diagram titled "Types of conversation according to Adler:". The diagram lists three types: Personal, Intellectual, and Practical.

At the bottom of the slide, there are logos for Swinburne University of Technology and a small number "4".

Now having said that let us come to the moot point of our discussion, that is conversation how can conversation be defined in this regard we shall also be talking about the views of several creative writers, poets as to what they have said about conversation. Because conversation now has become a sort of tactics----- a sort of ploy even in public speaking situations even in several professions where in order to win in order to negotiate, you are to apply these.

So, Oxford Advanced Learners dictionary says about conversation is--- it is actually ‘a sort of talk, a reciprocal between two parties especially an informal one between two or more people in which news and ideas are exchanged.’ So, this is the common meaning of conversation but nowadays it has actually taken different meanings keeping into consideration the way of the world.

In this regard let me make a mention of Michelle D Montaigne, the French philosopher, who was a contemporary of William Shakespeare and Francis Bacon and who is considered to be the man behind the essays that many of you might be reading. So, what he said in one of his

famous essays and title the art of conversation where he says, “The most fruitful and natural exercise for our minds is in my opinion conversation. “

So, he actually gives conversation a wider importance, a larger significance and says---“ The most fruitful and natural exercise for our minds. I find the practice of it pleasanter than anything else.” So, he values it more than anything else in life ‘and that is the reason why if I were at this moment forced to choose I would believe rather to lose my sight than my hearing or speech’, this is what Montaigne says.

We shall take up some more views of in this regard, fine. And Montaigne was a very famous figure, a French philosopher and it is said that all his essays are impregnated, they are full of meaning. In this regard one famous British Poet what, William Cowper says we can get a sort of suggestion in how to become a good conversationalist where he says, “Preserve me from the thing I dread and hate a duel in the form of a debate.”

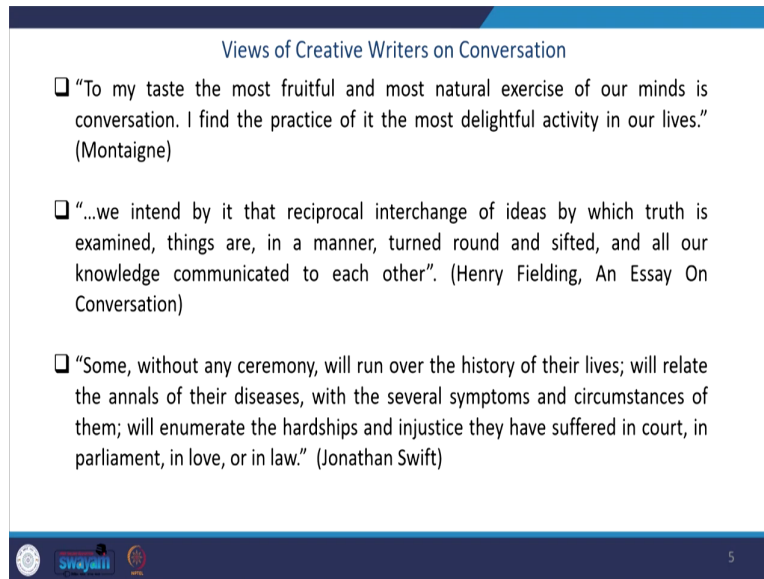
He says that conversation is such a beautiful art I do not want to do what I do not like meaning thereby dread and hate. Since I do not like dread and hate and I want that I should preserve I should be preserved from the thing I dread and hate. So, here he says that in debates, we simply do a sort of reasoning and at times it becomes a sort of duel but in conversation it is not.

There has been quite a good amount of research on conversation and in one of the papers that I came across by Adler who actually says that conversation can be of three types----- the first is personal, another is intellectual, and the last is practical. Personal conversation where emotions are exchanged between two people, they actually hinge upon emotions. May be at times it may also be considered to be a sort of private conversation, fine.

Then comes intellectual conversation where ideas are exchanged. Ideas are exchanged between two people of the same rank, fine, and do not you find that even in many professional circle also, we keep on exchanging our ideas through conversation and then comes practical meaning. Thereby in order to make effective use of conversation, one also needs to look at the sort of practicality, meaning thereby ,we can converse on the day- to- day affairs and out of the conversation something beautiful may come out.

