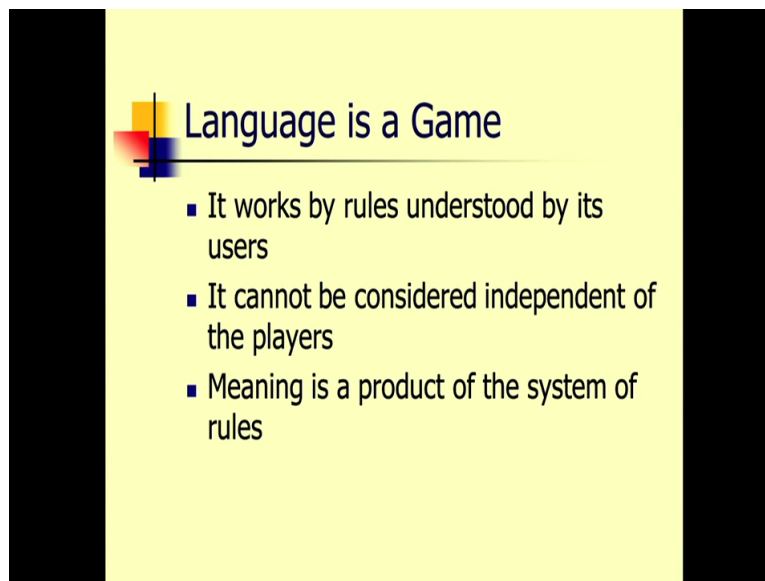


Speaking Effectively
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Lecture 3
Encoding Meaning using Verbal Symbols

Hello, in the third unit of speaking effectively module 1, we will be looking at the process of encoding again but we will be looking at the process of creating meaning using the verbal symbols, using words, the power of words.

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The slide features a yellow background with a black border. On the left side, there is a decorative graphic consisting of overlapping colored squares (yellow, red, blue) and a black crosshair. The title 'Language is a Game' is written in a dark blue font. Below the title, there are three bullet points, each preceded by a small blue square.

Language is a Game

- It works by rules understood by its users
- It cannot be considered independent of the players
- Meaning is a product of the system of rules

In other words we will be looking at the power of words and we will look at how language is like a code. Language is when we non-verbal and verbal symbols, we use a code, we agreed. And when we use language, we do not think that languages are code. When we think of non-verbal symbols like the Statue of Liberty or colors and light and so on, we think these are symbols but when we look at language, we do not associate language with a symbol.

I am trying to show you that language is also a symbol because it works in the same way as all other non-verbal symbols work. So words are also symbols, language is also a symbol. And I will borrow a phrase from again from a very famous philosopher Wittgenstein who said language is a game. He said language is a game and language works are rules understood by its users.

What I said in the last module, last unit of module 1, I said that in order to be able to communicate, both sender and receiver have to give the same meaning, have to ascribe the same meaning to a symbol for meaning to be created. So language also works like that, it works by rules understood by its users. It cannot be understood, it cannot be considered independent of the players.

Like we saw in the case of non-verbal symbols when we said Kolkata, it cannot be understood independent of the sender and the receivers or senders and receivers, who ascribe different meaning to the same geographical space which we call Kolkata. And geographical urban space which we all know as Kolkata, it had multiple meanings for multiple senders.

And receivers and without these players, without these multiple senders and receivers, we cannot understand. Of course there is a physical geographical space called Kolkata but we cannot understand its meaning independent of the players. And I said earlier, in as in the inferential model of communication, meaning is something which is created together, produced by both sender and receiver and meaning is really a product of the system of rules.

So language is a game, it works by rules understood by its players, cannot be understood, cannot be considered independent of players and meaning is a product of the system of rules.

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Meanings Are In People

- A word means what we want it to mean
- Experience is shaped by words
- We cannot share our world of experience

Now what do we mean by this? What we mean by this is supposed when you are a child, did you do the language in which you added cha before every word and only you and your friend could guess the meaning of what you are saying. What was the rule? Before every word you

will add the letter cha and that new language which is born only you and your friend will be able to decipher the language.

And the same thing happens in other codes when we are ascribing meaning in a language. That unless you know the rules, like here the rule was, use the cha before every word, unless both the sender and receiver know the rules they will make a mistake. I am sure all of you or many of you at least watch Hindi films and we find that in Hindi films particularly gangster films, like gangsters have their own codes.

Like computer programmers have their codes, gangsters have a code and if you are familiar with the idiom of Hindi film, you would also be by now be acquainted or well versed in the code of the gangsters depicted in Hindi films.

We do know whether the actual gangsters use these codes are not but from the Hindi film we have become acquainted with this code language of gangsters where you say where a gangster tells the other gangster where money is rokda and bomb blast is shaadi.

So both the gangsters, suppose two gangsters have decided that they are going to bomb a site and they are not going to say, they are speaking on a telephone, one is not going to tell the other, go and (blo) blast go and bomb market or go and bomb the train. They are going to say, we are going for a wedding and the work should be done.

So it is secretly coded language which both these gangsters know but the people who have maybe their phones are tapped and people are police officers are listening to their phone line and by now I hope even people were listening to the phone line now know the code language but they have learnt to couch the real meaning in very innocuous simple language which others are unable to guess because they keep changing.

Unlike the Hindi films, they keep changing the code everyday so that people who are listening in are not able to decipher the meaning. So that is what we mean, that languages are game and we need to know the rules. So when both the gangsters or both the sender and the receiver know the rules, they can understand the meaning whereas other people who do not know the rules will not understand the meaning.

The next thing that I am going to introduce you to is that meaning does not exist by itself. For any word, any symbol, meaning does not exist on its own. As we saw in the case of Kolkata or Statue of Liberty, meaning did not exist on its own. Kolkata by itself did not have

any meaning by itself, the meaning of Calcutta was in the people, so depending on the person, Calcutta was a place which with fancy bars and restaurants and nightlife and fun.

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For other people it was a place of crowds, tradition, trams, shopping. For yet another group, it was it is wonderful, brilliant Victorian architecture. So a word means what we want it to mean. Very few of us have the ability to mean what we say and say what we mean. Do you remember my favorite book when I was a child and I continue to read it in adulthood also is Alice in Wonderland.

Those of you might have read Lewis Carroll's brilliant children's fantasy book Alice in Wonderland, in which is really which was understood to be a children's story for several years until people came to know that Lewis Carroll who was a mathematician had concealed very complex mathematical equations in every sentence of Alice in Wonderland.

So it is really a coded book where those who understand the concepts in mathematics which Lewis Carroll was talking about would be able to read the hidden meanings. Bear in Alice in Wonderland, Alice says, I say what I mean and I mean what I say. Unlike Alice none of us mean what we say and none of us say what we mean because we are utterly confused about what we mean and we are utterly confused about what we say. Why?

Because a word, the problem is not with us, the problem is with the symbols because we think that communication is choosing the right symbol and matching it to the right meaning. But what we found out that no symbol has a right meaning, every symbol has a cluster of meanings which are porous, which are fluid, which keep changing according to the user.

