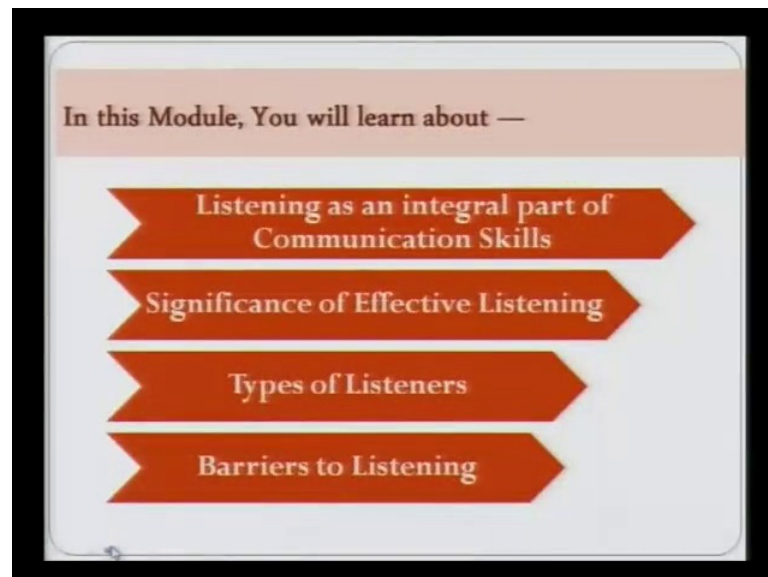


Communication Skills
Prof. T. Ravichandran
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur

Lecture - 11

Hello and welcome to NPTEL's course on communication skills. In the previous lecture as well as in this lecture, I have been discussing on listening skills as a basic module and this is module number 4, Overall on communication skills and this is lecture number 2 on listening skills.

(Refer Slide Time: 00:38)



Now, overall in this module you will learn about listening as an integral part of communication skills, and the basic Significance of Effective Listening. In the previous lecture, Lecture 1 already I discussed with you about why listening skills basically are very significant in terms of communication skills. How integral it is to becoming an effective communicator, along with spoken skills. Then I try to begin with clearing some of the misconceptions that speaking is more important than listening and I tried to assert that listening is sometimes more important than speaking in situations, where listening is much more demanded as an active skill than even speaking.

We are literally running away from speakers who are very talkative, who are very dominating, who are insensitive towards the thoughts and ideas of others, who refuse to take the point of view of others. So, we do not give contingency to such speakers. So,

there are occasions where in interviews students, candidates were just selected, because they happen to be very good listeners not very dominating speakers.

So, highlighting all these points, I try to assert this fact that listening is a very important communication skill activity. Listening along with speaking, both of them are considered to be two top most skills in terms of effective communication, which are very important either if you think of group discussion or interview or overall if you think of a job situation or job promotion situation. These two skills go hand in hand you cannot do one with the other.

Along with the other prerequisite skill such as reading as well as writing, now once these aspects are asserted now in this lecture. Let us look at the types of listeners and then identify the barriers to listening, particularly the barriers to effective listening. You must be surprised to know that first of all listening is different from hearing, hearing is a basically a physical activity. Listening involves lot of mental concentration, listening involves a process of selection, interpretation, storage and retrieval of information.

(Refer Slide Time: 03:17)



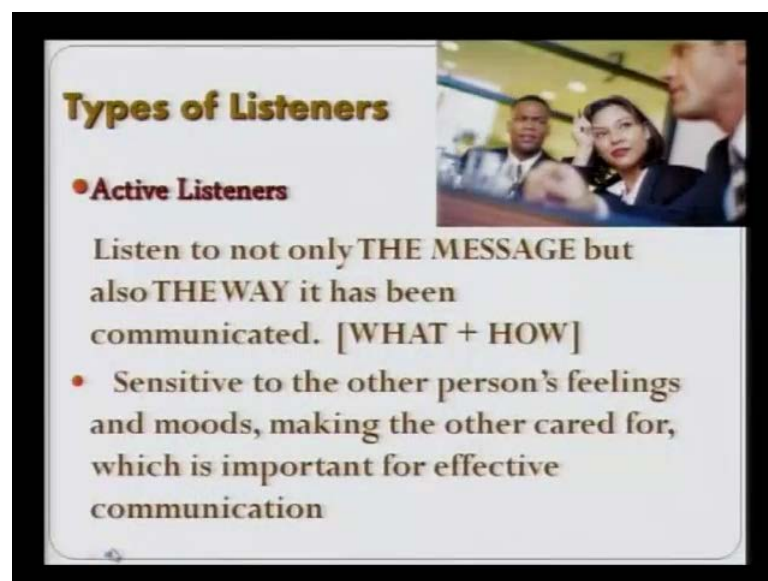
Now, once you are aware of this you should be surprised to know that there are types of listeners. Basically, we can categorize listeners fewer than four categories such as active listeners and the opposite of active listeners are the passive listeners. And then there is this category of non- listeners and then there is another general category of evaluative

listeners. So, we can typify listeners under four categories such as active, passive, non-listeners and evaluative listeners.

Let us briefly look at what these listeners typify, what are the characteristics of these listeners, how do they differ from each other and what kind of listening pattern you should follow. If somebody has to typify you as a listener, what kind of listener should you become? So, first pay attention to the types that I am talking about. Try to identify the type that you generally fall under and try to overcome some of the barriers for which you are falling under some particular category. Then the kind of type that I am going to prescribe, try to emulate work towards becoming that kind of type.

Now, first let us look at the active listeners, active listeners as the term itself is indicating they are very actively engaged in the communication process. When they are actively engaged, this already implies that they listen not only to the message, but also the way it has been delivered the way it has been communicated.

(Refer Slide Time: 05:12)



Types of Listeners

- **Active Listeners**
Listen to not only **THE MESSAGE** but also **THE WAY** it has been communicated. [WHAT + HOW]
- Sensitive to the other person's feelings and moods, making the other cared for, which is important for effective communication

The slide includes a small photograph of three people in a meeting setting, with a man on the left, a woman in the center, and a man on the right, all appearing to be engaged in a discussion.

So, what does it mean they are not only interested in what is being communicated to them, what somebody is telling them, but how somebody is telling that is much more important or equally important for them compared to what is being conveyed. Because how something is being conveyed will actually indicate much more than what is conveyed.

So, I gave the example of an Indian guest in a situation of having a sumptuous feast hosted by an Indian. So, in the situation where the Indian guest is feeling hesitant to ask for more food and the Indian guest is verbally saying no I do not want it. Now, the Indian host looks at the Indian guest nonverbal communication, the eyes are still open towards the food that is to be offered, the hand is slightly indicating that it should be given. There is slight anxiety that whether the host will misunderstand the interpretation, misunderstand the message that is being passed as a subtext not as a main text. But the Indian host being very shrewd and sensitive to the Indian guest obviously identifies that the person verbally says no, but figuratively and by implication actually wants more and then he gives him more food.

