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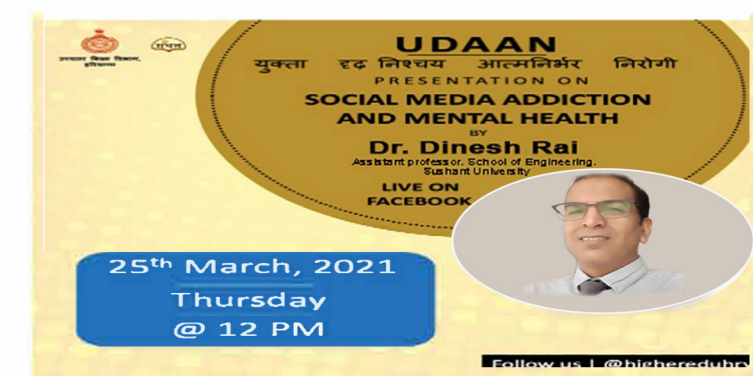


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**Type :** Udaan Mental Health Counseling

**Name :** Women In Media

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## **UNIT 7    LEARNING IN ORGANIZATIONS\***

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### **Structure**

- 7.0    Introduction
- 7.1    Objectives
- 7.2    Learning: Definition and Meaning of Learning
- 7.3    Theories of Learning
  - 7.3.1    Behavioristic Theories
    - 7.3.1.1    Classical Conditioning
    - 7.3.1.2    Operant Conditioning
- 7.4    Cognitive Theory
  - 7.4.1    Insight Experiments
  - 7.4.2    Sign Learning
  - 7.4.3    Latent Learning
- 7.5    Social Learning Theory
  - 7.5.1    Attention Processes
  - 7.5.2    Retention Processes
  - 7.5.3    Reinforcement Processes
- 7.6    Principles of Learning and the Theory of Reinforcement
  - 7.6.1    Reinforcement
  - 7.6.2    Schedules of Reinforcement
  - 7.6.3    Punishment
  - 7.6.4    Extinction
- 7.7    Let Us Sum Up
- 7.8    Unit End Questions
- 7.9    Glossary
- 7.10    Answers to Self- Assessment Questions
- 7.11    Suggested Readings and References

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### **7.0    INTRODUCTION**

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This unit will enable you to understand the meaning of learning in the context of managing organizational behavior. It also presents the various theories related to learning in organizations. This unit also presents the concept of employee behavior modification using the principles of reinforcement and punishment.

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## 7.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Define ‘learning’ and ‘motivation’;
- Understand the major principles of learning;
- Discuss the different theories of learning and motivation; and
- Explain employee behavior modification.

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## 7.2 LEARNING: DEFINITIONS AND MEANING OF LEARNING

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In this section, we will discuss the definition and meaning of learning, the different theories of learning and how the theory of learning can be used in managing employee behavior in organizations. Learning is defined as “any relatively permanent change in behavior that occurs as a result of experience”. It is a continuous process and human beings are always undergoing the process of learning as a result of their interactions with the environment in which they operate. The key component in learning is its outcome i.e ‘change in behavior’. The change may be positive or negative from the organizational point of view. For instance, people may learn negative or unfavorable behaviors like resistance and absenteeism as a result of their experiences, as well as favorable behaviors like increased productivity. Whether the outcome is favorable or unfavorable depends on their experiences as well as how they process them. It is also important for the change that has occurred has to manifest itself in behavioral modification. That is, learning has to be accompanied by a change in actions. Any change than occurs in people’s thought processes or attitudes does not constitute learning unless it is accompanied by change in behavior. The change in behavior has to be an outcome of experience. Experience may be acquired directly, through observation or practice, or indirectly through reading or listening to another person’s experience. Finally, the change that has occurred has to be relatively permanent to understand that learning has taken place. A temporary change in behavior as a result of tiredness of any other factor does not constitute learning. To state briefly, one can consider that learning has taken place, when there is a change in a person’s behavior as a result of his/her experiences and when the change manifests itself in the form of relatively permanent behavioral modification.

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## 7.3 THEORIES OF LEARNING

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The theories of learning explain the processes by which people can acquire patterns of behavior and can be classified under three main heads. These are Behavioristic Theories (including classical conditioning and operant conditioning), Cognitive Theories and the Social Learning Theory.

### 7.3.1 Behavioristic Theories

Behavioristic theories or Behaviorism constitute the traditional theories of learning. These theories were propounded by Ivan Pavlov and John B. Watson. The behaviorists attribute learning to the association between stimulus and

response. Behavioristic theories are also called the connectionist theories of learning because of their emphasis on the connection between the stimulus and the response. They mainly deal with the role played by conditioning in the process of learning.

### 7.3.1.1 Classical Conditioning

The theory of classical conditioning grew out of the experiments conducted by Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov. As a part of the experiment, Pavlov performed a simple surgical procedure on a dog, which allowed him to accurately measure the amount of saliva it secreted. When Pavlov presented the dog with meat, the dog showed a significant increase in salivation. At the next stage, he rang a bell without offering any meat, and the dog showed no change in the amount of saliva secreted. Then Pavlov proceeded to ringing the bell while presenting the meat to the dog. After sometime, the dog started showing an increase in the saliva secreted simply on hearing the bell, even without the meat being presented. This indicated that the dog had become classically conditioned to associate the ringing of the bell with meat, and respond to it.

In terms of the theory, the meat was an unconditioned stimulus and the salivation was an unconditioned response. Whenever the dog was offered the meat it responded by salivating. The bell was a conditioned stimulus. It had no connection to the response by itself initially, but after being associated with the unconditioned stimulus, that is the presentation of meat, it eventually caused the dog to salivate even when it was presented alone. The last concept is called conditional response. Thus, classical conditioning can be defined as a “type of conditioning in which an individual responds to some stimulus that would not ordinarily produce such a response.” It is a process in which a formerly neutral stimulus, when paired with an unconditioned stimulus, becomes a conditioned stimulus that elicits a conditioned response. It describes the link between a stimulus and a response (S – R). Classical conditioning can sometimes be observed even within the organizational context. For example, whenever the top management is going to visit a factory, the factory is cleaned up and the employees are expected to come to work, dressed neatly. It is sometimes observed that the employees come to work dressed neatly whenever the factory is cleaned even if the top management is not due to visit. In this case, the cleaning of the factory is a conditioned stimulus and the dressing of the employees is the conditioned response.