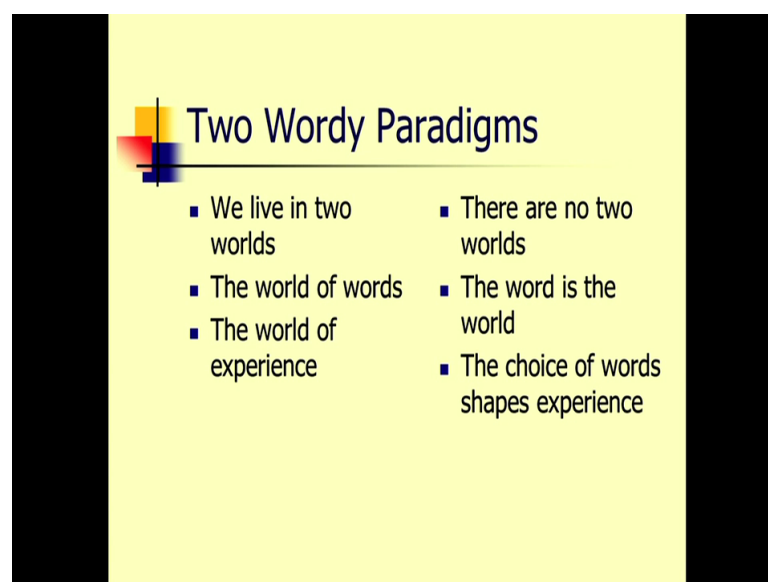
So think how elusive meaning is, it is not a question of matching symbols to meaning, but creating meaning through symbols which are themselves so porous, so fluid, so dynamic and choosing symbols to convey meaning which itself is so elusive. Are we always clear about what we want to say? We are not always clear. So the process of finding symbols to convey meaning is a very complex process and in that a word means what we want it to mean.

It does not have any intrinsic meaning by itself, it can mean only what we want it to mean. And not only that, our experience is shaped by words. By the words we use, our experience is shaped by that. The earlier view of language was that our language reflects reality but with Wittgenstein and others now we say language does not reflect reality, in fact language shapes reality.

So since we cannot share our word of experience, we cannot share meaning of words also because words are actually shaped. So think of the logic, a word means what we want it to mean but experience is shaped by words but since our experience is not shared.

How can we assume that the word we use will be understood in the same manner in which we use by someone whose experience is different because a word has no meaning by itself but is actually shaped by our experience or it shapes are experience. So someone whose experience is not the same as ours will not understand our meaning.

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Two Wordy Paradigms

- We live in two worlds
- The world of words
- The world of experience
- There are no two worlds
- The word is the world
- The choice of words shapes experience

So I will quickly walk you through a very major shift in understanding of language. The earlier understanding of language was that we live in two worlds, one is the world of words

and the other is the world of things. And what is language? Language is choosing the right word for the right thing.

So it is a question of matching, which is a very simple way of language which prevailed until new theories of language revealed to us different understanding of language. So the new theories of language particularly after Wittgenstein tell us that there are no two worlds, so it is not a question of there is a world of things and there is a world of words and we find the right word to describe the right thing. But what he tells us is that the word is the world.

The word is the world. The choice of words shapes experience, so instead of two worlds we have only a single world, we have a single world and the choice that we make of words, shapes the world of things or the world of experience. What do I mean by this? Let me, let me illustrate through a simple example. For instance, normally in most languages, we have only two words for ice, we either have the word ice or we have the word snow, right?

So we think that there is an objective, tangible object called ice or snow and we have to choose between these two words ice or snow to describe that thing. But would you know, are you aware that Eskimos have many different words for snow. And I do not remember the exact word number but I think they have something like 40 different words for snow.

Why is it that they have so many words for snow whereas most other people in the world do not have more than one or two words for snow. It is because their life depends upon the kind of snow, because of that they need to know the exact difference between 17 or 20 or whatever number kinds of snows that exist, so they have invented different words for describing snow.

So snow is not an independent thing which is common to all speakers of the world but snow is something which is created by the different words for snow which have been given by certain features which are not given by other speakers. So what we are saying yes, that the world of things or world of experience is not identical for all speakers of all languages. It differs, it is produced by the language itself.

It is created by the language instead of reflecting the language. If this example is not clear, let me give you another example from closer home. In Indian most Indian languages, we have different words to describe to talk about different kinds of relate relationships.

For instance, we have the word mama, we have the word chacha, we have the word taya, we have the word fufa, we have the word mausa, we have the word chota mama or bada mama.

Now why is it that these words do not exist in the English language, which have only one word which is uncle.

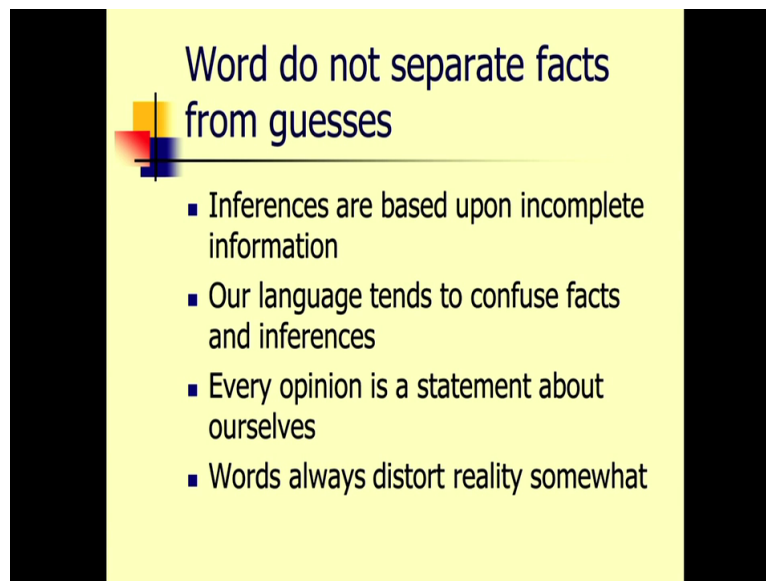
Whereas in Indian languages, we have five or six words to describe different kinds of uncles to whom we are related differently. Why is it so? Because in India we have the notion of extended family and our relationship with different members of the family are structured by a different set of rules. Whereas in the West, the family is more for a longer time it has been a nuclear unit.

First of all we do not have such large extended families and even if they are, its relationships with different kinds of members of the family are not so nuanced as they are in India. So that is why if you yourself think of your relationship, I am sure your relationship with your mama is very different from your relationship with your taya. Why? Because one is a more friendly kind of relationship, the other is a more reverential kind of relationship.

Because of that person's relationship with your own parent, your mother or father. That also structures your transactions or interactions with that member of the family. So what I am we are saying is one way of in the earlier theory we were saying that there is only different kinds of relationships and different languages have different words which are translatable to describe these relationships.

Now we are saying that the words we choose, the number of words we choose, the divisions we make in a language, in relationship signifiers or snow signifiers, that itself creates a reality for us. It does not reflect the reality or experience but it creates the reality. So the choice of words shapes experience. So we have three theories of meaning, referential, perceptual and behavioral.