Now, this is a situation where the person is not only focusing on the message, but also the way it is being delivered. Sometimes the way it is being delivered using some nonverbal communication which can belittle the verbal content. So, it is very important that not just the message, but also the way it is being delivered. So, not just what, but how? So, this is what active listeners are good at doing, they are capable of doing and more than that the active listeners are quite sensitive towards the feelings of others. They know what moved the audience or in they just not only focus their own inner feelings, but they want to know how if they are trying to convey some feelings; how the feelings are being affecting the audience and how are they responding to them emotionally psychologically. So, they are sensitive to other person's feelings and moods and make the audience or the other person cared for.

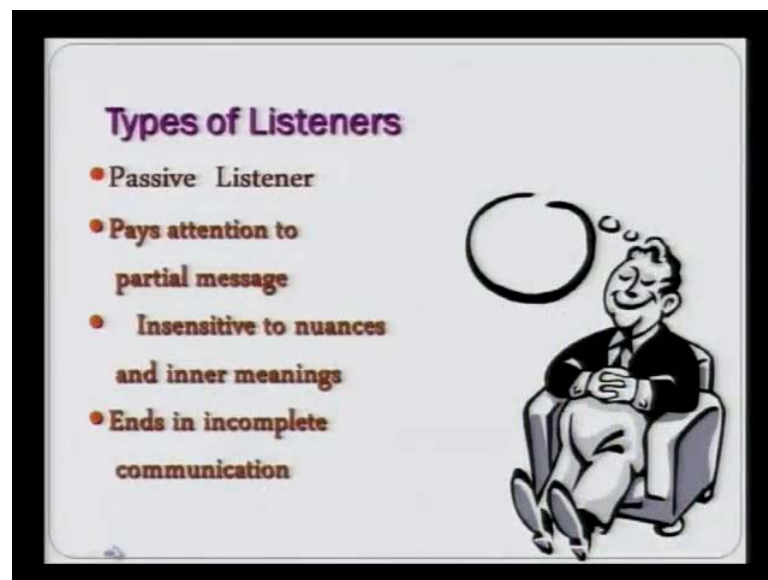
Once the audiences get the feeling that they are being cared for by the speaker, obviously there will be involvement. There will be 100 percent success in terms of communication process. The exchange, the give and take, message is sent, message is received, feedback is given feedback is responded to in a very favorable manner. So, there is a win win situation here. Now, this is very important for effective communication, because if the audience would feel that the speaker is insensitive towards their feelings, the audience would cut off from the speaker they will remain distant. So, even one among the audience gets a feeling the person will think that what is the point he is not understanding my feelings my emotions?

So, even a teacher forcing a student a tutor dominating and making the student learn something, but the student is not in a mood to learn. If the teacher or the tutor happens to

be an active listener, the person would actually listen to the sensitivity of the communication and take cues about the mood of the student and modulate accordingly. May be you give some other task again, so that the student warms up before actually going to the main activity, may be even you postpone the activity, give time for the student to change the mood and so on.

So, active listeners in a sense they mean business, when they communicate they want 100 percent communication to reach the other person, but in order to do that they are showing their sensitivity extra care they pay attention all the time not only to the verbal, but also to the nonverbal component of communication.

(Refer Slide Time: 10:00)



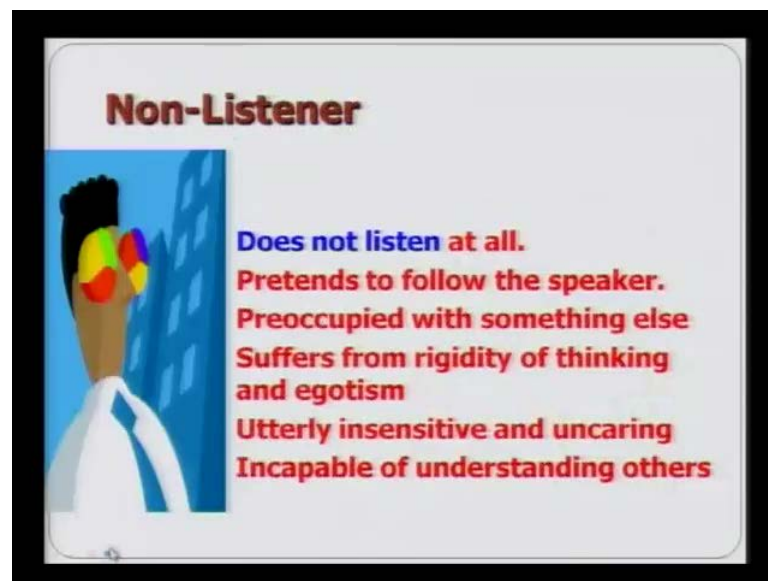
Now, you can say the polar opposites or the passive listeners, the exact opposite or passive listeners. What do they do? They pay attention only to partial message, they do not pay attention to complete message.

So, they will listen for sometime then their mind will be switched off for some other time. More than that they are very insensitive to the nuances and inner meanings involved in communication, nuances are the (()) intricacies which are involved in communication. They say often when somebody says no, it is depending on the context. The no could actually mean certainly yes also in certain context.

So, when that is a situation these people will miss out that intricate details the nuances and they will also ignore the inner meanings. The (()) meanings often communication is seen as a game, is seen as a game with lot of layers, lot of levels. So, if you are good at one level the superficial level, so you should be asked to get into the other level and so on. So, when you reach the inner most level you know that communication is much more intense and a serious business and there are lot of intricacies involved in communication.

Now, these people do not reach that level they pay only partial attention. Now what is the result? The whole process often ends in incomplete communication, the complete communication is not full, the communication process is incomplete. So, lot of barriers, lot of distractions, semantic gap, gaps as such and then there is incomplete communication in this case with regard to passive listeners. So, sometimes they are just dreaming of something, somebody is talking and then in the mind something else is going on. So, this can indicate that actually the listener is not actively engaged mentally with regard to the communication that is taking place.

(Refer Slide Time: 12:39)



What is the next type? Who is the next typical category? So, this is the non listener, while the passive listener atleast partially listens to communication and the active listener pays 100 percent complete attention. Now, this person is total contrast to the previous 2 types in the sense that this person does not listen at all, does not pay attention to the communication aspect the listening part at all, does not here anything.

But what will this person do? The person will pretend to follow the speaker, the person will fake attention, the person will appear to show attention, as most of the students will keep nodding, but the mind will think of something else. So, this person also pretends to follow the speaker, but actually the person will be preoccupied with something else. The mind is fully thinking of something else, but when the speaker is saying something the person is nodding or showing some indication that that person is actually following the speaker, but in reality it is not.