Now as I had been saying that if conversation is so important, how many of you especially the youngsters----- they do not know or they rather distance themselves away from conversation. They would rather devote more time on their laptops and on their phones than converse with the person, fine? And that is why for them it is actually time that they listened to and they understood the words of the great masters of art what they have said about conversation.

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Views of Creative Writers on Conversation

- ❑ "To my taste the most fruitful and most natural exercise of our minds is conversation. I find the practice of it the most delightful activity in our lives." (Montaigne)
- ❑ "...we intend by it that reciprocal interchange of ideas by which truth is examined, things are, in a manner, turned round and sifted, and all our knowledge communicated to each other". (Henry Fielding, An Essay On Conversation)
- ❑ "Some, without any ceremony, will run over the history of their lives; will relate the annals of their diseases, with the several symptoms and circumstances of them; will enumerate the hardships and injustice they have suffered in court, in parliament, in love, or in law." (Jonathan Swift)

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Montaigne, I have already mentioned what he says-----“ To my taste the most fruitful and the most natural exercise of our minds’ and in that essay he says that when I talk to somebody when I have a conversation with someone, I always think that if I am at some point of time I meet a sort of disagreement I actually feel that I should try to bring certain corrections in me and that is how he says ‘exercise of minds is conversation.’

“I find the practice of it the most delightful activity in our lives.” Another important and a very significant novelist fine Henry Fielding many of you might have heard the name of Henry Fielding, the novelist who wrote *Tom Jones* and many such good works. What he said in his essay on conversation is---“ We intend by it that reciprocal interchange reciprocal between two people. So, reciprocal interchange of ideas by which truth is examined things are in a manner turned round and shifted and all our knowledge communicated to each other.”

So, what Henry Fielding hints at is that with every effective communication you can get some new ideas because it is as Montaigne has also said it is an exercise of mind and it actually with the turning ground and shifting all our knowledge is communicated to each other.

Mention can also be made of Jonathan Swift, the famous Anglo- Irish author, satirist. One of whose novels *Gulliver's Travels* many of you are familiar with.

So, what Jonathan's Swift says and here he actually provides some sort of weapons as to how we can while we are conversing how we can be quiet so that we make proper use of it. He says and here he actually because he is a satirist. So, he actually takes dig that how can how a communication between two people how a communication can be delightful. How a communication or a conversation can be painful. So, he said----“ Some without any ceremony will run over the history of their lives”. You might have also come across many people who keep on telling about their own achievements, they actually keep on glorifying themselves and they will relate ‘the annals of their diseases.’ So, when we say that conversation is a delightful experience but what about those people who will keep on telling about ‘their own diseases with several symptoms and circumstances of them, will enumerate the hardships and injustice they have suffered in court in parliament in love or in law”. I also came across a one beautiful example where the author says that if two lawyers are a part of a company where conversation is going on they will actually destroy the mood and the pleasantry of the whole company because they will simply be talking about their own profession.

So, that is actually a sort of detriment to conversation and that conversation cannot be successful and in the same line Jonathan Swift says that ‘there are people who will keep on telling you everything about their lives right from their diseases to the history of their lives and then they will enumerate the hardships and injustice they have suffered in court in parliament in love or in law.’

Can such a conversation be called effective because when you are in a conversation all you need to understand that it is between two parties and you should talk about something which can interest both the parties and which should not be lop-sided.

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- ❑ “He lends his ear to an observation as if you had brought him a piece of news, and enters into it with as much avidity and earnestness as if it interested himself personally”. (William Hazlitt)
  
- ❑ “Of all things, banish the egotism out of your conversation, and never think of entertaining people with your own personal concerns or private affairs; though they are interesting to you they are tedious and impertinent to everybody else”. (Lord Chesterfield)

One very famous poet and writer William Hazlitt, fine, who says about conversation----“He lends his ear to an observation as if you had brought him a piece of news, and enters into it with as much avidity and earnestness as if it interested himself personally.” Meaning thereby, if you are in a conversation then he lends his ear to an observation, as if because the other party is very curious enough to listen to what you are going to say but then he is very much interested, he is earnest also as if it interested himself personally. But remember in such situations the other party should also say to it whether the person to whom he is conversing with is interested or not. Lord Chesterfield, what he says is--- “Of all things banish the egotism.”