Classical conditioning has been criticized as being passive. It only represents a very small part of human learning and is highly dependent on being offered a stimulus. In other words, it only deals with unlearned or automatic reactions or reflexive behavior; whereas most experts agree that human behavior is much more complex. This led to the emergence of operant conditioning.

### 7.3.1.2 Operant Conditioning

Operant conditioning differs from classical conditioning as it deals with voluntary or learned behavior as against reflexive or unlearned behavior. Proponents of operant conditioning like B.F Skinner argue that people learn to behave in a certain way in order to get something they want or to avoid something they do not want. Operant conditioning may be defined as a “type of

conditioning in which desired voluntary behavior leads to a reward or prevents a punishment.” According to Skinner, creating pleasant consequences to follow a certain types of behavior would increase the frequency of that behavior. On the other hand, a negative consequence of a behavior would discourage the person from repeating that behavior. Basically, the main aspect in which operant conditioning differs from classical conditioning is that, in classical conditioning, the stimulus is controlled to result in a certain response. But in operant conditioning, the stimulus situation does not elicit the response but acts as a cue for a person to emit a certain response. The main factor in operant conditioning is what happens as a result of the response. For example, in an organization, if a person is rewarded for higher productivity, the person will be encouraged to work harder to increase his/her productivity. The person who associates working harder with getting a reward, and this is a learned behavior. In this case, working harder is the response and the reward is the stimulus (R–S). Similarly, if a person is penalized for coming late to office, the person would try to avoid being late in future. Thus, operant conditioning has great significance in managing human behavior in an organizational context. It helps managers to identify ways to encourage positive behavior in employees and discourage negative behavior.

**SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQ I)**

1) Write the definition of learning.

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2) Write the emphasis of behavioristic theories.

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3) Write the definition of classical conditioning.

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4) Write how operant conditioning differs from classical conditioning.

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## 7.4 COGNITIVE THEORY

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So far the kinds of learning that have been studied were regarding the organization of behavior into learned stimulus-response associations. This organization of behavior is a very simple form of learning, but for more complex form of learning, we must consider the roles of perception and knowledge, or cognitive processes. Those who have been identified with cognitive viewpoint argue that learning particularly in humans, cannot be fully explained in terms of stimulus response associations. They proposed that the learner forms cognitive structure in memory, which preserves and organizes the information from various events that occur in a learning situation. When some information is presented to the individual, s/he must encode the stimulus and scan it against his/her memory to determine an appropriate action. What response will be given will depend upon the cognitive structure retrieved from memory and the context in which the stimulus occurred. Thus, the individual's response is a decision process that varies with the nature of the situation and the person's memory for prior events.

### 7.4.1 Insight Experiments

Wolfgang Kohler (1925) performed a series of experiments with chimpanzees. At some point of working at a problem, the chimpanzees grasped its inner relationship through insight, i.e. they solved the problem not through mere trial and error learning but by perceiving the relationships that are essential for problem solving. Kohler conducted an experiment on his most intelligent chimpanzee: Sultan. The chimpanzee was kept in a cage and some fruits were kept outside the cage. There was a short stick lying in the cage but he could not reach the fruits with it. There was a longer stick outside the cage which could not be reached by its hand but can be pulled within reach by means of the small stick. Sultan tried to reach the fruit once more with the help of the small stick but as it cannot reach, it looked around and suddenly picked up the small stick once more and tried to reach for the longer stick and pulled it towards itself and with the help of this stick, it got the fruit. On observing the complete process, it is seen that the moment Sultan's eyes fell on the long stick, his thought process formed one consecutive whole and it is seen that the solution appeared to him quite suddenly, in an interval of hesitation and doubt and undoubtedly had a relation to the final objective and the attainment of the end goal.

Thus, this study demonstrates as to how insight occurs. A moderate degree of insight is common in 'human beings and we tend to take it for granted with the occurrence of insight, we find solution of a problem as though a light had been turned on in the darkness which is appropriately called the 'aha' feeling experience'. This experience usually comes with solving puzzles or riddles.

The variables that influence insight learning have some general principles. Insight depends upon the arrangement of the problem situation i.e. the problem situation should be perceived completely or as a whole. If this situation is not completely available at one time, it would be difficult to obtain a solution. Human beings can rearrange the problem mentally; they can form mental images of the situation and rearrange objects in that image in an attempt to find a solution. Mental manipulations go on preconsciously and only when a solution is found, the person will realize that s/he had been thinking about the problem. Once

a solution occurs with subject, it can be repeated promptly. Gradual solution appears to be the rule in trial and error learning. Sudden solution is the rule of insight. When some solutions appear through insight there is a possibility that these solutions appear on other similar occasions. A solution achieved with insight can be applied in new situations. Since what is learned in the insight experiment is at cognitive relationship between means and an end the solution can appear even when the objects or tools get substituted. An effective learner is a resourceful, adaptable person, able to use what s/he knows in new situation and has potentials to discuss solutions to problems that s/he has never faced before. Therefore emphasis are upon insightful learning rather than on rote learning or on mechanical skills that encourage such problem solving behavior.

### **7.4.2 Sign Learning**

Edward. C. Tolman (1948) believed that much of the learning is sign learning i.e. 'what leads to what'. He used a rat to run a maze and found that the rat developed a kind of map or cognitive structure, of the maze instead of learning merely a sequence of left and right turns. If a familiar path is blocked, the animal can adopt another route based on this understanding of spatial relationships. Thus sign learning may be defined as 'an acquired expectation that one stimulus will be followed by another in a particular context'. That is, one response may be readily substituted for another, provided both lead to the same end point where the expected stimulus will be encountered. Thus, a rat that has learned to run on a maze to obtain food in the goal box will, if the maze is flooded with water, swim without error to the goal. The rat appears to have learned the location of the goal rather than a chain of specific stimulus response connections. Because what is learned is a set of expectation or a cognitive map of the environment rather than a specific response. Thus, sign learning classifies itself as learning with understanding rather than as conditioning.