Why is it so? Basically, because the person might be suffering from this rigidity of thinking and egotism, rigidity of thinking; if you remember we read this as one of the serious barriers to communication. Where the person's mind is already blocked, already the person is rigid in thinking, the person is not open to any new creative innovative ideas and the mind is closed. And the person always thinks that what I say is right combined with egotism, becomes an egotist. What does it mean? Not only he says I am right, but also he tries to impose his views on others by saying that I am always right and then listen to me all the time and I am the one who knows about all the subjects I know everything and you know nothing.

Now, this is the kind of attitude that this person has and that is one major reason why he does not listen to others at all. What happens in terms of sensitivity level, the person is utterly insensitive, totally insensitive. And the audience would get the feeling that they are totally uncared for the fellow does not have any feeling towards the audience, no sensitive towards the intricate feelings and emotions. So, generally non listeners we can conclude by saying that they are actually incapable of understanding others. They cannot understand others at all, reason their own egoistic egotistic tendencies their rigidity of thought pattern.

(Refer Slide Time: 15:53)



Their over enthusiasm to maximize the talk dominating, because of these notions underlining notions that they know better than others and then they do not listen at all so that is why non listeners are actually incapable of understanding others. And then we also have this category of marginal listener.

(Refer Slide Time: 16:15)



What do I mean by marginal listener? Marginal listener is somebody who pays very superficial attention. So, marginally he is interested does not gets to the main stream of ideas, the main thoughts he omits. So, what would he do? He would rather capture the

sounds, but fails to grasp its sense. So, that means the physical part of listening is taken care, the sounds the sound waves enter into the ears of this person, but they are not cohering and they do not make any sense.

The brain cannot interpret what is being sent, because it does not even reach that level of thinking and it does not happen in the brain. So, this person captures the sounds, but fails to grasp its sense. More than that this is combined with the person's impatience to listen to the main ideas, what he will do is he will show interest in listening to the bottom line so what is the conclusion? So, what are you trying to say? Now, if a person is trying to explain elaborately this person may say no just conclude what do you want to say. So, that is why he is termed as a marginal listener, who is superficial who physically hears but does not pay attention to listening part and who is interested in the bottom line and at the ignorance to main ideas at the negligence to main ideas.

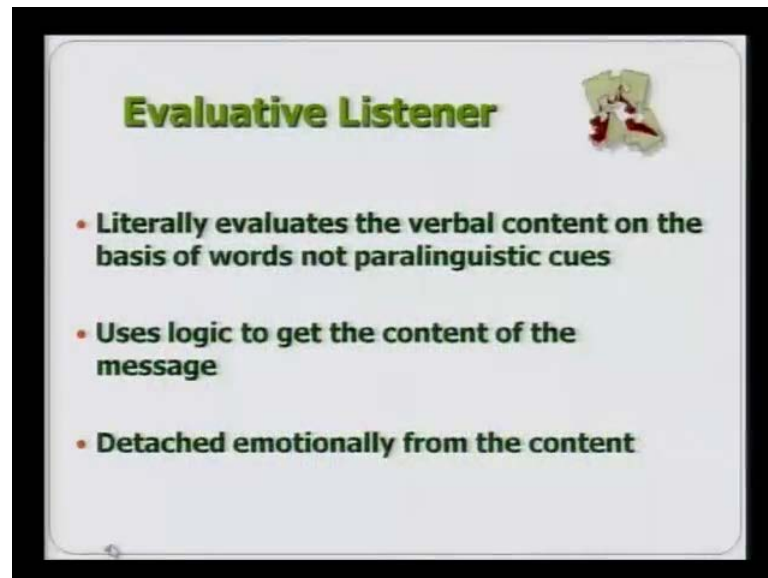
(Refer Slide Time: 18:06)



Now, it is risky to communicate with marginal listeners, reason being they contribute misunderstandings and cause problems. It is because they are not focused on the main ideas, they are not focused on the way the content is being delivered and they are just only focused on the bottom line message. They misunderstand the input the intention what these people will do they will misquote, they will take some verbal lines, they will misquote the whole thing in a different situation and create conflict between two parties. So, they are quite risky. In terms of the speaker and audience situation, they will mislead

the speaker with the false impression that they are listened to. They will somehow make the speakers feel that they are listened to, but actually they are just listening only to the most important point. The crucial conclusion, the central data, but overall they are not interested in the gist the mainframe of ideas they do not pay attention. So, it is very risky as far as this category is concerned and then we have the general evaluative listener.

(Refer Slide Time: 19:23)

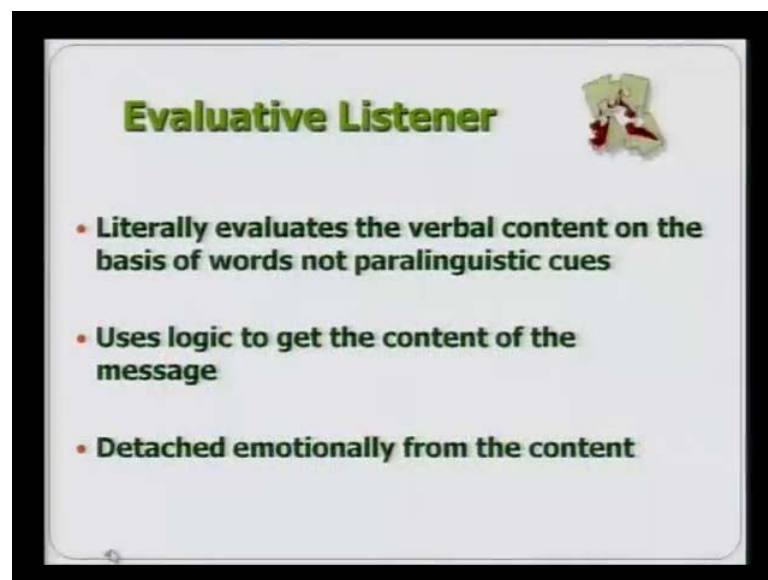


Now, the evaluative listener, literally evaluates the verbal content on the basis of words not paralinguistic cues. What does it mean? Again more on what is ignored or more on only what, but less on how so the paralinguistic cues so the person may be giving a speech on confidence, but there are lot of (()) what I mean, lot of crutches, lot of words indicating I mean to say, I mean to say and then repeating the same ones. Now, these are clues indicating that the person himself is very weak and lacking in confidence.

Now, the evaluative listener will just listen to what the other person is trying to convey. Then the person may also use logic to get the content of the message. He may logically follow what is being said, but he is not more interested in the message as such. How and why if I tell you one situation which most of the teachers are involved in so it will become very easy. Like if there are some project reports, which are to be presented in the form of oral presentations and let us say there are about 30 students who are suppose to give the presentations, the teachers form a panel and then they sit.