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Word do not separate facts from guesses

- Inferences are based upon incomplete information
- Our language tends to confuse facts and inferences
- Every opinion is a statement about ourselves
- Words always distort reality somewhat

Now we come to the most important thing, words. Why is this that we are not able to find the right word? The problem is finding the right word and we are not able to find the right word. Why is that? Because words are very tricky things. Most words that we use, they do not separate facts from cases. Whereas the way we speak, we state as if something is a fact. Whereas what it is really, is a guess.

So suppose we say that Devdas or Mother India is the best film ever made, okay. So suppose I make a statement like this, Godfather is the best film ever made or Mother India is the best film ever made, okay. Normally we do make statements like this but how do we know whether Mother India is the best film ever made? There might be people who disagree. How do we know that Godfather is the best film ever made?

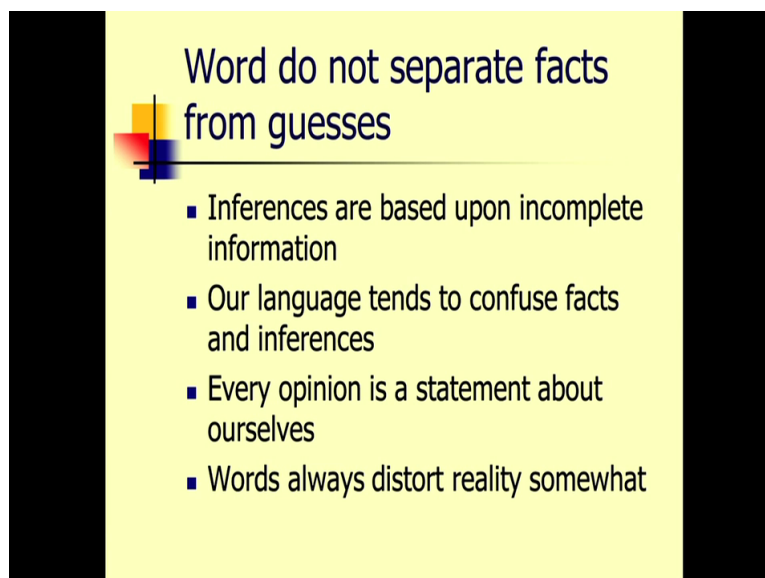
Does every one think that Godfather is the best film ever made? But we do tend to make statements in which because when we are forced to use words and when we use words, words tend to confuse facts and inferences. What is an inference? When you derive information based on certain information. Now usually when we make an inference based on incomplete information.

So suppose you say that Mother India is the best film ever made. Probably you have not seen all the films made all over the world and that is why only on the basis of your knowledge of Hindi films, you say that Mother India is the best film ever made. Or you have seen only Hollywood films and you say Godfather is the only the best film ever made. So your inference that Godfather is the best film ever made is an inference, it is not a fact.

It is based on incomplete information. So whenever we use language, unfortunately, we tend to confuse facts and inferences. When we speak we speak as if it is a fact. My wife is the most beautiful woman on Earth. A lot of people would say that. Or my daughter is the best daughter in the world. Now that, is that a fact? No, it is an inference.

So you say that I wife was Miss India 1994, so Abhishek Bachchan can say since she was Miss India 1994, my wife Aishwarya Rai Bachchan is the most beautiful man on Earth because through that , through that award she was given, through the title she was given, it becomes a fact. But for most of the people when they say when they say that my wife is the most beautiful woman in the world, it is just an inference, it is not a fact.

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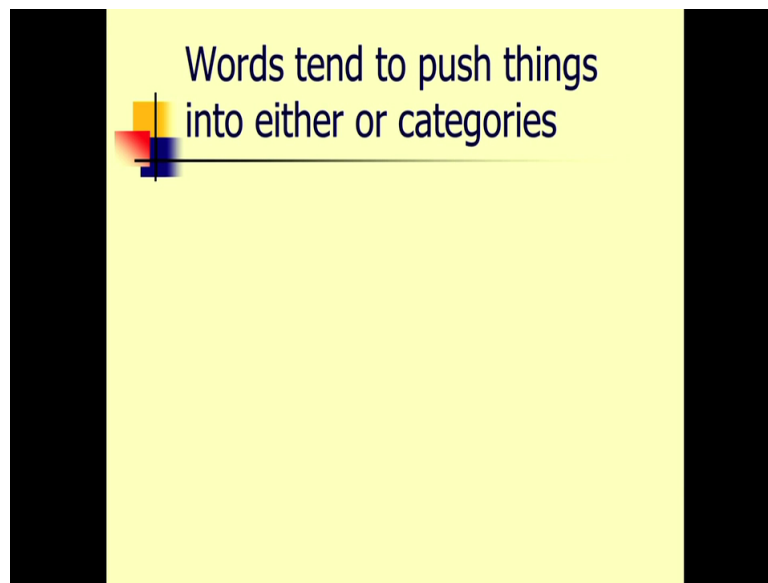
Word do not separate facts from guesses

- Inferences are based upon incomplete information
- Our language tends to confuse facts and inferences
- Every opinion is a statement about ourselves
- Words always distort reality somewhat

Now every opinion is a statement about ourselves. So when you say my wife is the most beautiful woman on Earth, what are you trying to say? You are trying to say that the way wife looks, that is your idea of beauty, that is one. The other one the other opinion the other statement that you are making by yourself because she is my wife, she has to be the most beautiful woman on the on earth.

So words always tend to distort reality, they assume I mean, they appear as if we are stating facts but they tend to distort reality somewhat.

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Words tend to push things into either or categories. So we say, he is a very good worker say he is a very bad worker, she is a very lazy worker, she is a very efficient worker, when we use words like these, adjectives like these, we make we make we polarize things we push things into black-and-white.

Whereas reality is not like that, when we say somebody is a good worker, maybe somebody is very good at doing certain kind of task, whereas that same somebody is not good at doing other kind of task. So when we say someone is lazy, maybe someone is slow but is a perfectionist.

So we are actually pushing things into either or categories, black-and-white categories, polarizing things whereas reality is a shade of grey rather than black-and-white. So what should we do? What should we do to avoid using verbal symbols in a way that they create it is difficult to decode them? Because what we try to do? We are trying to master the art of encoding verbal symbols.

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Danger Signals

- Use of absolute, conclusive, generalized terms
- Value terms, adjectives and adverbs
- Identifying
- Confusing facts with inferences
- Bypassing, polarisation, frozen evaluation

And what should we do to avoid that they are not decoded in the wrong manner. First of all we should try to avoid use of absolute, conclusive, generalized terms. Like that is the best food, my mother makes the best food in the world, it is an absolute term or generalized term. Indians are very religious, every Indian is not religious but we say Indians are very religious people.

Bengalis are very cultured people, Punjabis have no culture. We hear statements like these but some Punjabis might be cultured, some Bengalis might not be cultured but we do make statements of this kind. Or value terms, adjectives and adverbs, whenever we use adjectives, we are using value terms. So either we are using positive or we are using negative.

