

CHAPTER 11

CONVERSATION AND DIALOGUE

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you'll be able to:

- ★ know what conversation and dialogue are,
- ★ know about their types,
- ★ find the importance of dialogue, and
- ★ learn conversational skills, and

Introduction

We daily talk to our friends, relatives, and others on general or specific matters. We present our views and listen to them. We converse with each other. The conversation can be for formal as well as informal purpose. Though conversations occur normally and naturally, yet require effort, focus, and practice. In this chapter, we shall learn about conversation and dialogue, their importance, purpose, ways, and tips to improve conversational skills.

11.1 Conversation

Conversation is an exchange of words between two or more individuals. The individuals can be present at the same place or can talk through some mechanical or electronic device. It is the way of interaction with others. It is an interactive process that involves speaker(s) and listener(s). It is the method that employs informal exchange of views,

ideas or information through speech. It links people together to make social-interaction possible. It establishes, maintains, improves, and consolidates social as well as professional relations. It characterizes our everyday speech-making activities. Both, the speaker and the listener interact and reciprocate in the process.

11.1.1 Purpose

As conversations are carried out for some specific purpose, it is necessary to understand their basic purpose. Conversations can have the following purpose:

(a) Interaction

Conversation is a social activity. We spend time with the people whom we like and whose company we find stimulating. We interact with our friends, relatives and the persons we like. Interaction is the first and foremost aim of a conversation. This is the driving force behind all our social activities. Whenever we find an opportunity to interact with others, we share our thoughts with them. We converse with them and try to get acknowledged as a good conversationalist.

(b) Self-expression

We have some ideas and thoughts in our mind. We need to express them to others in order to get acknowledged. We communicate them through conversation. Self-expression is another purpose of conversation.

(c) To Know Others

Self-expression is not the sole purpose of social interaction, rather knowing others' feelings and thinking is equally important. Conversation helps to understand others' views, ideas, feelings, thoughts, in a better way. It is another purpose of conversation.

(d) To Build Trust

Mutual trust is essential in social and professional life. We cannot pour our heart before others. We need to establish our trust through our interaction. Building trust is another purpose of conversation.

(e) To Carry-out Various Activities

We are social beings. We need to take others' help to carry out certain activities. Conversation helps in performing the task in a better way.

11.1.2 Types of Conversation

Conversations are both interactional as well as transactional in nature. They are divided into different types. The type depends on the relationship between the participants and the situation. The first type of casual conversation can occur between the participants who are socially and culturally close to each other; and the other can occur between the participants who are less intimate. The type also depends on the situation. Conversations

can occur in informal or semi-formal situations. Broadly, the conversations can be divided into the following two categories:

- Informal conversations
- Formal conversations

(a) Informal Conversation

This type of conversation is held in informal setting. It occurs when the participants have close and intimate relations, such as friends, relatives etc. It involves exchange of personal information, such as general inquiries, personal matters, or so.

Example.

(i) A conversation between two girls.

Jyoti : Hi, Vinita! We are meeting after a long time. Where were you these days?

Vinita : Hi, Jyoti! You are right. We are meeting after one month. Actually, I've not been feeling well for last one month.

Jyoti : What's troubling you?

Vinita : I always feel feverish. Moreover, I have body ache. Even sometimes I feel difficulty in walking.

Jyoti : Oh! What does doctor say?

Vinita : I've consulted three doctors. None of them is able to diagnose the problem.

Jyoti : In fact, you are taking it serious. People often fall sick during winter. You should try to boost your immunity.

Vinita : What should I do for that?

Jyoti : You should do yoga to keep yourself fit. You should take proper and balanced diet.

Vinita : Thank you Jyoti for your suggestion. I'll follow your advice.

Jyoti : I'm sorry Vinita. My bus has arrived. I've to leave now.

Vinita : OK, Jyoti. Thanks for your wonderful tip. See you. Bye!

Jyoti : Bye, Vinita!

Activity : 1

Imagine you are Vinita. You reach home and tell your mother about the conversation with Jyoti. Write a short conversation between you and your mother.

Example.