Now, during this time they actually behave like evaluative listeners. They just want to see what is the central idea, how the person is delivering and then they they are not more concerned about whether the person is nervous, what is the mood of the person, what is he trying to tell intricately. They just look at it very objectively and then they want to evaluate, how many marks can I give for this presentation? So, that is the pre occupying thought and literally compelling the panel teachers to evaluate, to pass that something is right or wrong, to give credit that you get more marks than the other person. So, they are in that evaluative kind of situation. As a result they are detached emotionally from the content.

(Refer Slide Time: 21:51)

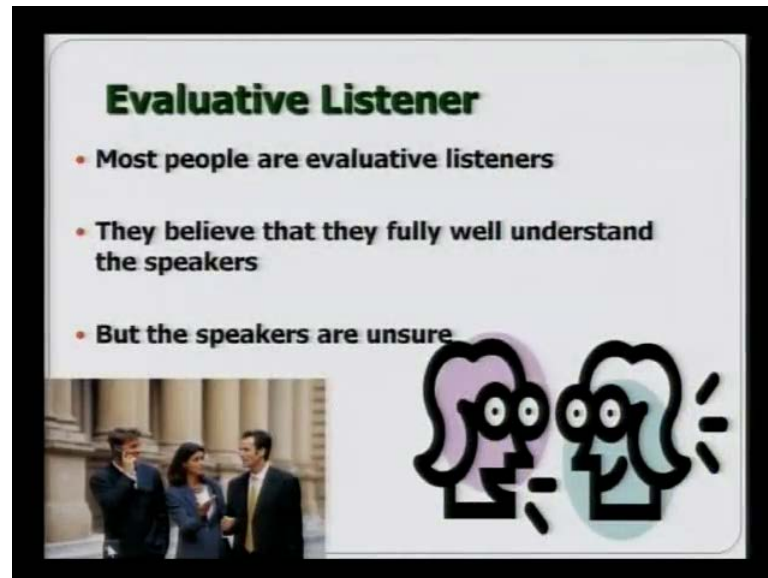


So, even if the content has some very emotional feelings so they would like to be finished in time. If the person is stretching beyond the time limit they may even give negative marks. So, they are more interested in evaluating, they are more interested in knowing what and how you are doing within that given time frame and how succinctly you can convey the message within the time frame. What message you conveyed is of secondary importance to them.

Now, you will be surprised to know that most of us are evaluative listeners. Most of the times we behave like evaluative listeners, we are always trying to evaluate what somebody is trying to tell us. Sometimes we are in a kind of negotiating communicative business kind of situation, where we actually want to know whether this message is

useful or not to me. Should I really listen to this guy and waste my time or listening to this person is going to help me. So, all the time we are evaluating, we are making a kind of calculation, we are weighing the pros and cons.

(Refer Slide Time: 23:08)



Evaluative Listener

- Most people are evaluative listeners
- They believe that they fully well understand the speakers
- But the speakers are unsure

The slide features a photograph of three people in business attire talking on the left, and a cartoon illustration of two people with large eyes and open mouths, one appearing to be speaking and the other listening intently, on the right.

And then there is another problem with the evaluative speakers, most of the times one is given this evaluative stance, because of once position or because one assumes that position. So, in case of teachers, in case of examiners, the position is given and then they are supposed to evaluate the candidates. Whereas, in case of certain personal communicators, they have a feeling that they know things better than others so they believe that they fully well understand the speakers and they sit among the audience. When the talk is going on, they quickly assess. They cut across the main ideas and they think that I know what he will say and I understand what he says. But the speakers are not sure whether they are being understood fully, because that is the kind of insecurity they leave among the speakers.

So, evaluative listeners although most of us come under this kind of category although they use logic, they do not give a sense of completion to the speakers who are delivering the message. Although they will create the impression that they have understood everything fully. Now, having talked about the various types of listeners the question may now arise in your mind.

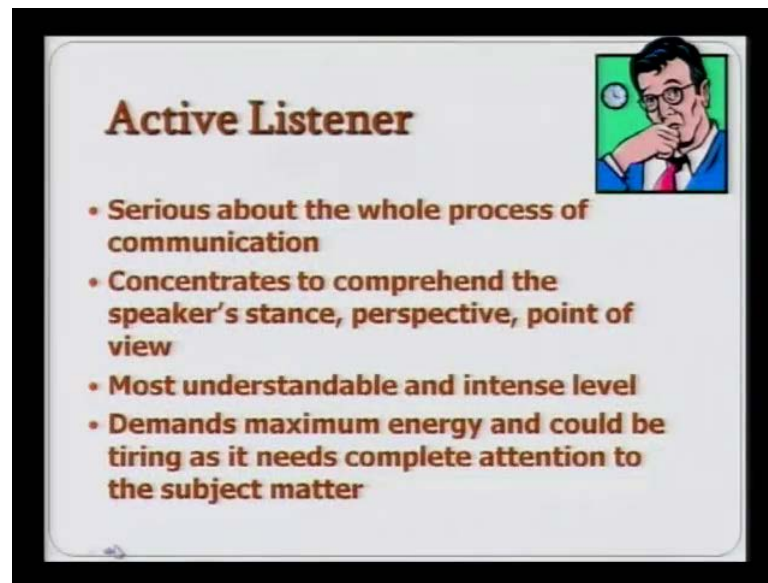
(Refer Slide Time: 24:35)



What type of listeners should I become? Should I be an evaluative listener? Should I be a marginal listener or can I afford to be a marginal listener in a classroom situation? So, what kind of listener should I become? There is only one answer and throughout the course modules, all the modules on this course on communication skills, I have been asserting the fact and emphasizing reemphasizing the fact that you should become an effective communicator. And if you look at the communicative patterns of all effective communicators, all effective communicators are active listeners. There is no shortcut without being an active listener that you will one day become an effective communicator. You have to be an active listener to become an effective listener and thereby to become an effective communicator.

So, the one and only answer is that all effective communicators are active listener and since, I emphasize the fact that you should become actually an effective communicator. So, you should be interested in becoming an active listener. Now, once I assert the fact that you should become an active listener; shall we identify some barriers so once I have accepted at least in principal that you should also become an active listener, what are the barriers? What are the hindrances? What are the impediments? So, although one may be genuinely interested in becoming an active listener, there may be some stumbling blocks. What are they? Now, let us look at some of the barriers that will create problem to an active listener.

(Refer Slide Time: 26:39)



Active Listener

- **Serious about the whole process of communication**
- **Concentrates to comprehend the speaker's stance, perspective, point of view**
- **Most understandable and intense level**
- **Demands maximum energy and could be tiring as it needs complete attention to the subject matter**

Now, before looking at the barriers, let us consolidate our ideas on what makes an active listener. Be sure about what makes an active listener before looking at the barriers. First, overall if you look at active listeners, they are quite serious about the whole process of communication. The whole process of communication sending, receiving, ensuring that there is no semantic gap, ensuring that there is no barriers and then sending feedback, causing response, then again resending feedback, again waiting for response.