You say, he is a very good student, he is a very bad student, she is a very beautiful girl, she is a very ugly girl, she is a very tall guy, he is a very tall guy, he is a very handsome guy, he is not a handsome guy, he is a brilliant student, he is not a brilliant student. So the moment we use words like this, we are using value terms and we should avoid using adjectives.

Identifying and confusing facts with inferences, as I said earlier, we should always make a distinction between facts and inferences. So you can say in my opinion my wife is the most beautiful woman in the world or since she won the Miss World title in 1994, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan is the most beautiful woman in the world. So you are using some support to show why an inference is not a fact.

So it is we when we use buffers of this kind by saying in my opinion up to this date, Cleopatra has been regarded as the most beautiful woman for centuries as goes the opinion of

most people. So there you are saying, you are going you are supporting it by authority. Bypassing, polarization, frozen evaluation are other problems. What is polarization? As we said earlier, he is very good, he is very bad, that is polarization.

Or use what is frozen evaluation? Frozen evaluation is somebody who somebody might when we use terms based on our opinion of someone in the past and we do not change that opinion. Say when you were a kid, you are not good in studies and your brother was brilliant but what happens, whenever you go to families they say, woh to padhai mein acha nahi tha, he was not good in studies, he was always playing but his brother was brilliant.

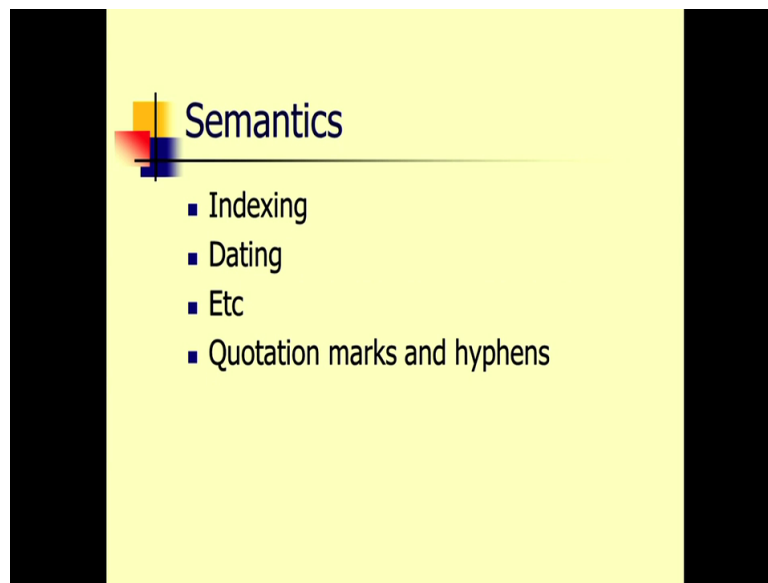
But what happened, maybe in your childhood you were not serious about studies but when you finished, by the time you entered high school, you started taking your studies seriously and maybe you excelled over your brother, you got a better job then your brother. But in the family circles, it is very difficult to get over frozen evaluation because what is believed to be true for one time is believed to be true for all times.

And you have famous examples of people who are considered quite brilliant or quite attractive later in life think of think of say the acme of beauty, say you know the famous film star Rekha. It is said that she was a child, she was considered an ugly duckling and in her family she still considered an ugly duckling, even though the whole she is the pin up girl of the whole of India if not many other parts of the world.

Or the cricketer Imran Khan once shared the story that even though the world thinks he is most handsome one of the most handsome men in on not only the field of cricket but also in the world, he is considered, he was considered unattractive by ugly by his family because he had small eyes.

So he is still so you imagine somebody like Imran Khan who is considered one of the you know the signifiers of male good looks, is considered himself unattractive because his family thought he is not attractive and that is an example of frozen evaluation.

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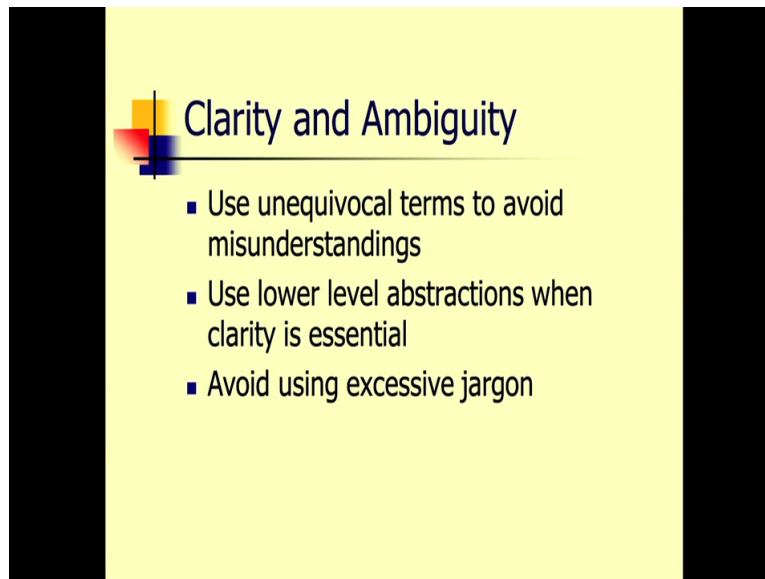


Semantics – what can we do to improve clarity in our encoding of messages so that our messages do not miss fire? Indexing, dating, etc, quotation marks and hyphens. Indexing – so you say, as of now so-and-so has been the best to retain the class. Dating – in 1995 these were considered, these clothes were considered very fashionable, bellbottoms were considered very fashionable in the 70s.

But if you say bellbottoms are very fashionable trousers today, nobody will agree that they are fashionable but in the 70s they were considered the peak of fashion. Etc – so when you say something you pretend that you know all of reality but you say well, Titanic is one of the best films made in my opinion among other films in English language. So when you add those statement, then it becomes less of a generalization.

And finally we use quotation marks and hyphens to say that in my opinion, Sholay the best film ever made in the history of Indian cinema. Maybe others do not agree with you but in your opinion you think that it is the best film.