### **7.4.3 Latent Learning**

It refers to learning that is not evidenced by behavior at the time of the learning. Typically, such learning gets in to hidden mode due to low levels of drive on in the absence of reward. When drive is heightened or appropriate reinforcement appears, there is a sudden use of what has been previously learned. In theorizing about how rewards and punishments influence behavior Tolman distinguished between learning and performance. In the latent learning study, the rat learned something about the spatial arrangement of the maze, but this learning was not evidenced in performance until reward motivated the animal to perform. Tolman maintains that for learning reward and punishment serve to convey information, to teach "what leads to what" they do not 'stamp in' specific responses and eliminate others. In performance, on the other hand, rewards and punishments function to determine possible responses, the subject decides to use. The response with the greatest expectation of reward will be made more quickly and efficiently.

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## **7.5 SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY**

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The social learning theory states that people learn not only from their own experiences, but also from observing what happens to other people and even just by being told about something. It is an extension of the operant conditioning

theory and subscribes to the idea that behavior is a function of consequence. However, it goes beyond operant conditioning by recognizing the role of perception in learning. According to the social learning theory, people learn not only from the actual consequences that they have experienced in response to their behavior, but also from what they perceive the consequences might be if they behave in a certain way. For instance, if a person sees his co-worker being rewarded for good behavior, s/he will learn to adopt the same behavior himself/herself to attain the consequence, which is the reward. The role of models are very important in social learning as people learn from observing the model. There are four aspects to social learning:

### **7.5.1 Attention Processes**

People learn from a model only when the model manages to capture their attention. People usually learn from models that are attractive, are similar to them or operating in a similar situation as they are, or are repeatedly available.

### **7.5.2 Retention Processes**

The model's influence on a person determines how well the person retains what s/he has learnt even when the model is no longer in front of him.

### **7.5.3 Motor Reproduction Processes**

After the person observes a new behavior from the model, the behavior must then be implemented. This shows efficacy of what has been learnt.

### **7.5.4 Reinforcement Processes**

People will be motivated to repeatedly exhibit the modelled behavior if they are rewarded for it. Therefore, behaviors that receive positive reinforcement will be learnt better and repeated.

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## **7.6 PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING AND THE THEORY OF REINFORCEMENT**

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We have learnt in the previous section that whether a behavior is learnt or not depends on the response to the behavior exhibited. In this context, the concepts of Reinforcement and Punishment play an important role in the learning process. Most experts agree that reinforcement is more important than punishment. That is, people are more likely to learn to exhibit behavior that is followed by a reward or praise than to stop exhibiting a behavior that is a result of punishment. One of the important theories of reinforcement is Thorndike's Law of Effect. According to Thorndike, "Of several responses made to the same situation, those which are accompanied or closely followed by satisfaction (reinforcement)... will be more likely to recur: those which are accompanied or closely followed by discomfort (punishment)... will be less likely to occur." Although the Law of Effect is generally accepted to be valid, there are some exceptions to it. For instance, a person's cognitive rationalization may neutralize the law. An inefficient employee may persist in the belief that s/he has high efficacy and that s/he is doing all s/he can do to accomplish the goals given to him/her. Even when his/her performance falls short of the manager's expectations, he may be unresponsive to any efforts made to correct him/her or improve his/her

performance because s/he believes that s/he does not need any improvement. In addition to this, the Law of Effect has its limitations and cannot be used as an overall theory of learning, as there could be factors other than reinforcement and punishment that also affect learning. However, despite its restrictions, the Law of Effect remains as very important part of the theory of learning and can be used in shaping behavior. Shaping refers to the attempts made to mould the behavior of individuals through some methods. In general, there are three ways in which behavior can be shaped: Reinforcement, Punishment and Extinction.

### **7.6.1 Reinforcement**

Reinforcement is defined as anything that increases the strength of the response and also induces repetitions of the behavior that precedes the reinforcement. It is different from a reward. A reward is something that the person who gets it thinks is desirable. It may or may not increase the strength of the response or induce repetitions of the behavior. For example, a manager may publicly praise an employee for finding an error in the production of factory. However, the employee may be harassed by his/her colleagues who are directly affected by the finding of the error. In this case, the employee may think twice in future before repeating any action that might make things difficult for him/her with his/her colleagues even though it might attract the praise of the management. Here it may be noted that the reward (the praise) has not been a reinforcer as it does not encourage the employee to repeat that behavior. Not only is there a difference between rewards and reinforcers, but a distinction should also be made between positive and negative reinforcers.

- i) **Positive Reinforcement:** Positive reinforcement is anything that strengthens and increases behavior by the presentation of desirable consequences. In other words, following a behavior by something pleasant is positive reinforcement. For example, giving a bonus for high productivity is positive reinforcement.
- ii) **Negative Reinforcement:** Negative reinforcement is anything that strengthens and increases behavior by the withdrawal or removal of unpleasant consequences. For example consider an organization that puts a ban on recreational activities of employees during working hours (such as not allowing them to read or check emails) due to low productivity. When productivity improves, the organization may lift the ban and allow recreational activities in a limited form. The lifting of the ban is negative reinforcement.

### **7.6.2 Schedules of Reinforcement**

There are two main types of schedules of reinforcement – continuous reinforcement and intermittent reinforcement. In continuous reinforcement, the desired behavior is reinforced each time it is demonstrated. In intermittent reinforcement, the desired behavior is reinforced often enough to make the behavior worth repeating, but not each time it is repeated. Intermittent reinforcement can further be divided under ratio schedules (the person is reinforced after giving the desirable response a certain number of times) and interval schedules (the individual is reinforced after specific time intervals).