Now when two people converse with each other what is actually the detriment and what can destroy a beautiful conversation which is pleasurable art. “Egotism out of your conversation and never think of entertaining people with your own personal concerns.” You may be interested into something but the other party may not be interested in it ‘you may be talking about your own private affairs though they are interesting to you they are tedious and impertinent to everyone else.’”

That is why now it is you will find that there is a lack of good conversations why because people keep on telling and in such situations when you keep on telling only about yourself the conversation cannot take place, this is against the rule of communication. You actually have to look, you actually have to see the interest of the other party as well.

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## Henry Fielding's Views

- ❑ First, that every person who indulges his ill-nature or vanity at the expense of others, and in introducing uneasiness, vexation, and confusion into society, however exalted or high-titled he may be, is thoroughly ill-bred.
- ❑ Secondly, that whoever, from the goodness of his disposition or understanding, endeavours to his utmost to cultivate the good-humour and happiness of others, and to contribute to the ease and comfort of all his acquaintance, however low in rank fortune may have placed him, or however clumsy he may be in his figure or demeanour, hath, in the truest sense of the word, a claim to good-breeding.



Now let us also take here are the views of Henry Fielding who also wrote one very beautiful essay on a conversation and then he says that when you converse with somebody else you can come across two sorts of people. Because some sort of people will tell you about their own attitude and they will also tell you about their own beliefs and how and why it happens he says such a sort of people who always try to impose his own views they are perhaps ill- bred.

So, in his essay he actually talks about and he says that it is the question of your breeding as to how you can make a conversation interesting or boring, how. Then he says---“ First that every person who indulges his ill nature or vanity....” Vanity, no. Too much of pride because that pride is against the etiquette of a good conversation. ‘At the expense of others and in introducing uneasiness, vexation and confusion into society however exalted or high title he may be is thoroughly ill- bred.’”

In this regard, I am reminded of one very beautiful essay where it is said that it is not about title or designation or whatsoever as Montaigne says that it is not because of your title that you may impress others. This is all temporary, my dear friend, fine. So, with your title or with your designation if you simply try to dominate over others even in a conversation the conversation is going to end in a sort of despair.

And such people belong to a category who are ill- bred rather what he says is---“ Secondly that whoever from the goodness of his disposition mood or understanding endeavours to his utmost to cultivate the good humour.” Humour is a very essential ingredient of all

conversation but you need to understand how you must make use of humour. We will have a separate lecture on humour also.

Sometimes it so, happens that you are making use of humour and rather you forget that there are people who may not like it, there are also people because, at times, it also creates a sort of confusion. Since people have got different tastes, different religious faiths, preferences and all. So, "...good humour and happiness of others and to contribute to the ease and comfort of all his acquaintance, however low in rank fortune may have placed him or however clumsy he may be in his figure or demeanour hath in the truest sense of the word a claim to good breeding."

So, he says even though the man may not be properly dressed, man may not be having a good title or a designation, man may not be having a sort of proper appearance but if he has cultivated some good humour and good mannerism, such a person can claim to be from a sort of good- breeding. Rather what is important in conversation is how you are trying to bring good humour into conversation.

But remember you need to be very careful while you are making use of that. In that let us also try to understand how, what are the purposes of persuasive speaking. Persuasive speaking can strengthen commitment, it can also weaken commitment.