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Clarity and Ambiguity

- Use unequivocal terms to avoid misunderstandings
- Use lower level abstractions when clarity is essential
- Avoid using excessive jargon

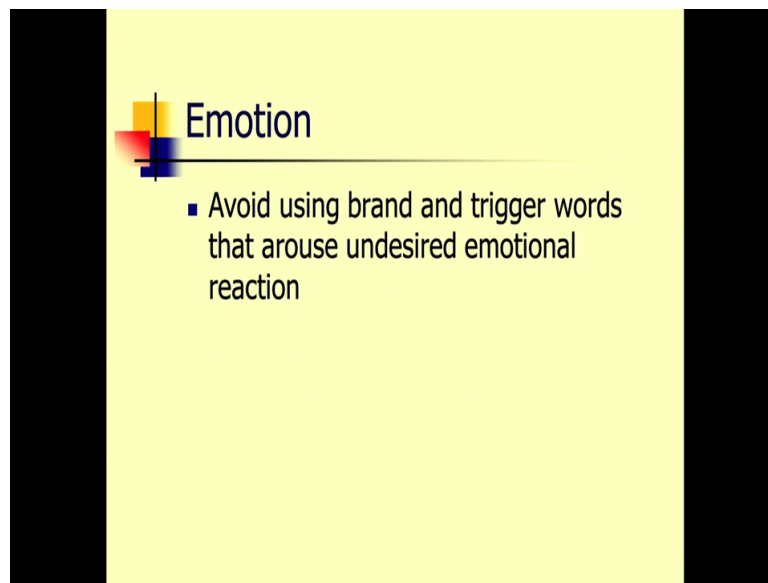
Now clarity and ambiguity, use unequivocal terms, an equally vocal terms to avoid misunderstandings. Do not use words which are equivocal. What are equivocal words? Words which have double meaning. If you remember your Mc Beth, in the Mc Beth what happens, the witch is equivocate and many of us use words tend to use words which have double meaning.

Now we should try to avoid using which words which have double meaning. Say, use lower-level abstractions when clarity is essential. So instead of saying, we had a huge audience for a play, you can say, we use we had the hall was 80% full when our play was staged. So that is less abstract, it is a more concrete and brings more clarity. Avoid using excessive jargon.

Very often in technical professions, for instance computer scientists, doctors, they tend to use jargons. And when you what to communicating people in your own field, it works very well because it is a shorthand for getting the message across but when you are talking to a layperson, then it creates confusion because I want to know in simple words what happened.

Like I want to know do not want to know whether computer has how many GB but if I want to know, I will be able to do all my work on my computer for my basic needs, I do not need to know the GB or I do not need to know the RAM or whatever is important in computers.

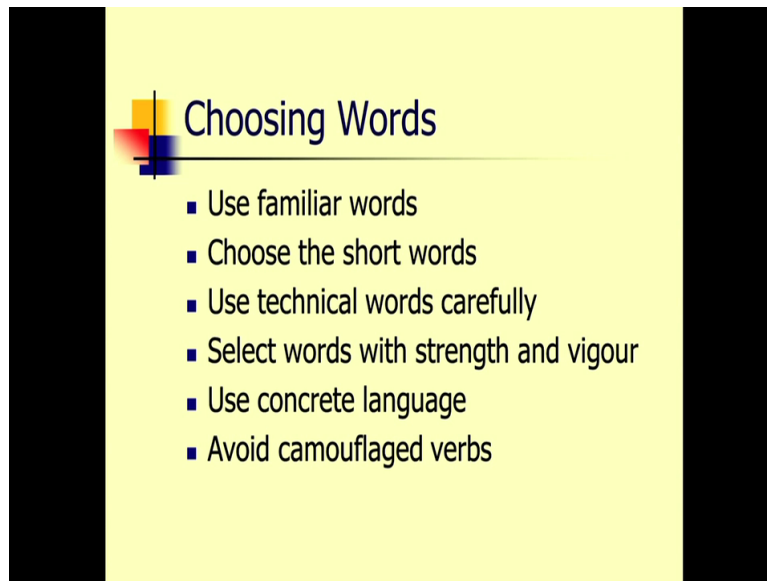
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Avoid using brand and trigger words that arouse an emotional reaction. So whenever we use trigger words, like when we say, suppose you say my wife is very fat. Is she going to like it? All very often students say, oh that madam is very fat that fat madam or that fat sir, that old sir. Now these are trigger words that when suppose when you are in front of that teacher, use a madam is very healthy or sir is very youthful.

But behind their back you say, oh that fat lady or you say that old man, right? So depending on the situation we use positive words or negative words like fat or healthy, right? But what we need to do is, we need to use neutral words, we need to use words that do not arouse any undesired emotional reaction.

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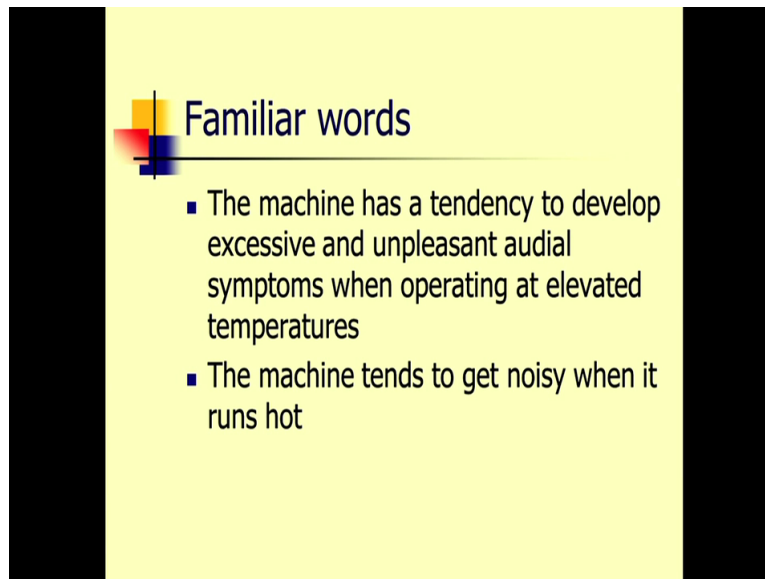
Choosing Words

- Use familiar words
- Choose the short words
- Use technical words carefully
- Select words with strength and vigour
- Use concrete language
- Avoid camouflaged verbs

So I will give you a quick checklist on the kind of words we use and in the next session we look at, we will practice each of these words. So first of all use familiar words, to use choose the short words, do not use long words. When you are speaking, we are talking about speaking, not writing.

Use familiar words, choose the short words, use technical words carefully, select words with strength and vigor, use concrete language, avoid camouflaged verbs. I will go into each of those in the next session because I need to practice all of this with you in great detail. Let us run through this checklist in more detail now. Let us begin with familiar words. What do we mean by familiar words?

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Familiar words

- The machine has a tendency to develop excessive and unpleasant audial symptoms when operating at elevated temperatures
- The machine tends to get noisy when it runs hot

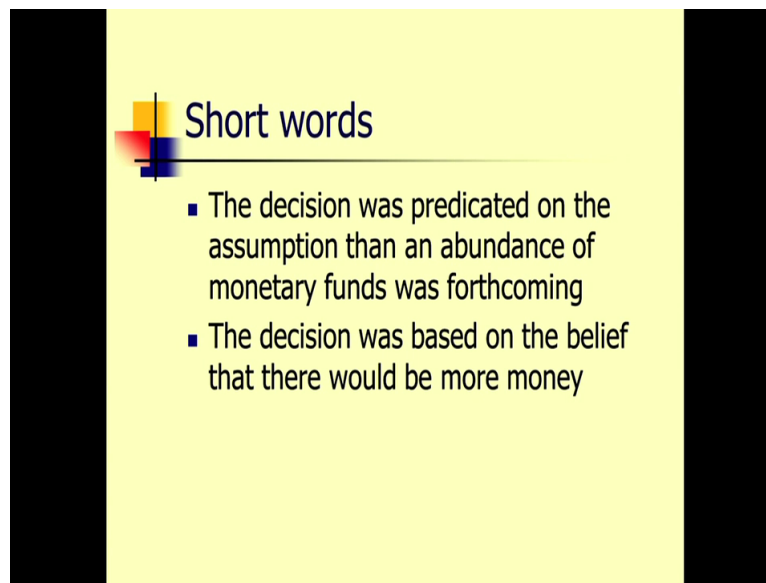
When we are writing we tend to impress we like to impress people by using a lot of complex words, by using technical jargons by using very complex structures but when we are speaking, we must remember to use very simple familiar words. Say, in this sentence I have a sample, the machine has a tendency to develop excessive and unpleasant ordeal symptoms when operating at elevated temperatures.