- (ii) A conversation between two friends, one of them is in favor of online examination while the other supports written exam.

Amit : Hi Rahul! We are meeting after a long time. Where were you these days?

Rahul : Yes, dear. I was busy in my studies. My exams are about to start. Aren't you preparing for the exams?

Amit : Yes, I am also busy. But I hate the present examination system. We keep on writing for three hours. Sometimes we aren't able to even complete the answers in time.

Rahul : What's the solution? We can do nothing.

Amit : There can be online examination. It may relieve the students from burden.

Rahul : But we cannot answer subjective questions online. Moreover, such a large number of students cannot appear for the exam at the same time.

Amit : But it has its advantages. The students can get result very fast. At present, the university takes 3 months to declare the result.

Rahul : But there are technical problems associated with online examination. Failure of internet facility can cause problems.

Amit : Yes, you are right. But university can develop better internet facilities for the examination. This system is successfully run in many countries.

Rahul : Dear, ours is a developing country. It is difficult to match the facilities of developed nations. We've to manage with the present examination system. It is the matter of future. It can develop after few years.

Amit : Yes, you're right. We've to manage. I agree with your points. But university should think about it positively.

Rahul : You're right, dear.

Amit : Sorry Rahul, I'll have to leave now. I'm to go to market. See you soon.

Rahul : Ok, Bye!

Amit : Bye!

Activity : 2

Imagining yourself as Amit, write a letter to the Vice Chancellor of the University of Delhi to hold online examinations.

(b) Formal Conversation

This type of conversation is different from informal conversation in style, content, approach, and language. It occurs between the participants who are less intimate to each other. It takes place in semi-formal or formal setting. It involves the exchange of information in a formal manner. It may include, conversation with a shopkeeper, officer, professional, or so.

Example.

(i) A conversation between the salesman and a customer.

Salesman : Good morning, sir. What can I do for you?

Customer : Good morning, I'm looking for some good shirt.

Salesman : Cotton or synthetic, sir?

Customer : Cotton, please.

Salesman : Sure. We have an excellent range of shirts in cotton. These striped ones are fresh arrivals. Choice of any particular color, sir?

Customer : No particular choice.

Salesman : What's your collar-size?

Customer : Eighteen.

Salesman : Here you are, sir.

Customer : What does it cost?

Salesman : Its MRP is five hundred ninety rupees. Would you like to try it on?

Customer : No, it's perfect. Is there some discount on its MRP?

Salesman : No, sir. It's fresh arrival.

Customer : Please pack this one.

Salesman : All right sir. Here it is! Make the payment at the counter, please.

Customer : Can I pay by card?

Salesman : I'm afraid we do not accept cards. You've to pay by cash.

Customer : All right.

Salesman : Thank you sir, and visit again.

Customer : Sure.

Example.

(ii) A conversation between the account holder and the customer care executive of the Bank.

Executive : Good morning sir. Welcome to the ABC Bank. How may I help you?

Customer : Good morning. I have an account with your bank. My ATM card has not been working. It creates problems when I try to withdraw cash from the machine.

Executive : If you don't mind, would you please show me the Card.? (Customer hands over the card) What's your account number?

Customer : My account number is 123456789.

Executive : Sorry sir, its validity has expired. Have you not received the new card?

Customer : No, sir.

Executive : I'm forwarding your request for the new ATM card. In the meantime, please furnish the necessary details in this form.

Customer : How much time would it take to get the new card?

Executive : The new card will be delivered at your registered address within one week. Anything else, sir?

Customer : No, thanks a lot.

Activity : 3

In spite of your visit to the Bank, you did not receive the new card. Write a letter to the manager of the Bank, telling her about your problem, and request her to issue the new card.

11.1.3 Ways of Delivery

Conversation is an exchange of words between two or more persons. The persons can be present at the same place or can talk through some mechanical device. The conversation can occur in the following ways:

- Face-to-face
- Over telephone

(a) Face-to-face Conversation

This type of conversation takes place when the participants are present at the same place. The participants can see each other and derive meaning from the body movements.

Example.

A conversation between Abhishek and Sneha at a restaurant.