### 7.6.3 Punishment

Punishment is the act of causing an unpleasant consequence to a response to prevent the person from repeating that behavior. Placing an employee on suspension for excessive absenteeism is an example of punishment. Punishment is not the same as negative reinforcement. Negative reinforcement strengthens and increases behavior while punishment seeks to weaken and decrease behavior.

### 7.6.4 Extinction

Eliminating any reinforcement that is maintaining a behavior is called extinction. For instance an organization may announce that it wants to adopt an open door policy to encourage employees to express their opinions to the management. However the managers may not be responsive to employees who approach them to discuss problems. This lack of responsiveness causes employees to stop coming up to the managers over time. This is extinction.

Most organizational theorists subscribe to the idea that reinforcement (whether positive or negative) is more effective than punishment in modifying human behavior. People do not like being punished, therefore excessive use of punishment can lead to rebelliousness and undesirable consequences.

#### SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQ II)

1) What is the cognitive view point of learning?

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2) What is the meaning of latent learning?

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3) What is the meaning of extinction?

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4) What is reinforcement?

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## 7.7 LET US SUM UP

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In the above unit we have dealt with learning and motivation. We have had a overview of the definition of learning and an explanation of the behavioristic theories which comprises of classical conditioning and operant conditioning. Behavioristic theories emphasize on the connection or association between the Stimulus & Response. Opposing them, the cognitive theorists have stressed that the organisms have the capacity of thinking and thereby process the information available to them and arrive to a solution. Further they are able to apply the same to other similar situations. Social learning theorists in turn have shown that learning takes place even with the help observation and modeling and the reinforcement theory has spoken about the different reinforcements and has given us an idea as to how shaping takes place.

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## 7.8 UNIT END QUESTIONS

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- 1) Define learning. Briefly discuss the applications of behavioristic theories to organizational behavior.
- 2) Illustrate the importance of cognitive theory of learning in organizational setup.
- 3) Discuss the social learning theory.

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## 7.9 GLOSSARY

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<b>Classical conditioning</b>	:	The association developed between the conditioned stimulus and conditioned response.
<b>Organization context</b>	:	The environment in which the employee works.
<b>Operant conditioning</b>	:	The organism emits a response or rather operates on the environment to avail reinforcement, i.e. it is proactive.
<b>Insightful learning</b>	:	When a problem situation is presented completely to organism, it has the capacity of finding a solution based on its cognitive process.
<b>Sign learning</b>	:	The organism develops a mental map of the environment and can apply this learning in any similar situation.
<b>Social learning</b>	:	This states that people learn more from observation of the environment in which they operate.
<b>Reinforcement</b>	:	It is an attempt of increasing the strength of the response whether positive or negative.
<b>Punishment</b>	:	If meted out needs to unpleasant consequence.

- Extinction** : Not reinforcing behavior leads to disappearance of the same.
- Expectancy Theories** : Are based on the assumptions that people choose between different courses of action according to which one results in the most favorable outcome for themselves.

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## 7.10 ANSWERS TO SELFASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQ)

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### SAQ I

- 1) Learning is defined as “any relatively permanent change in behavior that occurs as a result of experience”. It is a continuous process and human beings are always undergoing the process of learning as a result of their interactions with the environment in which they operate.
- 2) The behaviorists attribute learning to the association between stimulus and response. Behavioristic theories are also called the connectionist theories of learning because of their emphasis on the connection between the stimulus and the response. They mainly deal with the role played by conditioning in the process of learning.
- 3) Classical conditioning can be defined as a “type of conditioning in which an individual responds to some stimulus that would not ordinarily produce such a response.” It is a process in which a formerly neutral stimulus, when paired with an unconditioned stimulus, becomes a conditioned stimulus that elicits a conditioned response. It describes the link between a stimulus and a response (S – R).
- 4) The main aspect in which operant conditioning differs from classical conditioning is that, in classical conditioning, the stimulus is controlled to result in a certain response. But in operant conditioning, the stimulus situation does not elicit the response but acts as a cue for a person to emit a certain response. The main factor in operant conditioning is what happens as a result of the response.

### SAQ II

- 1) Cognitive viewpoint argue that learning particularly in humans, cannot be fully explained in terms of stimulus response associations. They propose that the learner forms cognitive structure in memory, which preserves and organises the information from various events that occur in a learning situation. When some information is presented to the individual, he must encode the stimulus and scan it against his memory to determine an appropriate action. What response will be given will depend upon the cognitive structure retrieved from memory and the context in which the stimulus occurred.
- 2) Latent learning: If refer to learning that is not evidenced by behavior at the time of the learning. Typically, such learning goes on under low levels of

- drive or in the absence of reward. When drive is heightened or appropriate reinforcement appears, there is a sudden use of what has been previously learned .
- 3) Eliminating any reinforcement that is maintaining a behavior is called extinction. For instance an organization may announce that it wants to adopt an open door policy to encourage employees to express their opinions to the management. However, the managers may not be responsive to employees who approach them to discuss problems. This lack of responsiveness causes employees to stop coming up to the managers over time. This is extinction.
  - 4) Reinforcement is defined as anything that increases the strength of the response and also induces repetitions of the behavior that preceded the reinforcement.

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## **7.11 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES**

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## UNIT 5: SPOKEN-WORD PROGRAMMES - I

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### Structure

- 5.0 Introduction
- 5.1 Learning Outcomes
- 5.2 Spoken-word Formats
  - 5.2.1 Talk
  - 5.2.2 Talk Show
  - 5.2.3 Interview
  - 5.2.4 Discussion
  - 5.2.5 Poetry Reading
- 5.3 Talk-based Formats
  - 5.3.1 Commentary
  - 5.3.2 Book Review
  - 5.3.3 Lecture and Literary Discourse
- 5.4 Planning and Production of Talk
  - 5.4.1 Selection of Theme
  - 5.4.2 Identification of Talker
  - 5.4.3 Vetting the Script
  - 5.4.4 Rehearsing
  - 5.4.5 Recording the Talk
  - 5.4.6 Briefing the Announcer
- 5.5 Presentation of Spoken-word
- 5.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.7 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers

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### 5.0 INTRODUCTION

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In Unit 2 of Block 1, you have been familiarized with different formats, which may feature in a radio programme. You would have also marked the special attributes and requirements of the audio medium distinct from other mass media. This unit focuses at the planning, production and presentation of spoken-word programmes i.e. the programmes, which use speech as a vehicle to communicate.