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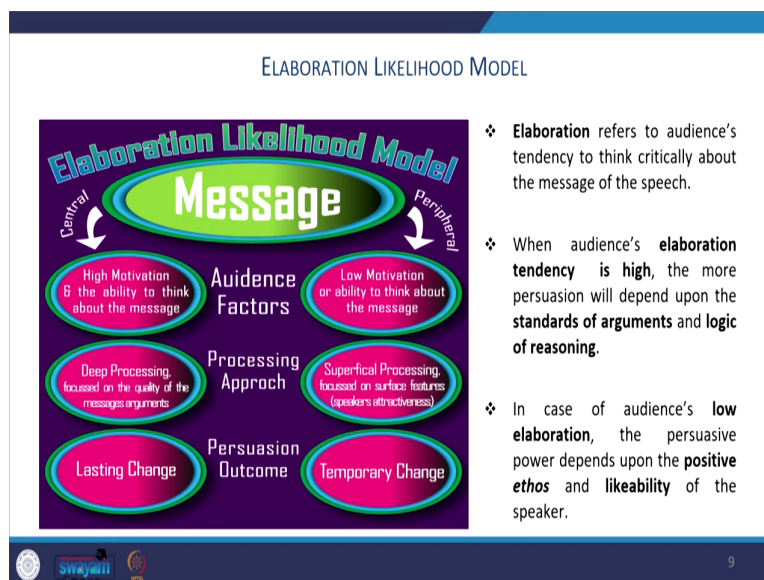
PURPOSES OF PERSUASIVE SPEAKING			
Strengthening Commitment	Weakening Commitment	Conversion	Inducing a Specific Action
<p>To strengthen the commitment of the listeners to a belief they already possess</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise consciousness about the cause</li> <li>• Lead from educating to commitment</li> <li>• Convey a sense of urgency</li> </ul>	<p>To weaken the belief of an audience committed strongly in opposition to the views of the speaker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find a critical distinction</li> <li>• Develop a contrary claim</li> <li>• Present a sound and strong refutation</li> </ul>	<p>To alter listener's belief - abandoning one idea and replacing it with another</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a pattern of anomalies in the belief</li> <li>• Aim for a slow conversion- in gradual modest steps</li> </ul>	<p>To move the audience from a strong belief to a specific action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State the desired action specifically and precisely</li> <li>• Make the task easy to perform – through preparations beforehand</li> </ul>

Both the strengthening and the weakening commitment can bring a sort of conversion and what sort of conversion----- the conversion can be to identify a pattern of anomalies, say for

example, if a person is simply imposing his own ideas either through strengthening a commitment or through a weakening commitment he will he will actually saw a sort of anomaly.

And then in a very gradual modest step it will be a very slow conversion. So, what action can be induced to move the audience or to move your conversational partner from a strong belief to a specific action. What is expected is desired action to be very specific and precise, and one needs to perform through preparations beforehand, meaning thereby, if you really want to bring a sort of humour not only think about the person as to how he will react to it. Rather also do some beforehand exercises, before you finally do it.

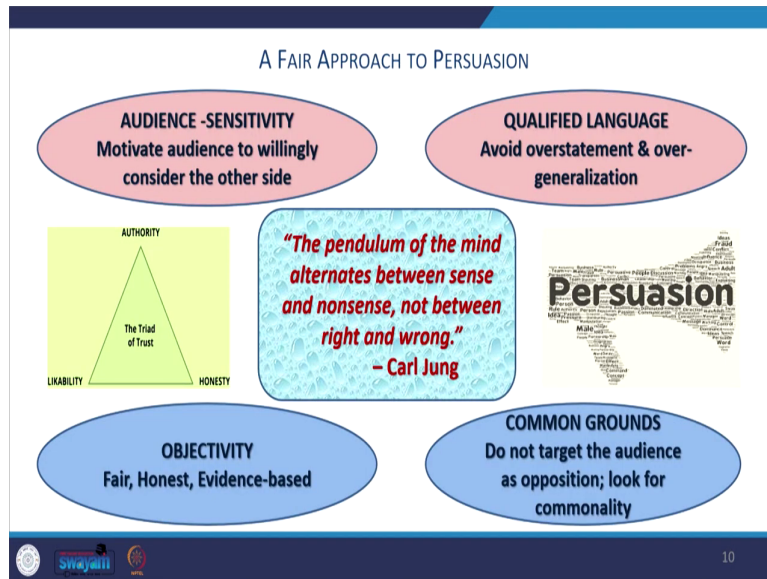
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In this regard mention can also be made of elaboration, likelihood model where it is said that the audience members are always critical. So, audiences' tendency to think critically about the message of the speech is called elaboration. And if the elaboration tendency is high, more persuasion will depend upon the standard of arguments the sort of arguments that you make.

As Montaigne says that argument helps me correct myself but then this argument has to have a sort of proper logical reasoning. Many people may not like argument, fine. But then, in case the elaboration is low, the persuasive power depends upon the positive ethos and likeability of the speaker. So, as conversational partners, what you have to develop in yourself is a sort of likeability.