Abhishek : Sneha, I like this restaurant very much. How's the place?

Sneha : Lovely! Very nice!

Abhishek : I was sure that you'd like the place. I usually visit this restaurant. Let's sit in that corner, shall we?

Sneha : Yes!

Abhishek : (Moves to a table and calls the waiter) waiter! Waiter!

Waiter : Good evening, sir. I'm very sorry to trouble you, but I wonder if you could possibly move to another table. I'm afraid this table is reserved.

Abhishek : Oh yes, why not.

Waiter : Thank you very much, sir. Here's the menu, please. What would you like to have?

Abhishek : While I go through the menu, may I have a fresh lime with soda and sugar to start with? What'd you like to have Sneha?

Sneha : An orange juice for me, please.

Waiter : All right, sir. Anything else?

Abhishek : No, thank you.

Waiter : (After some time) here's fresh lime and orange juice please. What about food, sir?

Abhishek : Thanks. We'll order the food after a little while.

Waiter : Okay, sir.

Activit : 4

Take another student with you. One of you will play the role of Sneha, and the other of Abhishek. Converse on the facilities, food, and service at the restaurant.

(b) Telephonic Conversation

This type of conversation occurs between two or among more than two individuals over a telephone or mobile phone. It is not necessary for the participants to be present at the same place. They can talk over phones from different places. Voice plays a central role in this type of conversation. Unlike face-to-face conversation, the participants generally cannot see the body movements and facial expressions of each other.

Example.

A conversation between two students over the phone.

Amit : (Over the phone) Am I talking to Aditi?

Aditi : (Receiving the call) Yes. Who's there?

Amit : Hi, Aditi. I'm Amit. How're you?

Aditi : I'm fine. How about you?

Amit : Are you coming to the college today?

Aditi : Yes! What happened?

Amit : Please bring the notes of yesterday's class with you. I didn't attend the class.

Aditi : Ok. I'll bring the notes. Anything else?

Amit : No, thanks. Sorry to disturb you so early in the morning.

Aditi : There's no problem.

Amit : Thank you Aditi. See you. Bye!

Aditi : Bye!

11.2 Dialogue

Dialogue means 'a conversation, discussion or negotiation'. It is a conversational exchange between two or among more than two individuals. The exchange takes place in spoken form. The conversation can take place on general matters or some specific issue. It is a kind of participatory process in which minimum two persons take part in the conversation or discussion to resolve the issue or problem, and reach upto an amicable agreement or settlement. The communication is based on mutual respect. The participants come together to build mutual understanding across their differences and create positive outcome through conversation. Each participant, in spite of disagreement, tries to take others' concerns into consideration. The exchange generally takes place in formal or semi-formal setting.

11.2.1 Objectives

Main objective of dialogue is to listen to the problem, issue or matter, try to resolve it through conversational exchange, and reach upto an amicable solution. But it can also take place for other purposes, like:

- To bring two parties closer to each other.
- To dispel misunderstanding.

- To create a climate of mutual trust.
- To build relationships.
- To make participants more sympathetic to one another, in spite of their differences.
- To prepare ground for negotiation.
- To facilitate decision-making.

11.2.2 Types

The dialogue can be of following types:

- Inner-dialogue
- Outer-dialogue

(a) Inner-dialogue

Sometimes we ponder over some issue(s) and talk to ourselves. We try to find the reason or solution on our own. We communicate to ourselves. We, ourselves, act as a sender as well as a receiver. This situation is known as inner-dialogue. It is also known as 'monologue', 'self-dialogue', 'inner-speech', or 'self-talk'. The example can be traced from Unit 9 of this book.

(b) Outer-dialogue

The conversation between two or more individuals is known as 'outer-dialogue'. It is the process of transmitting, exchanging or sharing of information between two or among more than two individuals. It is carried out to receive information, make inquiries; resolve differences, matters, issues, or so.

Example.

A dialogue between a student and the Counter Clerk at library.

Student : Good morning, sir. I'm to return this book.

Clerk : Good morning. Please give me your library card.

Student : Oh, I'm sorry. Here it is.

Clerk : This book was due on last Wednesday. You're late by three days. You'll have to pay the fine.