A speech is not just a group or assembly of words; it communicates ideas, feelings and thoughts. Similarly, spoken-word is not simply reading the written word. It requires sophisticated skills on the part of the broadcaster since his/her speech has to convey the spontaneity of the thinking process with required feelings, excitement, and reflect the personality as well. Script of spoken-word programme, should therefore, bear this important factor in mind that it would not be read but spoken to.

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## 5.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

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After studying the unit, you will be able to:

- distinguish spoken-word from the written word in terms of treatment and style;
- discuss the distinct features of talk, interview, discussion and other programme formats using spoken-word as an essential component;
- write the script of a spoken-word programme; and
- present a spoken-word programme.

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## 5.2 THE SPOKEN-WORD FORMAT

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The spoken-word in radio comprises diverse formats such as straight talk, interview, discussion, dialogue, talk show, quiz, book review, commentaries, etc. News bulletins are also a spoken-word presentation although news formats are progressively getting featurised, implying, that more and more actuality recordings are being used in the news programmes. News, therefore, would be dealt with as a separate category.

There is a substantial spoken-word content in programmes for special audience groups such as programmes for rural areas, children and women listeners, etc. As these are meant for specific audiences, the treatment of the themes is different from the spoken-word programmes targeted at the general audience category.

### 5.2.1 The Talk

The talk format is one of the basic formats of spoken-word programmes broadcast by radio stations. This format can be effectively used for treating a subject in an absorbing and interesting manner. Sometimes the importance or novelty of a subject may interest the listener, but more often than not, the talk could be effective or ineffective depending on how it is presented. It is the speaker who makes the listener interested through his /her presentation style and manner.

Paradoxically, the radio talk is spoken-word, which is written. Writing and speaking are contradictory in terms, yet radio producers insist upon written talks to ensure that the theme gets properly covered and vetted and conforms to the channel's editorial policy. All the important talking points pertaining to the subject of the talk, the key phrases, quotes, if any, and the substance of introductory and concluding remarks are put down in a proper sequence. Thus scripting facilitates the talker to conform to the scope of the programme. The script also helps to adhere to the time limit imposed by the station's programme schedule.

### 5.2.2 Talk Show

The Talk-show, which attempt to mix information with light entertainment, has emerged as popular format of Radio and TV.

The selection of a talk show host, celebrity and guests are important factors for the programme's success. A talk-show host has a distinct personality and style of presentation which contributes to the image and popularity of the programme. The versatility of the host enables him/her to quickly establish a rapport with guests participating in the programme from different walks of life. S/he understands and identifies with the interests and tastes of the audience. Needless to say that s/he has to have a pleasant personality and be courteous to the guests appearing in the programme even while cracking jokes or pulling their legs in a lighter vein. An exceptionally popular programme attracts sponsorship and can become a daily feature. Thus a talk show not only brings awareness but also generates interest in the audience.

### 5.2.3 Interview

As compared to a speech delivered by a single person, a conversation between two people is more absorbing. You would have noticed that even a passer-by stops for a while to over-hear conversation between two people. Interviews capitalize on this aspect of human interest created through conversation. Another reason for good number of interviews is that the Radio stations often find it difficult to get effective talkers, who besides being subject specialists have excellent broadcasting skills. The interviewer navigates the interview by outlining the topic set out for the talk and by posing intermittent questions and comments. S/he also gives important cues to help the interviewee to follow a certain track. Interviews are classified as of three types; opinion, information and personality interviews.

#### Opinion Interview

Opinion interviews are generally undertaken when diverse opinion on a subject is required. The host interviewer asks a similar set of questions to different people and tries to construct a kaleidoscope of opinions on a certain theme. S/he stimulates the discussion by putting up the problem in a proper perspective. These interviews are conducted by the presenter/interviewer while standing on a street corner and picking up people at random for their reactions and opinion. These interviews are also conducted through telephonic conversations as part of a programme.

#### Information Interview

Interview format is also undertaken to elicit information from a person, who is a known authority on a particular subject or is intimately connected with an event. Here, the interviewer places the concerns and queries of a lay-listener to get information for the audience. At times, when the matter is controversial and the expert tries to side-track the issue, the interviewer, skillfully brings him/her back on the issue to make a categorical statement.

#### Personality Interview

Interviews with celebrities from various fields such as politics, science, arts etc. fall into this category. Even lesser known people may qualify for such interviews if any one of them has been a witness to an important happening, or has contributed to it substantially. Such interviews include eyewitness account of happenings such as natural disasters, plane crash etc.



A dignitary being interviewed

### Attributes of a Good Interviewer

An interviewer needs to keep many factors in mind before embarking upon an interview. The interviewer has to pull out a lot of background information, undertake research, and identify the areas to be covered in the interview. The questions are framed in such a way as to probe the interviewee, keeping in view public interest and at the same time allowing him/ her an opportunity to explain one's stand. A balanced approach with a blend of humour makes the programme interesting. The following are some of the attributes of a good interviewer:

- Adequate research on the subject matter is a prerequisite of a good interview. The interviewer should make a thorough preparation before s/he talks to the interviewee. For example, if the interview is with an author, the interviewer may well acquaint with the works of the author and other aspects of his/her personality.
- The interviewer must chalk out a sequence so that the questions follow a certain track and the information flows in an organized fashion. The questions should serve to facilitate conversation by providing a logical sequence from one point to the other.
- The questions must be short, direct and must be able to elicit information at length. It must not be such that the interviewer trots out the information and the interviewee is left with the option of saying either 'yes' or 'no'.
- The interviewer should constantly try to keep the spotlight on the interviewee rather than projecting his/her own personality and appear as if s/he knows more on the subject than the interviewee.
- S/he should be an attentive listener and give appropriate and participatory responses to what the interviewee is saying. Responses such as, "yes-yes/I see, huh-huh" etc. should be avoided as they sound jarring and distracting.

