

Notes for Shastri – 1st year students

Unit-1

What Does a Good Language Learner Do?

1. Why are children & women considered good learners of language?

Answer- It has been found that adults lag behind in learning language in comparison to children and women. The main reasons are the unnecessary fear of being ridiculed by others and failure. These inhibitions prevent adults from getting the kind and amount of practice they need. Children do not nurture such kinds of inhibitions. They are spontaneous and enthusiastic in giving reactions. They are unconcerned about who is laughing at them and why. That is why, young children pick up new languages easily.

Women are considerably less self-conscious than their male counterparts. As a result, they remain enthusiastic in learning and in using target language. Males because of their more self-conscious nature than females lag behind in learning language. That's why, women learn languages faster than men.

2. “Language learning is a lifelong job” or ‘Advertisements that claim speak English within 60 hours/days are all lies’ – Explain.

Answer – All the rules of grammar of any particular language cannot be assimilated throughout life. All living languages change constantly. As a result, grammatical rules of these languages also change constantly. Language learning takes both time and patience. Advertisements that claim to teach you to ‘Speak English in 60 hours/days are all lies. There is no magic, there are no short cuts in learning language. One must have to spend time to learn ongoing/new rules in any particular language. That's why, it is said that language learning is a lifelong job.

3. What are the qualities required to learn a language?

Answer – The two most important things for language learning are – time and patience. Patience is a useful virtue for language learning. As language learning is a lifelong job, one must have to keep patience for language learning.

Another important matter for language learning is time. Learners are required to spend time on language learning related activities such as reading, listening to English programmes or participating in conversation with both friends and strangers.

4. What kinds of change have come in the concept of ‘error’ or evaluation?

Answer – The views on errors have gone through a 360 degree change. Earlier errors were regarded as the outcome of poor learning and teaching. Even errors were asked to be eliminated fully. But in this modern era, errors or mistakes are considered inevitable part of the language learning process. In the early stages, the only way to avoid errors was not to use the language at all. In the modern era, errors are considered as the first step in the language learning process. Modern teachers keep a more tolerant attitude towards errors in this modern era.

Unit-2

Language and Culture

1. When do we say that someone knows a language?

Answer- Talking about the rules of grammar is to talk in a social vacuum. Until a learner knows how to use the resources of grammar to send meaningful messages in real life situations, he/she cannot be said to know the language. He/she must know what variety to use in what situation, how to vary the style according to whom he/she is addressing, when to speak or remain silent, when and what kind of gestures are required to go with what speech. While these are picked up naturally and unconsciously in the first language or mother tongue, in second and foreign language learning, they require special attention.

2. Define bilingual, multilingual and Indianism.

Answer – A person who knows two languages simultaneously can be termed as Bilingual. A person who knows more than two languages can be termed as multilingual. For example, if speaker ‘A’ knows both English and Sanskrit can be regarded as Bilingual and if speaker ‘A’ knows English, Sanskrit and Hindi can be termed as multilingual. Indianism is regarded as the Indian way to speak or use English. In Indianism we notice coining of new words as per the necessity of the speaker. For example, the word ‘hot drink’ is used for ‘alcohol’ and the word ‘cold drink’ is used for drinks like Pepsi, Coca-cola, Sprite etc.

3. Define code mixing and code switching with example.

Answer – When a word or part of a word of one language is combined with a word or part of a word of another language, it is called code-mixing. The advertisement jingle ‘यही है right choice baby’ is an example of code-mixing where words of two languages are used simultaneously.

When we alternate between two languages – utter some sentences in the mother tongue and then switch to some sentences in English, we are code-switching. Both code-mixing and code-switching have equal importance in our day to day life.

Unit-3

Marking Formality and Informality

1. Define the following :

Formal language – Words and phrases that are used in a serious way and in formal situations such as in business letters, and documents, academic writing and books etc. or with people we do not know very well can be termed as Formal language. This language is used when people want to appear very polite. **Example** – Air India passengers are requested to fasten their seat. (In flight)

Informal Language – Words and phrases which are used in casual situation and with friends, family or people we know very well can be termed as Informal words. Informal words are more common in speech than in writing. It is not considered polite to use informal words in formal situations such as academic institutions, administrative workplace, books etc. **Example** – Hello Ram! What’s going on?