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Now, there can be some fair approaches to persuasion as to how one can be sensitive to the audience, how one has to be objective. So, this objectivity actually requires you to be fair, honest and whatever you say should be based by evidence. Now language also plays a very important role as I have been saying time and again. And here one should always remember what Carl Jung, a famous philosopher says---

“The pendulum of the mind alternates between sense and nonsense”. Never think that the person you are talking to is simply a subordinate rather he also keeps on alternating between sense and nonsense ‘not between right and wrong.’ So, very easily he can understand and then there comes situation where you will find that you are perhaps talking to a wall and not to a person. So, he will try to give you some sort of indication as to he will not listen to you he will not nod through his non- verbal gestures and postures he will provide you certain indications. And you must then perhaps construe or understand that perhaps you are not talking of something which has got a sort of common grounding.

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## Interpersonal Conversation: Influencing Factors

A healthy and engaging conversation stems from underlying **interpersonal attraction**. This bond is shaped and strengthened by **five major factors**:

1. **Nearness** – Physical proximity between two individuals strengthens the attraction between them, provided other factors like their personal beliefs and attitudes are not in gross conflict with each other.
2. **Similarity** – Similar interests, attitudes and momentary feelings create a stronger adhesive bond between strangers.
3. **Social Adaptability** – People with healthy self-concepts and a poised sociable attitude are more attractive than either extremities of the attitude like excessive superiority, egoism, timidity or withdrawal.
4. **Social Status** – We tend to get attracted towards people who provide us with recognition and praise.
5. **Physical Attributes** – First impression cast by the physical characteristics of an individual; like appearance, clothing, calorie count, energy level, body language – play a crucial role in interpersonal attraction.



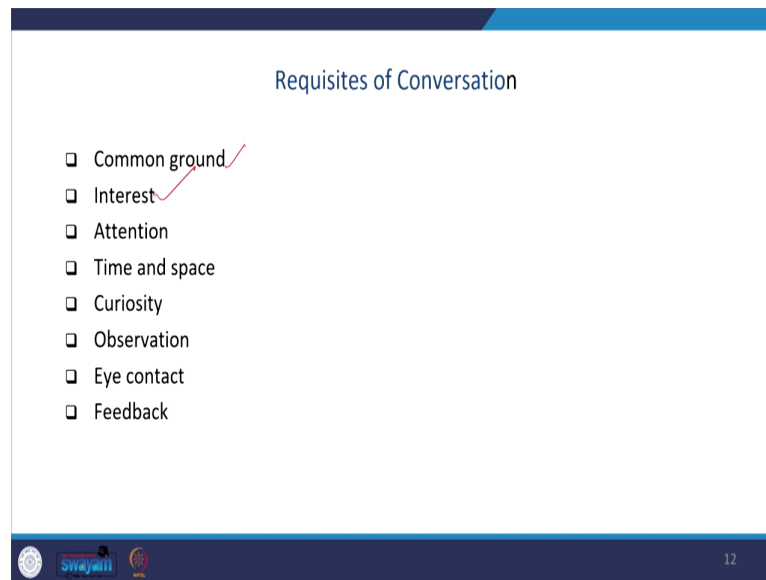
Now, when we talk of conversation we must also try to understand that what could be the influencing factors. What are the factors that can influence and what are the factors that can help an effective conversation? The very first thing is nearness, as we have said that it is a reciprocal process, and then here in most of the conversations you will find that there is a sort of expectation of intimacy.

So, nearness is very important, physical proximity. So, of course, this may, at times, differ from culture to culture as we have already said. But this physical proximity between two individuals, this actually strengthens the attraction between them provided there are certain, you know, cultural beliefs associated with it. Then comes similarity when we say similarity what we actually mean is that similar interests, attitudes and momentary feelings.

Of course, when we are having a sort of personal conversation we actually talk about a particular emotion or a sort of emotional experience. Then social adaptability--- people who are having healthy self- concepts and a poised social attitude they appear to be more attractive than either if they are very extreme in their thoughts in their ideas. Of course, status matters, no doubt, but as Montaigne says that momentarily you may be attracted by a person's status because of his recognition and the sort of station that s/he carries within. Of course, physical attributes also play a vital role but then Montaigne does not agree with it and many other writers also say that if a person does not have cultivated good mannerisms, then perhaps whatever physical features s/he has, s/he does not seem to interest or to enhance a conversation. So, physical attributes are important, no doubt, but then your body language because throughout non- verbals, we have been talking about that. Then one needs to

understand because nowadays conversation has become very important even in a global, technological world it is conversation as a face- to- face interaction which finally helps you get or strike a deal. Now what are the requisites? The requisites are-- there should be a common ground, I mean, on a particular topic that you are going to discuss, fine?