- Repeating the point made by the interviewee or trying to put them in one’s own words, unless recapitulation is necessary, should also be avoided.
- A good interview does not sound like a question-answer session but in the nature of conversation.
- The interviewer should always be conscious of the interest of the audience by asking relevant questions. The information intake has to be commensurate with the interest of the audience in that particular matter. It must be appreciated that the listener is interested in getting the information or views in the words of the interviewee and the interviewer’s role is in facilitating the articulation on the part of the interviewee.
- The interviewer’s role is that of a host in the programme. S/he must, therefore, sound to be courteous, kind and reasonable even while putting probing questions in order to stimulate or to provoke the interviewer. A mere didactic approach to questioning does not sustain the listeners’ interest in the programme. The interviewer must sound interested in the subject to expect the distantly placed listeners to listen to his/her programme.

Some interview programmes have a specialized format of their own e.g.- ‘On the Mat’ or ‘Firing Line’, where the interviewer tends to be tough or even abrasive at times in order to provoke the interviewee. In this approach, the objective of the interview is to give an opportunity to defend oneself and not to expose anyone.

Interviews for special audience programmes must keep in view the requirements of a particular audience. The interviewee must be advised to use a language which is simple and select words which the listeners could easily grasp. If the interview is with an agricultural scientist in the programme for farmers, the expert has to be particularly briefed to avoid unfamiliar, technical words. Even if such words are used, the interviewer needs to get the interviewee explain the terms. Very often, the interviewer raises questions to clarify the information provided by the specialist and wherever necessary, interprets the information in the local dialect for the benefit of the farmers. This technique has been found good for special audience programmes. Spot interviews recorded for inclusion in features and documentaries have a specific purpose in relation to the needs of those programmes.

**Check Your Progress: I**

**Note:** i) Use the space, below for your answers.

ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1) Enlist the qualities of a good talk show host.

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- 2) State five dos and don'ts for a good interviewer.

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### 5.2.4 Discussion

Discussion can be categorized into four broad types:

- (a) Panel Discussion: which allows informal exchange of views freely even to the extent of frequent interventions by participants.
- (b) Symposium: in which every participant is given an exclusive opportunity to present his/her view point with an anchor person presenting it.
- (c) Debate: in which arguments and counter arguments between two opposing points of views are presented.
- (d) Mixed: which start with a narrative, then intercepted with spot interviews and finally capped with a discussion.

In broadcast parlance, 'discussions' are largely associated with Panel Discussions. The Panel Discussion format is used when a theme has several dimensions and there is scope for wide divergence of opinions. It involves an informal exchange among three or four participants. A panel discussion is anchored by a moderator who balances varied and sometimes diagonally opposing points of views. The moderator plays the host, outlines the subject and introduces the participants. S/he then calls upon each participant to express views and respond to a point made or to counter an argument. S/he, navigates the discussion through interventions on its chartered path and finally synthesizes divergent points to sum up the discussion.

Although the skills of an anchor or moderator are crucial for a smooth flow of discussion, producer of the programme acts as a remote control. The producer asks the moderator to give equal time to all the participants, start or wind up the discussion etc. by passing over slips or through gestures. If the discussion exceeds the allotted time, the producer edits it in post-production to conform to the time limit.

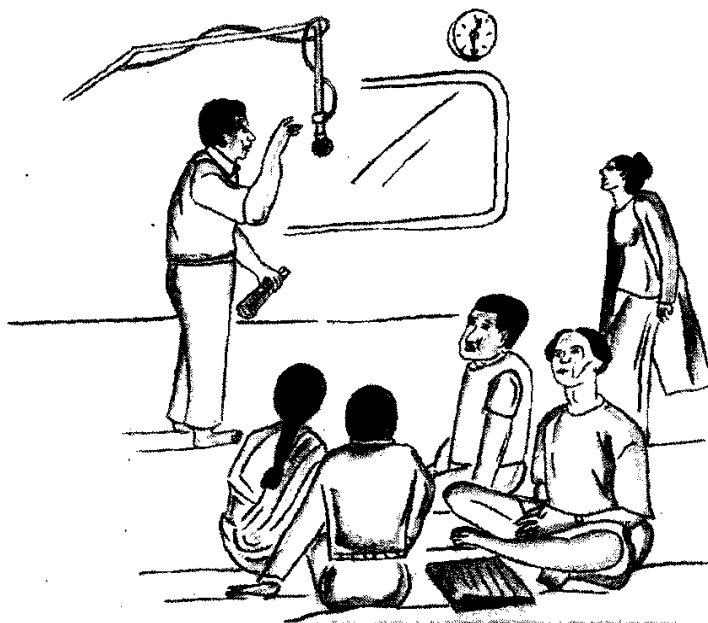
**Activity**

Organize a mock opinion interview with your friend. Identify the target audience for your programme and the duration clearly. Record it and analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the programme.

### 5.2.5 Poetry Reading

It is a trite criticism that poetry is 'elevated thought in an elevated expression' is not speech. But in broadcasting, no spoken-word schedule is complete without a provision for poetic recitations. Broadcasting reckons poetry as a metrical form of spoken-word while the lyrical poems are taken for light music renditions. It is a truism that poetry is recognised as a powerful format for indicting social evils and arousing the consciousness of people.





Poetic symposium to mark a festival

A radio producer lays equal emphasis on the content as well as the presentation of the poems with due regard to the popularity of the poet. S/he also arranges poetic symposia- *Kavi Sammelans* on special occasions where the poets present their poems before an invited audience. There are occasions when the producer arranges recitation of poems of poets of yesteryears.

## 5.3 TALK-BASED FORMATS

Talk as a format aims at ‘communicating ideas by spoken-word’. There are several radio formats which use the talk format of communicating ideas through spoken-word but they have established their own identity. Some of these are more popular than straight talks. These include Commentaries, Reviews, Quiz, Lectures and Discourses.

### 5.3.1 Commentary

Radio commentaries are of two types; Live running commentaries on cultural or sports events and News commentaries.