So this this is how I came across a sentence and you can see it is very wordy, it is very complex, it uses too many words, it uses very complex words and it is very confusing because it tends to use a unfamiliar word and a more complex word instead of using a simple word. Now when we try to decode this message in simple words, this is what it is.

The machine tends to get noisy when it runs hot. All the person is trying to say is, the machine tends to get noisy when it runs hot. So suppose you are explaining to your technical person you are not explaining it to you are not writing a research paper, you are just try to tell the person please try to use the machine carefully because it tends to get noisy when it runs hot.

Instead of that if you try to use the former sentence and use complex words, unfamiliar words, the person may be who is not very familiar with the technical words or very complex language would get completely confused and your machine will get burnt out.

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Short words

- The decision was predicated on the assumption that an abundance of monetary funds was forthcoming
- The decision was based on the belief that there would be more money

Similarly we tend to use short words. When we speak, we ought to use more short words than long words. So when you use long words like you do in writing, it sounds like this. The decision was predicated on the assumption that an abundance of monetary funds was forthcoming. Now this is a structure which you would typically find in a research paper which I myself tend to use in my research papers.

This is the my favorite sentence word, the decision was predicated or the argument is predicated on the assumption, so using a very complex structure, you are using very long words because in writing we tend to be formal and particularly in academic writing, we tend to use very long words because it sounds very scholarly. But in everyday in functional English, in particularly in speaking, we should not be using these kind of words.

Instead we should use short words. So all we are saying is, decision was based on the belief that there would be more money. So in a meeting if you say, the decision I made the decision on the belief that there would be more money, instead of that if you tell your in a in a meeting you tell people, this was predicated on the assumption that an abundance of monetary funds was coming, people take a while to understand what are you saying.

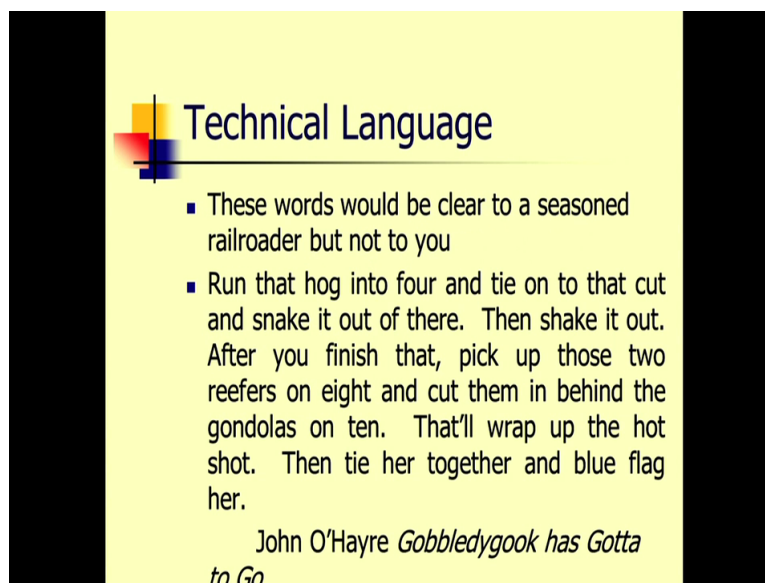
The third now oh, one more point, we tend to think that short words are always simple words. Is it always so? And we also tend to think that short words are always familiar words. Some short words are not familiar. For instance, for in India, if you use a very short word like naïve which is just a five letter word, everybody is not familiar with that word.

Or you tend to use words which are known words from other languages like chic, or gosh or suave, these are words that have been borrowed in English by other languages like French. And fashionable people or (35:14) people learn it people tend to use these words in a in their everyday speech. But it is quite likely then you say oh my girlfriend is very chic or that lady is very chic, which is usually it is used with women rather than men.

Or you use the word Amitabh Bachchan is a very suave person. Now it is a very short word, it is not a very long word. Sonam Kapoor is very chic and Amitabh Bachchan is a very suave person. Now while it might impress people who are familiar with these French words, others will get completely befuddled, what are you trying to say? So you might be able to guess by the visual image of these personalities, these celebrities that this is what you are trying to say.

But all short words are not familiar words, just remember that. Some short words are actually unfamiliar.

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Technical Language

- These words would be clear to a seasoned railroader but not to you
- Run that hog into four and tie on to that cut and snake it out of there. Then shake it out. After you finish that, pick up those two reefers on eight and cut them in behind the gondolas on ten. That'll wrap up the hot shot. Then tie her together and blue flag her.

John O'Hayre *Gobbledygook has Gotta to Go*

Let us come to technical language next. Particularly professionals tend to use technical language. Engineers, managers, academics tend to use a lot of technical language and this technical language which is very familiar to people in the same peer group of people in the same profession, doctors for instance, they tend to use medical terms for everything, it will be very confusing.

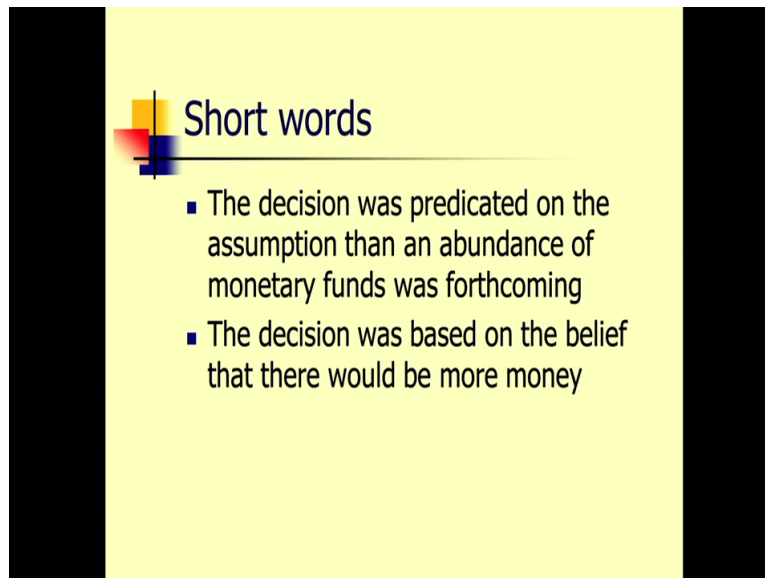
Suppose I want to know, look a broken my kneecap, I do not want to know my patella is fractured, I just want to know whether it is my kneecap which is fractured but the doctor would say your patella is fractured, okay? So let us look at this example, these words would

be clear to a seasoned railroader but not to you. Now these are very simple words mind you, they are not difficult words but these are words like a code.