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You could have found at times that even when you are travelling by a train and then if two people start talking on a common topic, the conversation may go longer. You also need to understand whether the other party is interested or not. So, interest also matters, then attention during the conversation as if you are observing you will find that if the other party is interested in your talk or in your conversation, he will actually provide you some sort of signals.

Then time and space. How long you are going to talk and what is the space what is the venue then curiosity. If the other person is curious naturally, he will go deep in that conversation and he will show his own curiosity then observation a effective conversationalist has to be quite an observant fellow so that he can understand whether the other party is paying attention or not throughout the conversation.

And for that matter all sorts of communication one needs to see that there is a proper eye-contact. One scholar has gone to the extent of saying the proper coupling of eye movements I mean a joint, fine. So, there has to be a proper co-ordination through eyes even and then feedback if you are quite careful enough you will understand through the indications that the other party is providing. Now should there be also some room for healthy conversation.

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The slide is titled "Psychological Climate of Healthy Conversation". It contains the following text:

A **healthy conversation** can be defined as an interpersonal interaction facilitated in a **cohesive environment**, in which the participants achieve a mental state of **psychological safety** and **freedom of thought and expression**.

Carl R. Rogers, in his book '*On Becoming a Person*' (1961), counsels on the psychological conditions that aid a healthy conversation –

- ❑ The **degree of warmth and cordiality** they feel with each other
- ❑ The **willingness to be frank and honest** in their expression of ideas and emotions
- ❑ The **degree of congruence** of their experiences and awareness – the greater the congruence the higher is the mutual satisfaction in relationships.

On the right side, there is a pink speech bubble containing the following text:

*"In my relationship with persons, I have found that it does not help, in the long run, to act as though I were something that I am not.*

*I find that I am more effective when I can listen acceptably to myself, and can be myself!"*

- Carl R. Rogers  
*On Becoming a Person* (1961)

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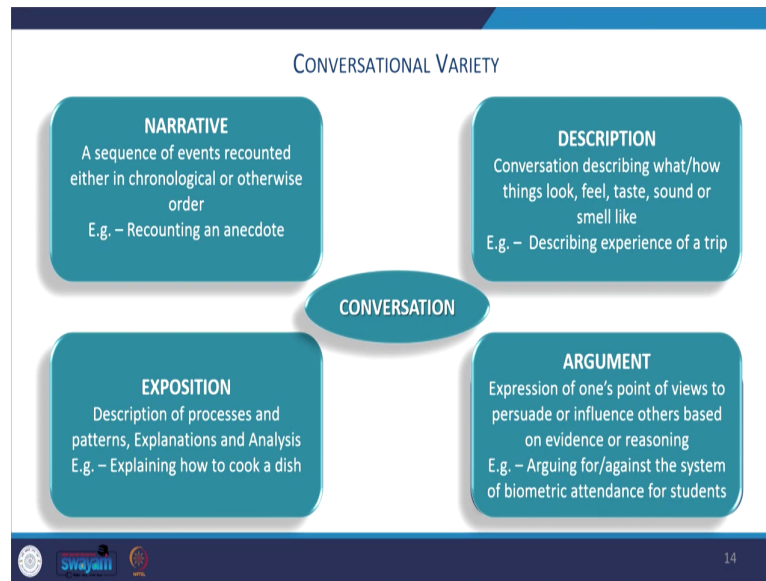
According to psychology it is said that a healthy conversation can be defined as an interpersonal interaction which can take place in a sort of cohesive environment. So, when you think of having a sort of conversation-- decide the place, decide the venue and see to it that the venue is favourable. There needs to be psychological safety and freedom of thought and expression. In this regard Carl R Rogers in his book *On becoming a Person*, he actually provides some psychological condition that can help a healthy conversation.

And what are these degrees of warmth and cordiality two people must have a proper coordination and the degree of wall. Cordiality is the hallmark of all communication for that matter. Willingness to be frank and honest and the degree of congruence, the degree of congruence, I mean, agreement even though there may be disagreement on certain points but then there has to be a congruence of their experience and awareness.