#### Live OB Commentaries

These are un-scripted talks, which enable the listeners to feel the pulse of the event, absorb into that environment and have the emotional satisfaction of imaginary participation. The ethos of the event is built up into the programme by inserting actuality sound effects from the locale of the event, narration by commentators and spot interviews with actual participants in the event. It takes a lot of effort on the part of radio stations to organize such live commentaries on events taking place at near and distant places away from the studios.

Sports commentaries attract large audiences to the broadcast channels. Radio stations and networks compete with each other for obtaining exclusive access to sports fixtures and pay substantial amounts to sports organizing bodies as access fees. Listeners mark out their favourite sports-casters and

their comments are referred to or quoted in informal discussions among sports loving audience-groups. A sports-caster is a specialized broadcast professional. Besides, in-depth and practical knowledge of the game, s/he should have fluency and command over the language, must be an alert observer of the game and have presence of mind to grasp and describe developments in the game, almost as they are happening. While the moves in a game can be analysed, criticism, which might expose his/her own bias, should be avoided. With the advent of the TV, sports fans are now much better informed about intricacies and details of the game and the task 'of a radio commentator has become more challenging.

Radio commentary whether it is on sporting event or the Republic Day Parade or a religious procession; requires the skill of keen observation and quick responses. A commentator should have keen observation skills, attentive mind and good articulation. It is said that the radio commentator has to see through the eyes, think with the mind and speak through the tongue. The advice normally given to a commentator is:

- simplify your description, so that everyone can understand;
- use spoken-word in present tense;
- keep your tone soft and friendly; and
- describe the environment, weather, ambience, mood and reaction of the spectators.

#### **News Commentaries**

News bulletins and news commentaries both report the happenings. The basic difference lies in terms of the purpose or objective of the programme. While a news bulletin presents news without editorial comment, the news commentary on the other hand tries to present the theme in perspective, take stock of divergent shades of opinions expressed about the happening and finally synthesize them adding editorial comment. Some important elements of the news commentary are:

- narration of factual aspects of the story;
- laying focus on the personalities involved;
- giving a mount to the story by putting it into historical perspective;
- taking stock of diverse opinions expressed and prognosis made about future course of events; and

News commentaries which adopt the talk format are broadcast on highly topical subjects. The radio station has to maintain a panel of experienced journalists or experts who can write such commentaries at a very short notice.

#### **5.3.2 Book Review**

Book reviews form an important segment of radio programming. These are primarily targeted at the intellectual minority among its audience, who are keen to acquire knowledge through such reviews. A book review touches upon the broad features of the book under review, and the reviewer's critical comments on the work. With the reading time shrinking, the book review programme serves as a capsule on the latest publications. It usually adopts

the talk format, however, interviews with the authors or discussions are also included in reviews.

### 5.3.3 Lecture and Literary Discourse

Lectures are delivered by well-known personalities before an invited audience on some important aspect of human life and thought. These are particularly popular amongst the discerning sections of audience because of the elaborate and analytical treatment of a serious subject by a distinguished person. The duration of a talk programme does not exceed 15 minutes but the lecture format may be of an hours' duration. BBC broadcasts Reith Memorial Lecture every year. All India Radio also organizes yearly memorial lectures. For centuries, 'Pravachan' and 'Harikatha' have been the effective styles for the spread of ethical and moral education. The literary discourse broadcasts takes up copious excerpts from the literary work chosen. The language used is simple, the presentation lively and the effect dramatic.

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## 5.4 PLANNING AND PRODUCTION OF A TALK

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So far we had been discussing the various formats of Spoken-word programmes. Now let us take a close look at their production techniques. Production of a Talk involves the following steps:

- identifying the theme;
- identifying the talker and inviting him/her to script the talk;
- vetting the script received from the talker;
- rehearsing with talker in the studio;
- recording the programme and do post-production, if required; and
- briefing the announcer regarding the presentation announcement.

### 5.4.1 Selection of Theme

A Spoken-word producer usually prepares a quarterly schedule of programmes in which a wide variety of subjects in different formats such as talks, discussions, interviews and symposia are included. A schedule consists of programmes of utilitarian nature in addition to programmes of artistic, literary and cultural interest. The former includes subjects of current affairs and socio-economic issues. The schedule includes a series of talks on a particular subject giving scope for exhaustive analysis of various aspects of the subject. It also includes individual talks, Science reviews, Sports reviews etc. The producer writes out the scope of the talk/series of talk to make the talkers conform to the scope, avoiding overemphasis or exclusion of certain aspects of the topic.

### 5.4.2 Identification of Talker

The producers maintain a directory of talkers keeping in view the expertise required. In addition to the expertise, communication skills of the talker are also kept in mind. Once the schedule is finalized and the talker identified, the producer sends letters of invitation requesting him/her to prepare the script with specific reference to the scope outlined. The scope of the talk and of the series as a whole is sent to the talker indicating the duration and the number of words the script may contain.

### 5.4.3 Vetting the Script

The producer then ensures that the script received from the talker is in accordance with the scope specified. S/he also ensures that;

- the language is comprehensible to a lay listener;
- the sentences are simple, free from tongue twisters, tinged and unpleasant expressions;
- the script is in conformity with the broadcast code and conventions;
- the script is well-structured and the treatment of the subject is neither too elementary nor too technical; and
- the script does not contain too much of data in great detail.

### 5.4.4 Rehearsing

The producer then explains the points s/he has noted while vetting the script for suitable modifications to the talker. While doing this s/he convinces that the modifications will improve the talk. If there is an unfamiliar technical expression, the producer should ask the talker to substitute the word. However, in this process, the producer should not shake the confidence of the talker or convey the impression that s/he is imposing his/her ideas.

It would be desirable, particularly in the case of new talkers, to read their scripts in front of the microphone. This helps the producer to time the programme, check the pace of the delivery and mark out the places where there are wrong stresses. If time permits; the rehearsal could be recorded and played back to the talker so that s/he could make necessary corrections in the final recording. Rehearsal helps to make the presentation of the talk personal and conversational. The talker will then refrain from ‘talking at’ and speak as if s/he is in conversation with someone explaining a particular topic.