Slang – Informal language which might include words which are not polite can be termed as Slang. Slang is often used between members of a particular group when speaking to each other, and might stay in use for only a short time. **Example** – That’s a load of bullshit.

2. How is politeness different from deference?

Answer- The below mentioned differences are noticed between politeness and deference –

- i. Politeness is a genuine desire to be pleasant to others.

Deference refers to the respect we show to other people by virtue of their higher status, greater age, etc.

- ii. We remain polite with those who are in reality known to us well.

Deference is the opposite of familiarity.

- iii. Politeness may be behaving in a way that is socially correct and shows awareness of and caring for other people's feelings.

But in case of deference showing awareness and caring for others remains as a matter of formality which is not morally bounded.

- iv. Both deference and politeness can be shown through general social behaviour. We can show deference by standing up in front of a senior person and politeness can be shown holding a door open to allow someone else to pass through.

- v. Deference is built into the grammar of many languages. It is shown through address forms such as Sir, Madam, Professor, Hon'ble etc.

Non-deferential relationship is shown through short forms of names such as Dick, Kate, Richard etc.

3. Is meaning conveyed through only words? Explain.

Answer- A study states that only 7 percent human communication occurs through language, 38 percent is conveyed through voice and tone ; and 55 percent is conveyed through body language. From the outcome of this study, it becomes clear that body language plays an important role in human communication.

4. How does the notion of public and private space differ?

Answer – Notion of public and private space varies as per the conventions of culture. And the convention of culture also differs as per the nation and community. Farming communities accept speaking loudly. While on the other hand, Europeans dislike speaking loudly. Arabs greet each other by embracing but Europeans dislike embracing. In Eastern cultures, touch is associated with warmth, comfort and empathy. In one society a given communication can be fulfilled through verbally but in another society no verbal means may be available. Depending on need, motivation and exposure, learners pick up these aspects of languages and culture as they proceed.

Unit- 4

Ways of Reading

1. Define the following terms :

- i. **Skimming:** Skimming often refers to the way in which one reads at a faster rate to gain the general idea about the text without paying heed to the intentional and detailed meaning of the text. For example – When one reads the text only in order to understand the thesis statement, in one or two lines, it is called skimming.
- ii. **Scanning:** Scanning is reading a text quickly in order to find specific information, e.g. figures or names. From this perspective scanning can be regarded as a specific reading skill which is often used in combination with others such as skimming and intensive reading.
- iii. **Intensive reading:** Intensive reading involves learners reading in detail with specific learning aims and tasks. So, it may be regarded as a study method with care and in depth to remember or memorize the content. For example: When students prepare any topic for examination, they actually go for intensive reading.
- iv. **Extensive reading:** Extensive reading involves learners reading texts for enjoyment and to develop general reading skills. Example – A teacher reads a short story with learners, but does not set them any tasks except to read and listen.
- v. **Reading between the lines:** It is that reading technique by which a particular reader tries to find meanings that are intended but that are not directly expressed in something said or written. For example – When a particular reader tries to understand the contemporary society just by reading a novel by a particular author, he/she is actually reading between the lines.

2. Define Child abuse.

Answer – Child abuse has been defined as all forms of physical, and /or emotional treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual and potential harm to the child's right to health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. In this modern era, it is widely accepted that children are need to be treated with care and dignity. Their freedom should be respected. It is in this context, the International Day for the Rights of the Child is observed on 20th November every year which started in the year 2000 and World Day for the Prevention of Child Abuse is also observed on 19th November.