Student : Sir, I was sick and was not in a position to come to the college. Please condone the delay.

Clerk : But you could send through some of your friends.

Student : But none of my friends stays near to my house.

Clerk : Please talk to the librarian in this regard. I have no power to condone the fine.

Student : All right sir, I'll see the librarian. Meanwhile, please issue me with this another book.

Clerk : Sorry, you have already four books with your name. I cannot issue the book until this book is returned.

Student : What amount I'll have to pay as fine?

Clerk : Three rupees.

Student : Here are three rupees. Now please issue the book.

Clerk : All right, please put in your sign here.

Student : Thank you, sir. But sir, page number sixty four is missing from the book. You can have a look.

Clerk : It's disgusting! Somebody would have torn it away. It has become a common practice. Please give me the book, I'll stamp page sixty three to indicate that page sixty four has been torn out.

Student : Is this necessary?

Clerk : Yes, it's necessary. Otherwise you may be blamed at the time of return.

Student : OK sir. Thank you very much.

Clerk : That's all right

11.3 Tips to be a Good conversationalist

Most people find difficulty in conversing with others. They cannot present their views effectively. Sometimes they fail to argue and feel ashamed of. A good conversationalist can persuade people and get things done. Good conversation largely depends on mannered attitude and ability to adjust with others. One can improve the conversational skills by following the below mentioned basic tips:

(a) Be an Active Listener

A good conversationalist should be a good listener. S/he should listen to the other participant(s) carefully and attentively. S/he should listen and understand the meaning of the conveyed message. S/he should not interrupt in between and let him/her complete the statement. Then s/he should present his/her views in a forceful manner.

(b) Be a Smart Speaker

A good conversationalist should be a smart speaker. S/he should not speak whatever comes to his/her mind rather should think before speaking. S/he should evaluate the consequences of his/her statement. S/he should use an appropriate style to present his/her views.

(c) Be Interested

A good conversationalist should be interested in the conversation. His/her action, attitude and behaviour should reflect his/her interest. S/he should make active participation. Some conversationalists remain lifeless during conversation. They remain mere passive listener and do not contribute anything to the conversation. It communicates that the person is not interested in the conversation and should be avoided.

(d) Be Clear

A good conversationalist should be clear in thoughts as well as expression. S/he should present her/his views in clear and simple words. Words having double meaning should be avoided. The words should be used with proper intonation, stresses and pauses to make the meaning clear.

(e) Be Polite

Politeness is the key to an effective conversation. The conversationalist should present his/her views politely. S/he should be courteous and respect other participant's views. If s/he does not agree with the views, s/he should express his/her disagreement or reservation in a friendly way. S/he should not be rude and impolite. S/he should avoid making the remark(s) that can hurt the other person. S/he should not jump to hasty conclusion.

(f) Be Positive

The conversationalist should remain positive during the conversation. S/he should avoid criticizing others. S/he should appreciate the good and positive qualities of the other participant(s) and express her/his appreciation.

(g) Be Flexible

The conversationalist should not be rigid. S/he should be flexible in approach, style and attitude. S/he should accept the right point(s) of the other participant(s). S/he should not argue for argument's sake and avoid heated argument.

(h) Use Proper Body Movements

Body movements make communication effective and forceful. The conversationalist should use body movements wherever required. S/he should maintain eye-contact with the other participant(s). It adds to the confidence and reflects person's liveliness.

11.4 Some Solved Examples

Example.

(i) A dialogue between the shopkeeper and a customer.

Shopkeeper : Good morning, sir. What can I do for you?

Customer : Good morning. I've come to show you the watch that I purchased last week.

Shopkeeper : Is there any problem with the watch?

Customer : Yes, it's not been working properly. It doesn't tell correct time. Sometimes it runs fast and sometimes gets slow.

Shopkeeper : When did you purchase this watch?

Customer : Last week.

Shopkeeper : Do you have the cash memo?

Customer : Yes, here it is.

Shopkeeper : All right, sir. It's under warrantee. You need not to worry about. You'll get the new one. But you'll have to wait for two days.