It is like a jargon which is used as a code among railroaders which you will not be able to understand. Run that hog into four and tie on to that cut and snake it out of there. Then shake it out. After you finish that, pick up those two reefers on eight and cut them in behind the gondolas on ten. That will wrap up the hotshot. Then tie her together and blue flag her. Did you follow anything at all? I did not.

John O'Hayre, this is from his book Gobbledygook has Gotta to Go, so this is Gobbledygook.

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Short words

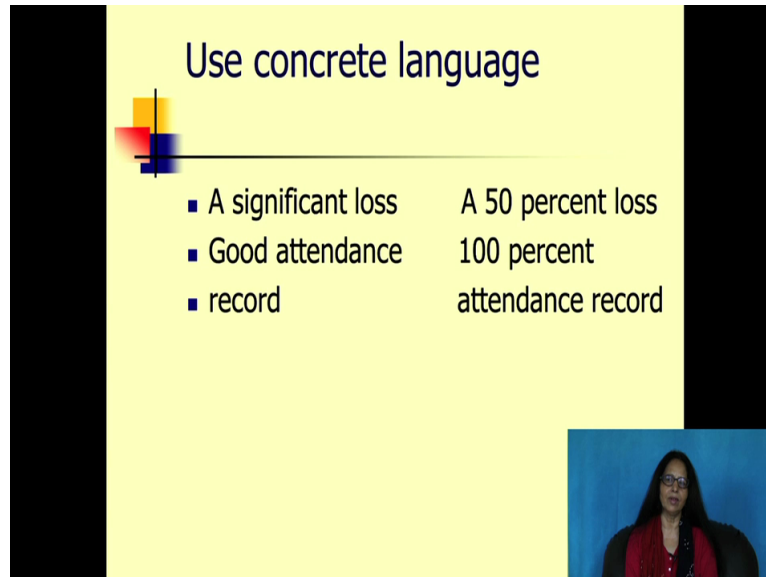
- The decision was predicated on the assumption that an abundance of monetary funds was forthcoming
- The decision was based on the belief that there would be more money

Now select words with the right strength and vigor. When we use words, we say okay this word is the same as the word other word, it is not so because one word is not the same as another word. Not only because some words naturally sound better than the other words but also because there are shades of meaning, there are finer nuances which one word will be able to convey whereas the other word will have different connotations altogether.

So first of all we have to choose words with the right strength and vigor. You can say my Vijay Mallya was a very successful businessman until he had problems. (Whh) What is the commonly used word for Vijay Mallya, he is a tycoon. Tycoon is a stronger word than saying successful businessman. Or we say the market is declining instead of saying generally declining market we say bear market.

Instead of saying Subhash Ghai is a big filmmaker, we say Subhash Ghai the Movie Moghul or Yash Chopra the Movie Moghul. Instead of saying one who was the first, it is better way of saying would be to use the stronger word and say the pioneer.

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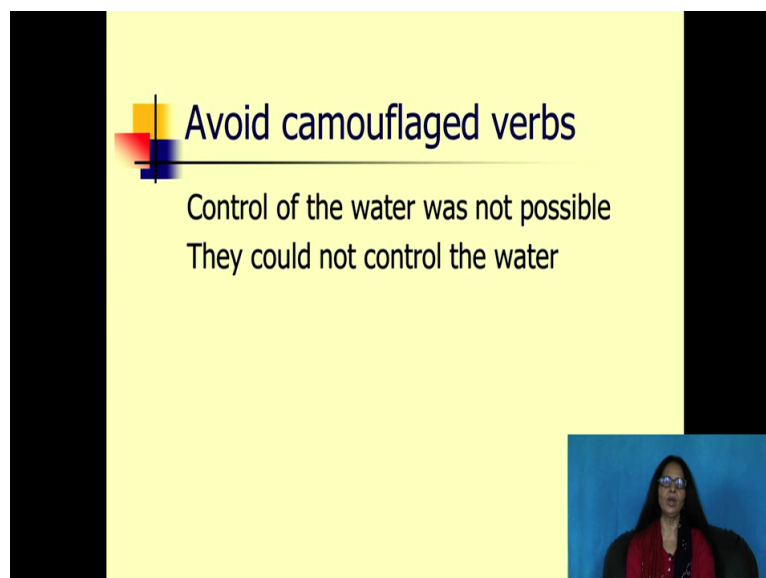
Use concrete language

- A significant loss A 50 percent loss
- Good attendance 100 percent
- record attendance record

The slide features a yellow background with a black border. A decorative graphic of overlapping colored squares (yellow, red, blue) is positioned to the left of the title. A small video inset in the bottom right corner shows a woman with glasses and a red top speaking.

Use concrete language, instead of saying a significant loss say a 50% loss. Instead of saying we had good attendance, we say 100% attendance. Instead of saying we have a good record, you say attendance record, be specific.

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Avoid camouflaged verbs

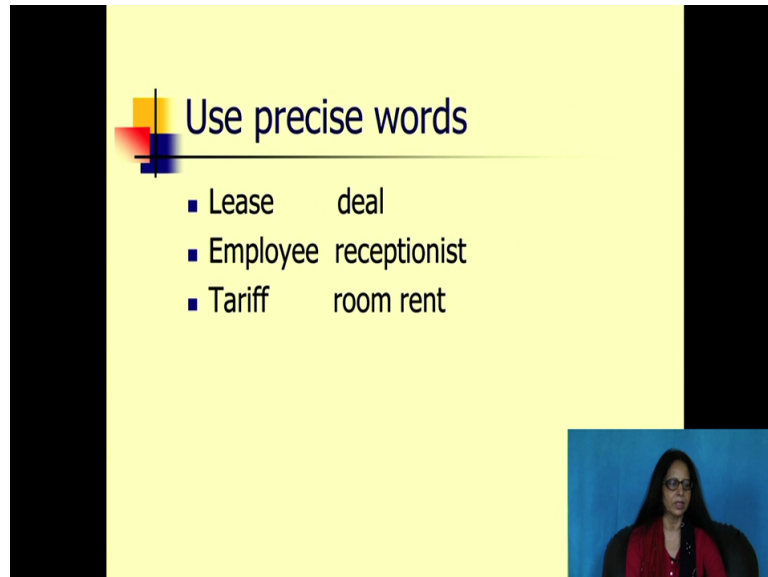
Control of the water was not possible
They could not control the water

The slide features a yellow background with a black border. A decorative graphic of overlapping colored squares (yellow, red, blue) is positioned to the left of the title. A small video inset in the bottom right corner shows the same woman from the previous slide speaking.