3. What is the scenario of Child Abuse in India?/ What are the causes of child abuse in India?

Answer- India is a developing nation. In this era too, we can barely guarantee our children basic health, nutrition, and shelter. There is little time and opportunity to think about the rights of children or of their abuse. We have a tradition of expecting unconditional and unquestioning respect to elders from children. Children are treated here as the property of parents. All such kinds of prejudices prevalent in our nation keep the scenario of child abuse behind the screen. People in our country are neither willing to talk about it nor report it to the police or other authorities. As a result, a grim scenario of child abuse is noticed in our culture.

4. What are the possible solutions for Child Abuse?

Answer – Below mentioned steps can be taken to curve the grim situation of Child Abuse –

- i) Awareness is the only effective tool to minimize the issues of child abuse.
- ii) People need to be cautious on child abuse and should avoid silence on the issues of child abuse.
- iii) People must have to treat children with dignity and care and should not regard them as their property.
- iv) Any issue of child abuse must have to be handled strictly with the help of authority or by any prevalent legal provision.

Unit- 5

Writing and Its Systems

1. Define the following terms –

Pictographs - Roughly 600 Chinese characters are pictographs. They are stylized depictions of objects in the real world and are among the oldest characters in Chinese. They were originally inscribed on stone tablets, bones, and tortoise shells. For example, the character 馮 evolved from a pictograph of a horse.

Ideograph - Ideographs are characters derived from symbols representing ideas or abstractions. For example, the character for 'one' is 一. Simple ideographs can be

compounded. Thus the character for ‘two’ is 二. Another example is 木 ‘tree’ and 木 木 ‘grove.’

Logograph – When symbols represent words or parts of words they are called logographs or characters. Modern Chinese and Japanese languages have some 2000 and 1850 logographs or characters respectively.

Scientific and mathematical notations are modern logograms. These symbols are widely used in modern written languages. Their spoken versions vary from language to language. For instance, ‘O’ may be pronounced as zero, 0 and naught.

Alphabets – Alphabets are the latest development of writing system. It is the most economic and adaptable of all writing systems. It shows a clear relationship between the symbols and the sounds of the language.

Most alphabets contain 20-30 symbols. Most languages do not have just one symbol/letter/character for each sound. Languages vary greatly in their sound symbol relationship. English has letters both consonants and vowels but there are languages such as Arabic and Hebrew that only have consonantal letters. The vowels are indicated using diacritic markings which are optional.

Passage – B

2. What are the differences between writing and speech? Discuss in detail.

Answer - The below mentioned differences are noticed between writing and speech –

- i) Speech is time bound, while on the other hand, writing is space bound.
- ii) Speech is dynamic and writing is static.
- iii) Speech is transient and writing is permanent.

In addition to the above mentioned differences the below mentioned points may be considered on differential ground –

- i) The permanence of writing allows repeated readings and analysis. By contrast, the spontaneity and rapidity of speech reduces the chance of complex preplanning.
- ii) Writing promotes the development of careful organization of thoughts and arguments and accurate selection of content, language and structures.

But speech promotes features that assist speakers to ‘think standing up’. As a result constructions are looser, repetitions are frequent; filler phrases such as ‘you know’, ‘let me see’, ‘well....umm’ etc. are used.

Unit- 6

From Pictures to Prose

Passage –A

1. What is the meaning of ‘Qutb Minar’ in Arabic?

Answer – The word ‘qutb’ in Arabic means pole or axis and a ‘minar’ is a free standing tower. Such kinds of free standing tower were quite common in the Arab world.

2. What has been said about the construction of Qutb Minar in the passage?

Answer – In the mentioned passage it has been described that the construction of Qutb Minar might have been started by Prithviraj Chauhan though no proof in this regard is still available. But the first storey was accomplished by Qutb-ud-din-Aibak. The next three storeys were built by Iltutmish, the son-in-law of Qutb-ud-din-Aibak.

In the reign of Firoz Shah the damage to this monument by earthquake was repaired by converting the fourth storey into two. Later the repairing work was again done in 1794 by Major Robert Smith, a British engineer by placing a cupola which was later removed and placed in the lawns of the Qutb.

(Questions for comprehension check may be given in the exam from passage – A & B of this unit)