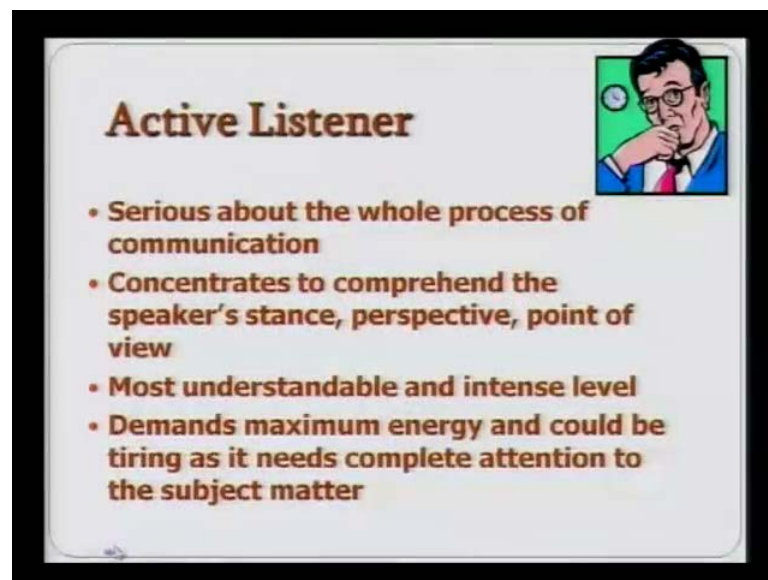
So, completing the communication process at various levels, they are quite serious about the whole process of communication. They take care of not only they themselves are senders, but also they are very sensitive towards the receivers and the whole communication process that is involved. They are quite serious and then in order to maintain this high level of seriousness in communication, what they do is they concentrate to comprehend, the speakers stance perspective point of view. What do they do? They try to understand the stance of the speaker. What is the stand point the speaker is taking?

Suppose the speaker is speaking on dowry system in India and he is giving factual details, but even then if there is an active listener among the audience, the person would like to see what is this person's stance? Is he for or against or is he having a neutral stance. Combined with that what is his perspective? Where from the perspective is coming? Is it coming from the Indian political scenario or the social setup or his own

personal religion, caste and other identity markers? How is he gaining this perspective and what is his overall point of view what is the central argument.

So, active listener concentrates to understand the whole of the speaker, the stance, the point of view, the perspective and where these things are emanating from? From culture, society, politics or one's own personal ethics; they try to identify all these things. They try to interpret taking cues from all these ones. Then this is the level in which they have this kind of listening which is most understandable.

(Refer Slide Time: 29:16)

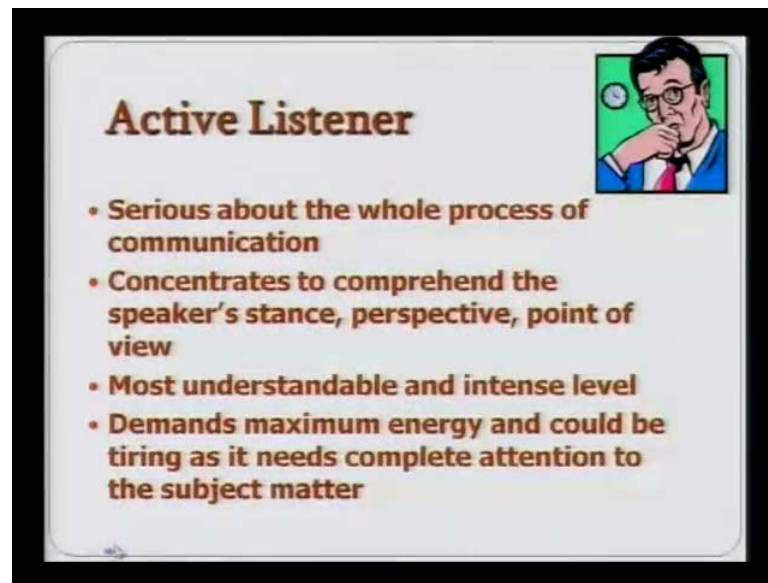


Active Listener

- **Serious about the whole process of communication**
- **Concentrates to comprehend the speaker's stance, perspective, point of view**
- **Most understandable and intense level**
- **Demands maximum energy and could be tiring as it needs complete attention to the subject matter**

So, this means the communication process is 100 percent complete, most understandable from both sides. The person is sending this, the active listener is giving that impression and is also really working out to that impression, that he has understood the message mostly almost fully and more than that it is at the intense level. So, complete devotion total attention now, because of the intensity involved in active listening skill process it demands maximum energy.

(Refer Slide Time: 29:55)



Active Listener

- **Serious about the whole process of communication**
- **Concentrates to comprehend the speaker's stance, perspective, point of view**
- **Most understandable and intense level**
- **Demands maximum energy and could be tiring as it needs complete attention to the subject matter**

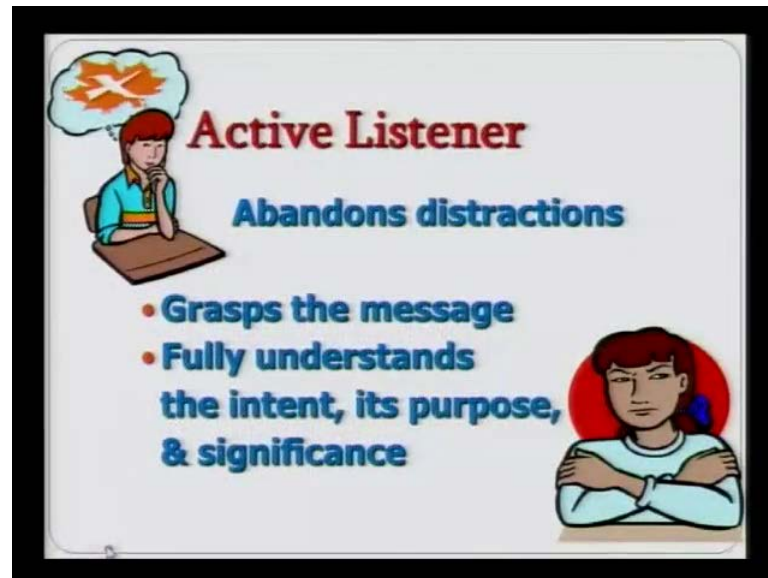
It is sometimes tiring, just like I said in the previous lecture, that many people think that listening is just a passive activity and then one need not do anything, but it is not true. It is an active one and then psychologists as well as physiotherapist, they have analyzed this fact. Then they are telling us, that just like the way a person who jogs would get the physiological changes after jogging. It is the same manner in which a person who is involved in active listening is also undergoing.

Now, when that is a case you should understand that it expends maximum energy and it is also a tiring process. So, it is not that easy to pay complete attention to the subject matter, but when I say tiring one should not feel negative so why I should spend lot of energy in actively listening to something. When it is tiring, it is not a negative thing. I am just saying just like the way when somebody is doing exercise, the person feels tired out and then there is a cool of period. Then the person goes to next activity, but it is after tiring, the body regains its strength just like the way it is after only one tires oneself in the communication process. The communication as a collective process is getting strengthened the goodwill is building up.