Avoid camouflaged words. We tend to use a lot of verbs which are used as nouns but are actually verbs so that creates unclarity, lack of clarity. Instead of saying control of the water

was not possible, which is actually a verb camouflaged as noun, you could say they could not control the water. Using the passive voice, if you use the active voice and you say they could not control the water, it is easier to follow it.

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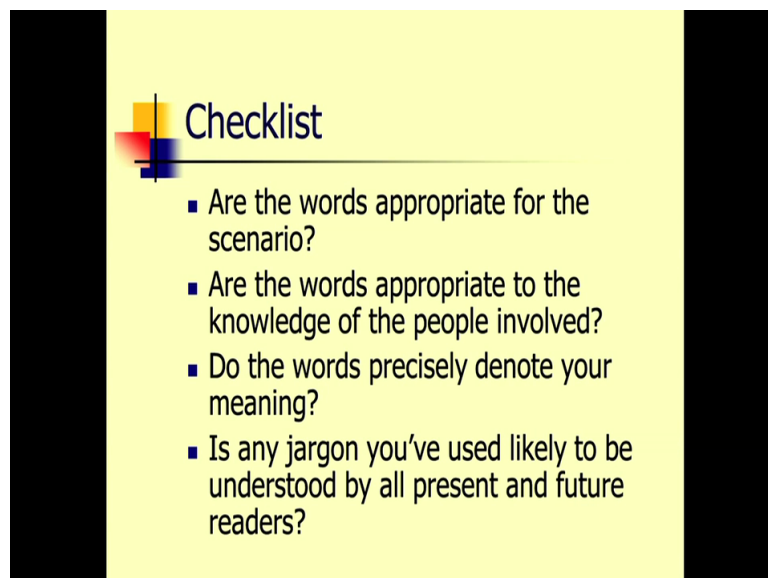
The slide has a yellow background with a black border. On the left side, there is a decorative graphic consisting of overlapping colored squares (yellow, red, blue) and a vertical line. The title 'Use precise words' is written in a dark blue font. Below the title, there is a bulleted list of three items. In the bottom right corner, there is a small video inset showing a woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a red top, speaking.

Use precise words

- Lease deal
- Employee receptionist
- Tariff room rent

Use precise words, instead of using leaves, we use deal. Instead of using employee, use receptionist. Instead of using tariff, say room rent.

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The slide has a yellow background with a black border. On the left side, there is a decorative graphic consisting of overlapping colored squares (yellow, red, blue) and a vertical line. The title 'Checklist' is written in a dark blue font. Below the title, there is a bulleted list of four questions.

Checklist

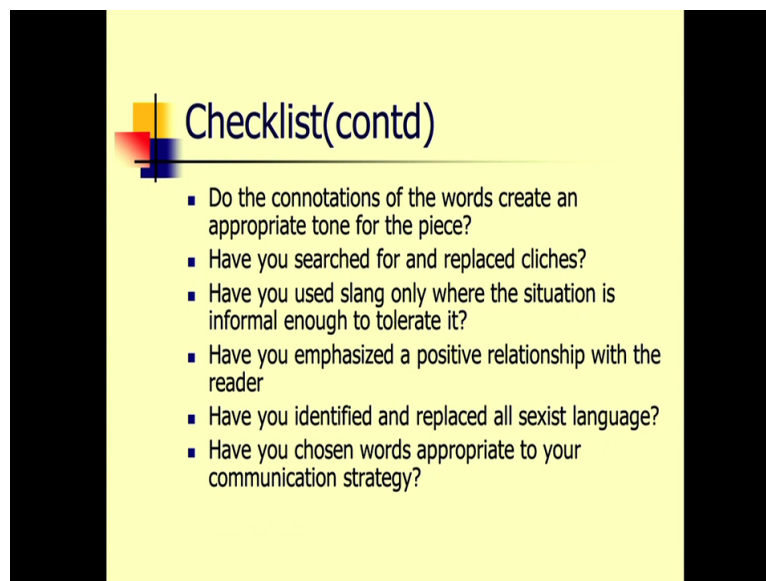
- Are the words appropriate for the scenario?
- Are the words appropriate to the knowledge of the people involved?
- Do the words precisely denote your meaning?
- Is any jargon you've used likely to be understood by all present and future readers?

So checklist, we conclude, when you speak or write for that matter but I have been focusing on speaking skills in this course and I will not go engage with writing in detail, you need to

find out are words appropriate for this scenario? Two, are the words appropriate to the knowledge of the people involved?

So suppose you are talking to experts, you can use jargons but suppose you are talking to laypersons, are they appropriate to the knowledge of the layperson? Do the words precisely denote your meaning? Is any jargon you have used likely to be understood by all present and future readers?

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The slide features a yellow background with a black border. On the left side, there is a decorative graphic consisting of overlapping colored squares (red, yellow, blue) and a black crosshair. The title 'Checklist(contd)' is positioned at the top left of the text area. Below the title, there is a bulleted list of six questions.

Checklist(contd)

- Do the connotations of the words create an appropriate tone for the piece?
- Have you searched for and replaced cliches?
- Have you used slang only where the situation is informal enough to tolerate it?
- Have you emphasized a positive relationship with the reader
- Have you identified and replaced all sexist language?
- Have you chosen words appropriate to your communication strategy?

Do the connotations of the words create an appropriate tone for the piece? Have you searched for and replaced cliches? Have you used slang only where the situation is informal enough to tolerate it? Have you emphasized a positive relationship with the reader or the speaker? Have you identified and replaced all sexist language? Have you chosen words appropriate to your communication strategy?

I will give you a quick, before I conclude, I will give you an example of cliché, what is cliché? Cliché is a word when it is used for the first time a phrase, it is very interesting and people like it but after a while it becomes jaded and it is not appropriate to use it like people say the bottom line was, within this timeframe, these kind of cliches used by people, they were used by some journalists long time ago and they were considered very noble, original.

But now they have become so jaded that nobody wants to see them. Similarly slang, the language of campuses, the language of youth, that is not, like saying, I want to talk to this guy, he is my buddy. That might be okay when you are talking to your student friends but when you are talking in a formal situation, you cannot use a slang, it is a no-no.

And finally sexist language, what is a sexist language? Sexist language is something which is there a gateway to a person and today we do not use language which is sexist like to even till now we have notices addressed to us we use a the chairman of this committee, even if the chairman happens to be a lady, the designation used is chairman. In IIT for instance, the student is genetically male.

Whenever people are referring to the students, if a student if a student wants to write his exams later, let him write it. If a student wants to go on an internship, let them do it. Whereas we have our large number of female students now or female faculty now but faculty and student is always in the old-fashion you use sexist language is always a male.

So that is why feminists have been campaigning for the removal of all sexist language from both speech and writing. So we do not say chairman, we say chairperson, we do not say author, we do not say poetess, we separate. We do not say actress, we say actor and we remove all traces of sexism for writing. So with this I conclude my session on encoding messages using verbal symbols.

And in the next module, in the next unit of this module, I move onto encoding messages nonverbally using non-verbal symbols. Thank you.