Customer : But how'd I manage without watch?

Shopkeeper : I'm sorry. You've to bear with. We may send the defective watch to the company and the company will replace it. We'll give you the new watch as soon as we receive.

Customer : It can take more than two days.

Shopkeeper : No, it won't take more than two days. The company's dealer is in Nehru Place. I'll send the watch to the dealer tomorrow and request him to replace the watch immediately. Please write down your mobile number at the back of the cash memo. We'll call you back as soon as we receive the watch.

Customer : Please give me the receipt.

Shopkeeper : Sure, sir. Here it is.

Customer : Thank you.

Shopkeeper : Sorry for inconvenience caused.

Activity : 5

You are the customer. You received the new watch. But it too has been creating problems. The shopkeeper has not been listening to your problem. Write a letter to the manufacturing company to replace the watch.

Example.

(ii) A dialogue between the Receptionist and a tourist at a Hotel.

- Receptionist : Good morning, sir. Welcome at Hotel Grand. What can I do for you?
- Tourist : Good morning. I need a room. Do you have any room vacant?
- Receptionist : Double or single, sir?
- Tourist : I want one single.
- Receptionist : Please let me check. I'm sorry, sir. There's no single room vacant at the moment. But I have one vacancy at twelve. Could I book the room for you in advance?
- Tourist : Yes, please. It's quarter past eleven. I don't mind waiting for forty five minutes.
- Receptionist : All right, sir.
- Tourist : What're the charges for two nights?
- Receptionist : It's five thousand only. You've to pay fifty percent in advance.
- Tourist : OK, what facilities do you provide here?
- Receptionist : Here's the brochure with complete detail. Please take a seat on the sofa over there.
- Tourist : (after reading the brochure) Please book the room. Here are two thousand five hundred rupees.
- Receptionist : Thank you, sir. Here's the receipt.
- Tourist : Thank you, madam.

Example.

(iii) A dialogue between a customer and the clerk(s) at the bank.

- Customer : Excuse me, please. Could you tell me where I can cash this cheque?
- Counter Clerk : Please go to the counter number 5.
- Customer (at counter number 5) : Can I cash this cheque, please?
- Counter Clerk : What's the amount? Please show me the cheque. Oh, it's less than five thousand. I'm sorry; you've to go at counter number 7. He'll cash it right away.
- Customer (at counter number 7) : Sir, please cash this cheque.
- Clerk : All right, sir. Bear with me for two minutes.

- Customer : Could you be a little prompt please? I'm in a hurry. I've already spent some time going from counter to counter.
- Clerk : Please put another sign on back side of the cheque.
- Customer : Why do you want me to sign on the back side when I've put in my signature on front side of the cheque?
- Clerk : We need the signature to prove who received the money.
- Customer : That's true.
- Clerk : Here's the amount. Sorry for the little delay.
- Customer : It's all right. Thank you.

Example.

(iv) A dialogue between the Enquiry Clerk and Priya at railway station.

- Priya : Good afternoon, sir.
- Enquiry Clerk : Good afternoon. What can I do for you, madam?
- Priya : What time is the Shiv Ganga Express expected?
- Enquiry Clerk : The scheduled time of its arrival was 2 o'clock. But, as per my information, it is late by fifty minutes.
- Priya : But I haven't heard any announcement in this regard.
- Enquiry Clerk : We've made the announcement. Let me check. Yes, it was made at 1:55pm.
- Priya : Do you make only oral announcements?
- Enquiry Clerk : No, we also display information on the Electronic Board.
- Priya : But the Board hasn't displayed the information.
- Enquiry Clerk : Sorry, I can't say anything in this regard. It'd be better, if you register your concern to the Station Master.
- Priya : Very well. What's the present position? When is the train expected to arrive?
- Enquiry Clerk : At 2:50. This is the position at the moment. But, it can cover some time, or can be delayed further. We'll make another announcement as soon as we receive some message.
- Priya : All right. Thank you.

Activity Box : 6

You are Priya. You go to the Station Master. Write a dialogue between you and the Station Master.

Example.

(v) A dialogue between the doctor and a patient.

Patient : Good morning, doctor.