Familiarity--- the greater the congruence, the higher is the mutual satisfaction in relationships Rogers says that "I find that I am more effective when I can listen acceptably to myself and can be myself." So, conversation depends very much on a sort of relationship and he says that 'In my relationship with persons I have found that it does not help in the long run to act as though I were something that I am not.'

And what he says later is that 'I can listen acceptably to myself'. Tell yourself, confirm from yourself and be yourself but when you be yourself you also need to understand that the other party also has got something to derive out of this conversation.

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There can be conversational variety, fine? It can be at times narrative. Narrative in the sense that it can talk about a sequence of events it can be expository where explanation and analysis could be there it can be descriptive when you are now you came back from a trip and you are going to tell the other person and if the other person is also that much interested and familiar the conversation will go a long way.

And then comes argument. Of course, argument is dangerous at times but then argument is a sort of expression of one's point of views to persuade or influence others based on evidence or reasoning but remember we at times agree to disagree. So, when you are arguing say to it that even though there might be moments of disagreement but finally you are going to agree otherwise the beauty of conversation will be lost.

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Raymond S Ross in his very famous book *Speech Communication* analyse five primary agendas and this is very common. So, social gathering--- so, in social gatherings you converse fine you can find 2 or 3, 3 people sitting together conversing with each other on a particular topic sometimes in order to get rid of some of your pent-up feelings which you have not been able to give an outlet.

So, there also at times you need a sort of sympathetic listener, who, at times becomes very emotional, at times therapeutic, seek help also you go for a conversation counselling and sometimes you also negotiate; and in negotiation you find bargaining is there. But much of the bargaining depends upon the interest of the two parties, which we shall discuss when we take up negotiations. And then finally evaluation--- sometimes you also converse to know something through this feedback.

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## THE ART OF CONVERSATION

Sir Richard Steele, in his essay *The Art of Conversation*, instructs:

- ❑ The ideal conversation should not be a laboured one, rather should be readily and clearly apprehended.
- ❑ In a conversation, the chief end should be neither to affect silence nor to flaunt eloquence.
- ❑ Pedantry is the outcome of much reading but little comprehending.
- ❑ Conversation ought to be neither an attempt to polite sycophancy nor of a determined disputation.

"The great enemies, therefore, to good company, and those who transgress most against the laws of equality which is the life of it, are, the clown, the wit, and the pedant."

- Sir Richard Steele  
(Spectator, No.100)

Another writer Richard Steele in his *Art of Conversation* says---“ The ideal conversation should not be a laboured one”, meaning thereby, it has to be very natural fine. In a conversation the chief ends should neither be to affect silence nor to flaunt eloquence. I mean, so long as the conversation is going on, there should not be silence nor there should be silence nor there should be too much of eloquence. Conversation ought to be an attempt to be polite, fine.

But this politeness should not end in a sort of sycophancy. You need not become as a sycophant or a person of determined disputation what Richard Steele in his famous essay Spectator Number 100 says---“ The great enemies, therefore to good company and those who transgress most against the laws of equality which is the life of it are the clown the wit and the pedant.” A person who reads too much, I mean, you cannot have a very good conversation with him unless and until you have the same amount of background. So, needless to mention here that if a man has got too much of reading he cannot be a good conversationalist because he is not made for the common man.

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Contd...

- In case of a difference of opinions, one should introduce one's point of view by some agreeable circumlocution.
- One should exhibit patience and curiosity to understand the speaker.
- To possess and express good sense and goodwill are the vital qualities for companions in an ideal conversation.
- The ideal conversationalist ought to practise deference in disagreements.

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Sometimes there can be differences and during those differences, one should try to introduce one's point of view by some agreeable circumlocution meaning thereby when you are saying something which may appear to be a sort of disagreement, please use it in such a language where the language is circumlocutous, I mean in a roundabout manner. One should have patience and curiosity.


And then even if you have to practice deference in this agreements even if you disagree that does not mean you must disrespect. There are certain precautions that I need to underline here--- please try to save yourself from arguments, too much of argumentation is a danger to a good conversation. Please try to avoid slanderous remarks. Slander ---when you are criticizing somebody, when you are hitting somebody beyond the belt and then sarcasm--- this is one of the greatest enemies of conversation.