So, certain amount of tiredness is required and at the same time whatever is actively listened is something that is told for the time to come. So, even if you are tired at the end of it, you will be happy to know within few moments later the next say that whatever you listened very actively are almost stored in your mind. So, this is something that you are

paying as a kind of compensation, for the tiredness that you experience after becoming an active listener. Now, what are the other good qualities that the active listeners possess?

(Refer Slide Time: 32:17)



Generally, the active listeners would abandon any kind of distraction. It is rather you can say they are so fully concentrated it would be rather difficult to distract them or even if there is some slight distraction, they immediately control, they immediately come back to the listening process. So, they abandon all kind of distractions and they focus on the message and they grasp the message. They do not miss out the essence they get it. Not only that, all the active listeners fully understand the intent, the purpose and significance the intent is what is the aim.

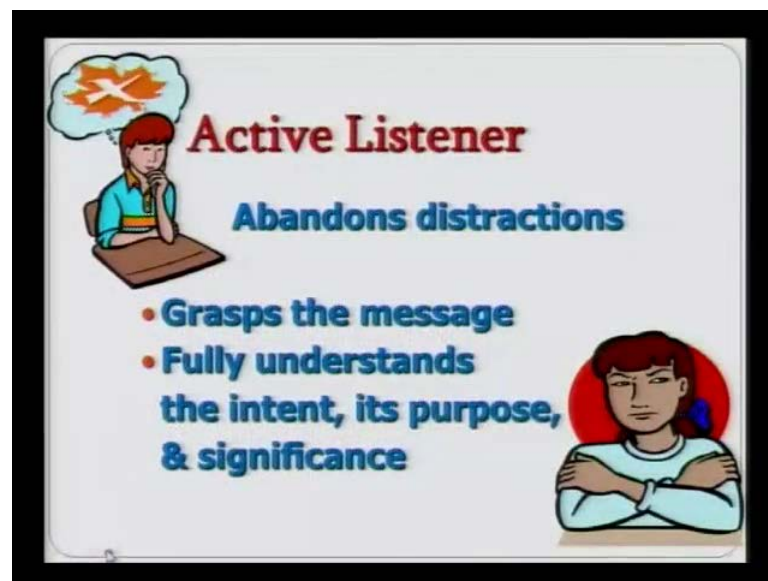
Sometimes, people remove certain verbal content and then they are furious and then they feel bad about it. Now, once they realize that the person actually said something with a good intention, then this problem is sorted out, Most of the times people misunderstand the verbal content in communication and then they think that the person is verbally saying this because his intention must be wrong.

Now, active listeners pay keen attention to the intent, the purpose in which somebody is saying something. It may be an advice, just like the father saying telling his son do not smoke. Now, if the son thinks that the father himself is smoking so he does not have any ethical grounds to tell me this so I will also smoke. Now, the son is missing this intent,

the purpose, the significance. The intent is maybe I fell into this bad habit, but my intent is to give you the right input from the beginning.

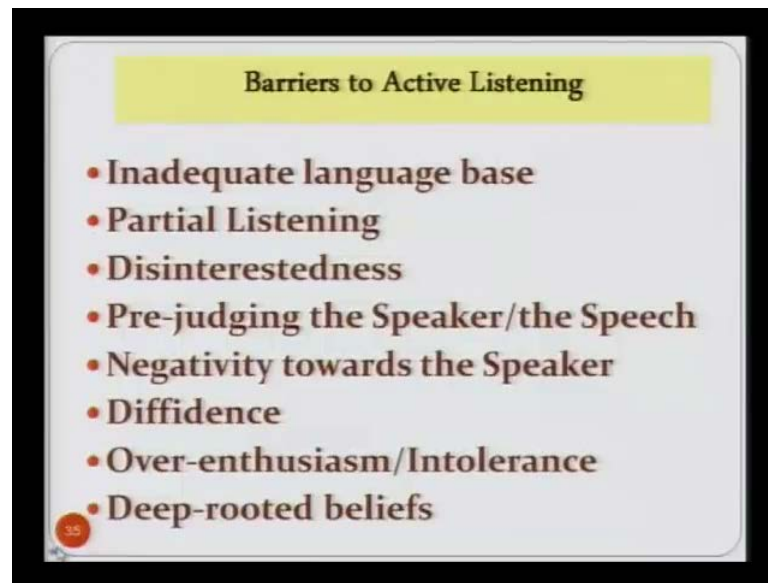
So, if you are able to take care of it at this stage probably tomorrow you and me will not regret on this situation. Now, that is the intent, the intent is good. The purpose is to give good habits and the significance is to nurture healthy habits from the childhood itself.

(Refer Slide Time: 34:48)



Active listener will get all these components right from the beginning itself. In fact active listener will keep asking this, what is the intent? What is the purpose? What is the significance? What is he implying? What is he trying to convey? How successfully has he conveyed? How do I feel? How do I respond? He keeps critically evaluating all these things, decides what should be recorded? What should be omitted? What should be kept for future use? Now, having asserted these aspects of active listening, let us focus on the barriers to active listening. So, there are some barriers I will discuss those barriers one by one now.

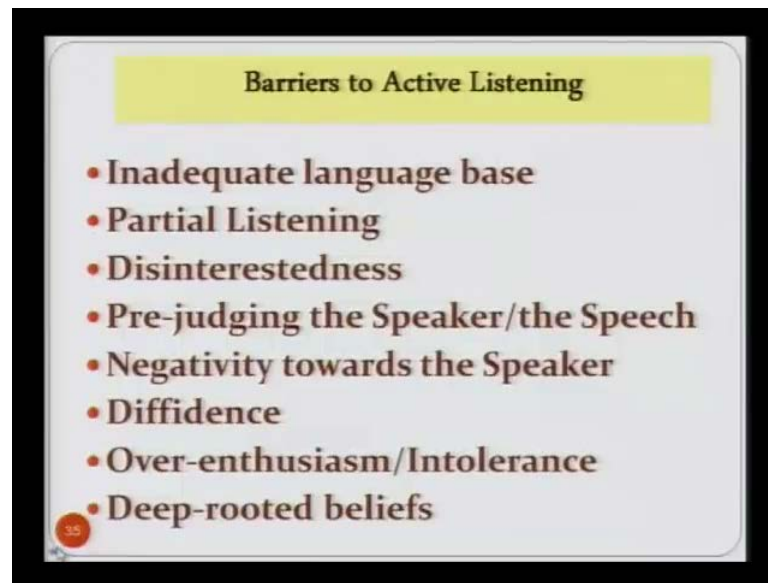
(Refer Slide Time: 35:27)



Barriers to active listening: I have identified about eight common barriers to active listening, but there could be many more. But these eight barriers if you are able to overcome you will definitely become an effective and active listener. What are these barriers? The first and foremost barrier is the listeners or the audience's inadequate language base. If you remember the earlier lectures on communication, I talked about a common frame of reference.