Doctor : Good morning. How are you?

Patient : I haven't been feeling well for two days.

Doctor : What's troubling you?

Patient : I have had a lot of pain in the stomach for ten days and severe headache for two days.

Doctor : What's your appetite like?

Patient : Not good. I feel full up all the time. I also have bad taste in mouth.

Doctor : Did you check your temperature?

Patient : No, but I feel feverish all the time.

Doctor : All right, let me take your temperature first. Open your mouth, please. Let me examine you. Please loosen your clothes a little. Would you please lie down on that couch? Do you feel any pain here?

Patient : No, doctor.

Doctor : And here?

Patient : Oh, it's quite painful!

Doctor : All right. Come with me, please.

Patient : Is something serious, doctor?

Doctor : No, there's nothing to worry about. I'm prescribing two kinds of tablets. Take one before meals and the other after meals. You'll be all right in three days. Avoid fried or spicy food. Drink more and more water and take some rest.

Patient : Do I need to stay away from work?

Doctor : No, not at all. Take it easy.

Patient : Thank you very much. Good-bye!

Doctor : Bye!

Example.

(vi) A dialogue between an entrepreneur and the manager of a bank.

Rajat : May I come in sir?

Manager : Yes, do come in. Please have a seat.

Rajat : Sir, I'm Rajat. I'm an engineer. I want to start a small business. I need finance for the purpose. Could you please help me in getting the loan?

Manager : Sure. We are here for new entrepreneurs. But I'd like to know a few things.

Rajat : Sure sir.

Manager : What is your area of specialization?

Rajat : Mechanical.

Manager : What business do you want to start?

Rajat : Sir, I want to set up a workshop.

Manager : Do you have any work related experience?

Rajat : Yes sir. I have been working with a workshop for last five years. I'm well aware of each and every thing.

Manager : Do you have plot of land to set up the workshop?

Rajat : Yes, I have a 500sq. yard plot at a prime location. I also have money for building. I need 5 lakh rupees for the installation of machinery.

Manager : Do you have project proposal?

Rajat : Yes sir, here it is.

Manager : (after reading the proposal) Your proposal is very impressive. Please go to counter number 5 and complete the formalities.

Rajat : How much time would it take to get the loan?

Manager : Not more than 15 days.

Rajat : Thank you very much sir.

Manager : You're welcome.

Activity : 7

You are Rajat. You reach at counter number 5. Write a dialogue between you and the clerk.

Exercise

1. Complete the following dialogue between the policeman and a car driver.

Policeman : Show me the papers.

Driver : What happened sir?

Policeman :

Driver : But I haven't jumped the red light.

Policeman :

Driver : But Sir, the light had only turned yellow!

Policeman :

Driver : I was getting late, otherwise I would have.

Policeman :

Driver : 60 km per hour.

Policeman :

Driver : Double challan! Please Sir! Don't be so hard. I promise to always be careful henceforth.

Policeman :

Driver : I am not carrying my pollution check certificate. I am sorry.

Policeman :

Driver : Ok Sir. I will pay the entire fine and never repeat my mistake.

2. Complete the following dialogue between a mother and a son. The mother is persuading the son to go for hair cut.

Mother :

Son : But Mom, I don't want to cut them!

Mother :

Son : I don't care!

Mother :

Son : You don't know anything about fashion! I am not going.

Mother :

Son : Come on Mom, Just this month please!

Mother :

Son : Mothers!!

3. You purchased a refrigerator from the local electronic goods dealer about a week back. But it has not been working satisfactorily. You visit the dealer. Write out the dialogue between you and the dealer.
4. Write a dialogue between two boys, one of them is habitually despondent and thinks that luck is against him; whereas the other is of a more practical turn of mind.
5. Write a dialogue between the mother and the daughter on the issue of early marriage.
6. You were invited to a friend's Birthday party. But you reach there when the celebrations had already started. Write a short dialogue between you and your friends.
7. A patient is down with fever. He visits a doctor. Write a dialogue between the patient and the doctor.
8. Write a dialogue between two students; one of them is in favor of the implementation of Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) whereas other is against it.