At times we make use of sarcasms but we never know how it is going to affect others. Even when you try to orient it to some but others in the conversational company may not like it. So, please try to devoid yourself of ironies and sarcasm. Blasphemy never speak something that may hurt somebody's religious sentiments or feelings. Never ever try to use indecent words in a conversation and then do not try to remind people of something untoward which happened in the past. That is also going to destroy the beauty and benignity of conversation.

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### Precautions during Conversation

- ❖ Arguments
- ❖ Slander
- ❖ Sarcasms
- ❖ Blasphemy
- ❖ Indecency
- ❖ Remembrance of some untoward past
- ❖ Neither a dirge at a wedding nor an epithalamium at a funeral


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And then as one famous writer had said---“ When you are in a conversation you should neither aim a dirge at wedding”, meaning thereby a sad thing on a wedding ‘nor an epithalamium at a funeral nor a celebration during a funeral.’ So, the need of the hour my dear friend is that if you really want to derive much pleasure out of a communicative situation see to it that you do not do certain things which are not going to be liked by all.


There are certain etiquettes which I have already mentioned here and once again I recapitulate there are certain do's and dont's.

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### ETIQUETTES OF CONVERSATION

DO's	DON'Ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Begin the talk with a topic of common interest</li> <li>✓ Occasionally address the person by name</li> <li>✓ Be mindful of your language and demeanour</li> <li>✓ Cultivate a cheerful and friendly tone</li> <li>✓ Practise attentive listening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>× Abstain from being dogmatic or argumentative</li> <li>× Avoid use of superfluous vocabulary</li> <li>× Do away with exaggeration and affectation</li> <li>× Do not sound impatient or flustered</li> <li>× Do not use slang</li> </ul>

# let's talk

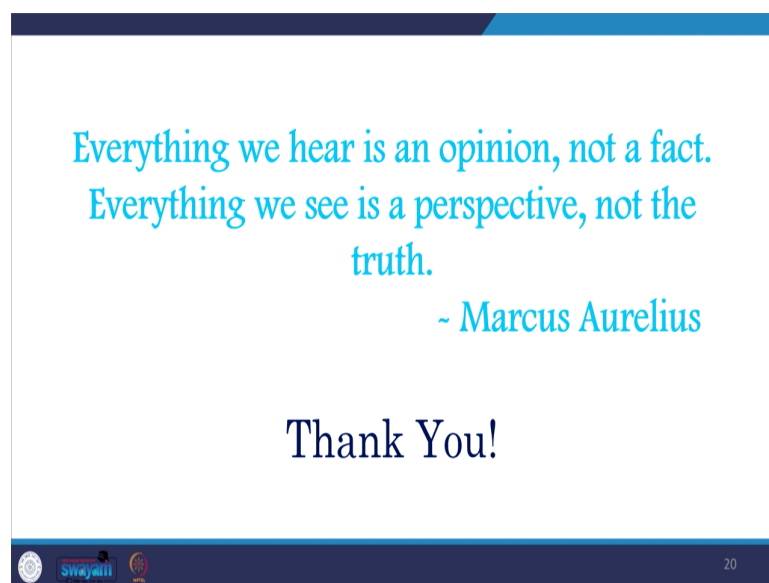

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When you are going to start the conversation begin on a note of common interest address the person by name maintain eye contact throughout cheerful disposition has to be there and ensure that there is a proper listening. There are certain dont's or certain things that one must

avoid is do not be too much argumentative or dogmatic do not use too much of extra words or pompous words, do not exaggerate, do not sound flustered, do not use slang, slanderous remark.

Rather you have come here to talk, talk in such a manner that the talk does benefit and talk is advantageous for another. So, my dear friends even though conversation may appear to be a lost art yet it cannot be written off .It is again time that one goes back and tries to understand the beauty and benignity of conversation in order to have a better tomorrow, a better world and before I come to wind up this talk let me make a mention of Marcus Aurelius's quote.

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Where it is said “Everything we hear is an opinion not a fact.” So, in conversation one needs to be careful of that whatever you hear may be an opinion not a fact. “Everything we see is a perspective and not the truth.” But an effective communication, in truth, will bring you a lot of pleasure a lot of happiness and that is what we are missing because happiness is required in all the walks of life and nothing can be a better exercise than an effective conversation to result in happiness thank you very much.