Now, in the common frame of reference among other things, one thing that I talked about was about language. Now, between the audience and the speaker the common frame should have a commonality in terms of language, in terms of vocabulary, assuming that the speaker is using a kind of vocabulary which the listener does not have in his or her basic requisite in the skill. Now, then the problem starts. So, the speaker says something because of the inadequacy with regard to language choice, the audience is not able to understand that, listener is not able to grasp it. So, that is why inadequate language base and then the listener's habit of partial listening, not paying attention to it fully for various reasons.

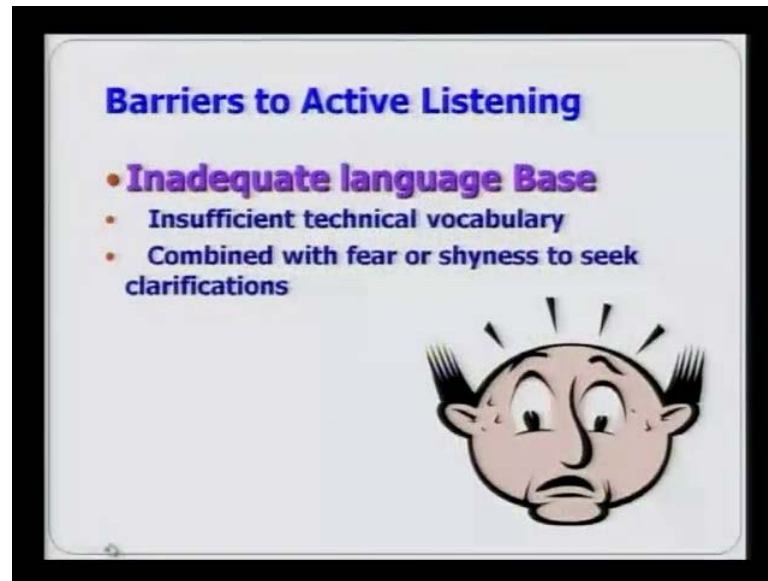
(Refer Slide Time: 37:06)



And general disinterestedness, not liking the subject, so or just not showing any interest in the subject, followed by once attitude to pre-judge the speaker as well as the speech. Pre-judging by looking at the person's appearance and deciding something and looking at the topic of the speech, deciding that the topic will be boring. So, pre-judging is even before actually listening to the first word, one has mentally concluded especially in a negative sense that the speech or the speakers either of them or both are actually boring and ineffective. Then the worst of all is showing negativity towards this speaker. Hatred, antipathy, totals ill feelings against the speaker. So, we will look at this deeply later and then showing diffidence, showing lack of confidence, showing a kind of defeatist attitude. Remember communication to be effective should be a win win situation. There is nobody who is trying to win over somebody in a communication situation and if one has this defeatist attitude, then it becomes a problem.

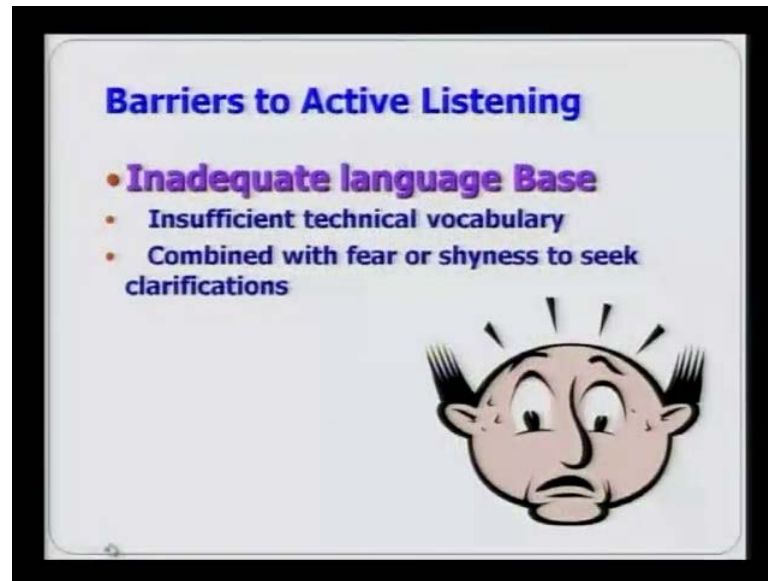
There is also this tendency to be intolerant and over enthusiastic about things. So, over enthusiasm combined with intolerance, impatience can be a major barrier. And finally, there are some deep rooted beliefs, strong convictions, inherent values. Sometimes, even these values come out of a kind of strong belief, which becomes negative over time. So, this can also be a problematic one in terms of causing a barrier to listening. Let us look at these barriers one by one.

(Refer Slide Time: 39:26)



The first and foremost inadequate language base, what do I mean by this? For instance, the person may be having insufficient technical vocabulary to understand something about artificial intelligence, which is being described by an expert eminent scientist in that area. So, if the person has insufficient technical vocabulary, it is now posing a barrier to successful effective communication as well as active listening. A technical term is dropped the mind loses focus and the mind keeps thinking what does it mean I am not able to understand. So, the mind is also distracted and by the time it comes back to the track, another technical word is dropped. So, the mind keeps moving here and there, it is not able to go on a single track paying complete attention. So, inadequate language barriers can be caused because of insufficient vocabulary.

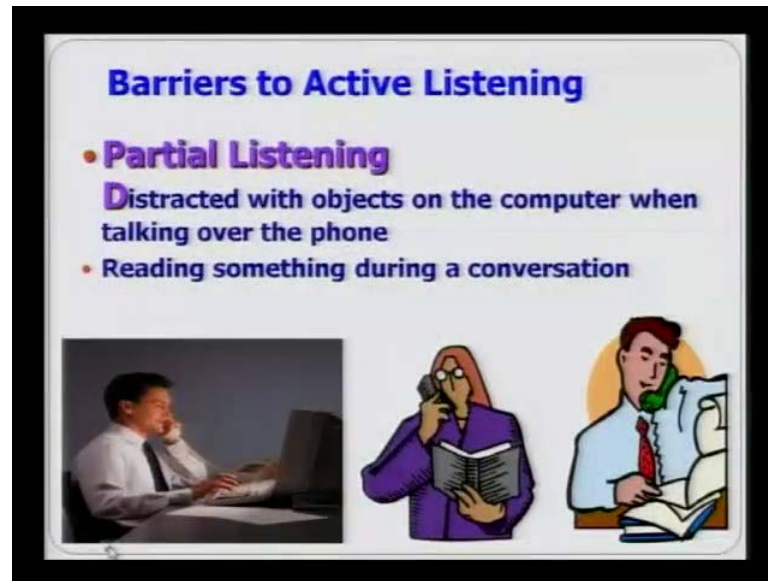
(Refer Slide Time: 03:17)



But it can also be caused not just because of insufficient technical vocabulary; it can be caused because of the fears which are accompanied with this or the general shyness to seek clarifications. This happens in classroom situations or in situation where the speaker is endowed with maximum intelligence knowledge and experience. So, the teacher when the teacher is treated as a God demigod status, the student is afraid of asking question to the teacher. The speaker coming from a reputed institute eminent social scientist group with lot of experience, the audience however intelligent may be are afraid of clarifying doubts. So, this shyness fear combined with insufficiency in terms of general vocabulary contributes to that inadequate language base. Neither you have equipped yourself with the required (()) vocabulary for communication process. In that lecture activity nor are you mentally open nor are you able to overcome your shyness as well as your hesitance and the inherent fears. So, that we can enrich your vocabulary base both you are not doing.