### 5.4.5 Recording the Talk

Once the recording levels have been fixed by the engineer, the recording of talk is normally done by the programme producer. If enough attention is paid at the time of rehearsals and recording then post-production effort can be minimised.

### 5.4.6 Briefing the Announcer

We have already stated that presentation constitutes an important aspect of broadcasting. The producer provides the announcer the details of the series, the subject of the talk and the talker. Very often, the producer writes out the presentation announcement and keeps it along with the recorded tape. If the announcer is properly briefed, many of the mistakes occurring in live announcements can be avoided.

#### Check Your Progress: 2

- Note:** i) Use the space, below for your answers.  
ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What care should be taken while identifying speaker for a talk ?

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2. Why is it important to get script of the talk in advance ?

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3. Why a talk should be rehearsed ?

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## 5.5 PRESENTATION OF SPOKEN-WORD

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In the preceding unit you have read that broadcasting is an intimate medium which aims to establish direct communication with its audience. Spoken-word programmes on radio, therefore, must reflect freshness, spontaneity and emotion behind the words that are spoken. The following care needs to be taken while presenting spoken-word programmes:

- The talker must reflect poise in his/her delivery and sound confident in what s/he is talking about. The audience quickly detects nervousness of the talker. Once a listener notices these flaws s/he is likely to get distracted from the content.
- Unlike a written or printed text, radio listeners do not get a chance to refer back to the content. The delivery of the talk should, therefore, follow a smooth and easy pace to facilitate the listener to keep pace with the exposition.
- While recording a radio programme we must pay attention to minimise the external noises as the studio microphones are very sensitive. Avoid jarring noise by rustling of papers or heavy breathing.
- It is always advisable for the talker to mark points of punctuation and emphasis. Repetition of words and phrases sound odd phonetically hence need to be deleted.
- A radio talker has to overcome the psychological limitation that s/he is not able to look into the eyes of the audience and get their response, which is a crucial factor in a person-to-person communication.
- As regards the speed of the delivery, the golden mean is 120 words per minute - marginally plus or minus.
- While delivering a radio talk, the talker should not distort the natural breathing pattern. A bit of histrionics and good articulation add to the impact of the delivery.

The microphone reveals much more than the literal meaning of the speech. It reflects the personality of the talker, although s/he is not physically present before the audience. It magnifies even minor faults and flaws, that are not noticeable in normal hearing-situations. The mike is placed only a few inches away from the speaker's mouth, a situation that pertains in actual

life only when one speaks intimately to a close friend or is in a small family group. Listeners of radio programmes, though they are physically located at great distances are able to get the same kind of feeling. The modulation of electrical impulses highlights faults such as roughness in texture of the voice, in-distinctiveness, nasality or slowness in the speech of a talker. Often a good exposition of the subject matter is messed up in its effect on account of faulty delivery.

Thus, you would have noticed that the Radio talks require excellent broadcasting skills on the part of the talker. This could be cultivated by training, preparation, and practice to a great extent. It is quite a painstaking duty for the radio producers, who have to constantly look out for suitable talents who can be groomed as successful broadcasters.

**Check Your Progress: 3**

- Note:** i) Use the space, below for your answers.  
ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.
1. State three do's and don'ts while presenting a talk.

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**5.6 LET US SUM UP**

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In this unit, we have tried to encapsulate the essence of spoken-word programmes and the different formats in which they can be presented on radio. We have also tried to distinguish between the printed word and the spoken-word.

The spoken-word is a direct and instantaneous communication mode with the audience to whom the broadcaster is talking. There is no printed paper or a book in the hands of the listener, which stores the author's thoughts and can be referred to more than once at the convenience of the reader. This points at the inherent limitation of broadcasting, i.e. it imposes a certain time discipline on the listener. It is, therefore, all the more necessary that the spoken-word broadcasts must attract and hold the attention of the listener and keep alive his/her interest in the broadcast.

Features, documentaries, drama and magazine programmes also belong to the genre of the spoken-word. The production of these programmes is complex and requires the use of music, effects etc. These formats would be dealt with separately in next units of this course.

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**5.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS**

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**Check Your Progress: 1**

- 1) The talk show host needs to be polite, courteous as well as witty. S/he needs to establish quick rapport with the guests participating in

the programme. S/he thoroughly understands the interests and tastes of the audience. Through his/her distinct style and presentation s/he contributes to the popularity of the programme.

2) Do's and don'ts for an interviewer:

**Do:**

- Thorough preparation.
- Ask relevant questions.
- Sound courteous, kind and reasonable.
- Be an attentive listener.
- Keep the spotlight on the interviewee.

**Don't:**

- Ask questions which would elicit 'yes' or 'no' response.
- Project your own personality.
- Give responses such as, "yes-yes/I see, huh-huh" etc.
- Repeat the point made by the interviewee.
- Sound didactic.

**Check Your Progress: 2**

- 1) While identifying a talker, his/her expertise in the subject selected for the talk and good communication skills should be kept in mind.
- 2) It is important to take a written script from the talker to ensure that the script is in accordance with the scope specified. The theme gets properly covered and vetted and conforms to the channel's editorial policy. All the important talking points pertaining to the subject of the talk, the key phrases etc. are put down in a proper sequence. The language is comprehensible, the sentences are simple. The script adheres to the specified time limit and is in conformity with the broadcast code and conventions.
- 3) Rehearsing a talk in front of the microphone helps the producer to time the programme, check the pace of delivery and mark out the places with wrong stresses. It helps to make the presentation of the talk personal and conversational.

**Check Your Progress: 3**

1) Do's and don'ts while presenting a talk:

**Do:**

- Reflect poise in your delivery and sound confident.
- Mark your points of punctuation and emphasis.
- Deliver a talk around 120 words per minute for a smooth and easy pace.

**Don't:**

- Make jarring noise by rustling of papers or heavy breathing.
- Repeat words and phrases.
- Distort natural breathing pattern while delivering a radio talk.