So, this contributes to one barrier of active listening. What about the next barrier this is with regard to partial listening. Now, what do we mean by this? Again most of us experience suffer this barrier because most of us do this. Especially, we are all known as Indians for multitasking and when we are involved in multitasking, what we do inadvertently is partial listening.

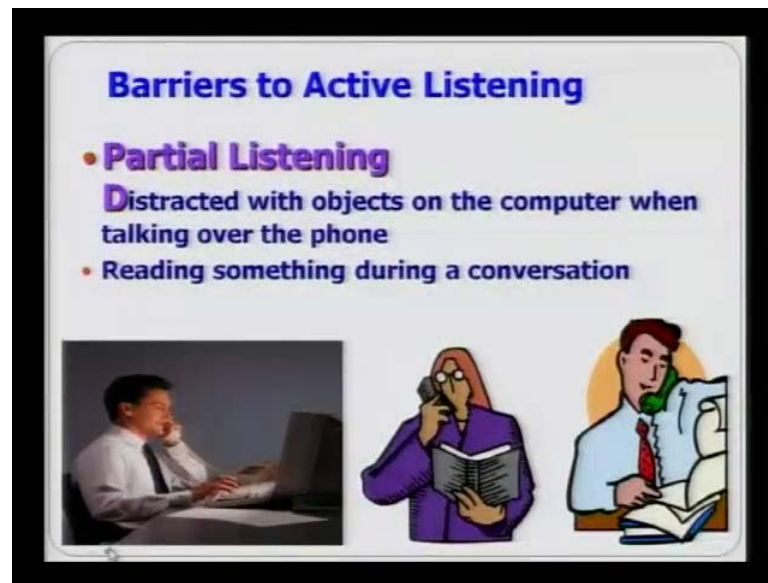
(Refer Slide Time: 42:31)



How many times we have done this? Somebody has taken our appointment and then the person is there sitting right before us, suddenly a phone call came we lifted and we were saying something on the phone and we are saying you keep talking and the person keeps explaining the problem. We are just nodding and somebody is coming outside knocking at the door seeking our attention for a signature, we need to read the draft before signing. So, we are reading that also and meanwhile there is somebody else coming with some parcel, somebody else is asking for permission to meet after sometime. Then when we are attending to all these things, we just come back to the person whom we are communicating and we say; what else you wanted to say, yes please go ahead.

Now, this amounts to partial listening neither being completely here nor being completely there and when the person continues, we just turn and then we ask the other person what time did you tell the meeting is was it 4 or 5? Then when the person says yes you said something about that thing yes just continue. Now, partial listening literally, but I am actually talking about another kind of partial listening in which lot of distraction is there.

(Refer Slide Time: 43:52)



Look at the picture that I have put here, this is something we do commonly. We look at the objects on the computer or even we type we send an e mail, but at the same time we are talking to somebody on phone and often the person to whom we are sending the communication and the person whom we are communicating on phone are different persons. So, sending an email to the boss, talking to one's girl friend or some other intimate friend, mind is more interested in the phone communication than in the email that is sent.

So, this can again cause miscommunication, this again makes one a partial listener. You also come across this kind of situation especially, when making phone people may read a serious document, people may even read a book because they understand that the person who is speaking at the other end may be boring. But the person even may be boring at the other end, may come out with one very important information, in that case what happens because somebody is reading something the person is partially only listening to the conversation. So, this makes a person a partial listener which is again a serious barrier to active listening.

(Refer Slide Time: 45:14)



Look at the next barrier, in the next barrier this is related to one's mood, habit and interest. It indicates disinterestedness, that is the person totally lacks interest in the subject. See cricket may be an interesting subject, but then there is a person who is interested in writing a novel and writing poems. He is totally an introvert and he does not like even watching cricket and he thinks that cricket is just a serious waste of time. He may even think like what Bernard Shaw said once, he said that cricket is just 11 fools playing and 11 thousand fools watching.

Now, if he is subscribing to this kind of views that it just wastes time and it has no sense and it is nothing to do with intelligence. And somebody is talking about skills involved in cricket obviously; this person will not be interested in the subject. Whatever the credits he may be given, whatever benefits that may be talked about at the end of the lecture, but this person is generally disinterested. So, this is lack of interest in the subject.

(Refer Slide Time: 46:37)



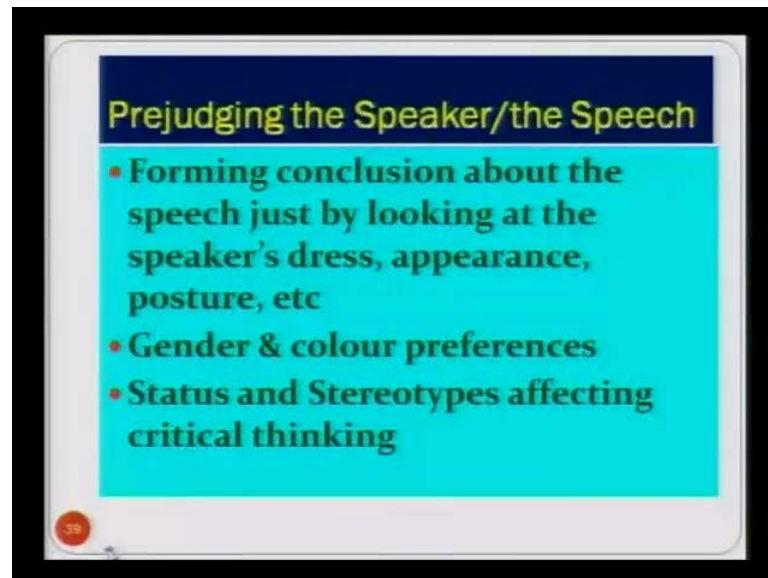
And then one hand the person is lacking interest in the given subject. On the other hand this lack may generate because of the fact the person may be paying attention to other subjects. May be he is interested in the examination that he is suppose to write tomorrow for which the person should read something. And the one that is reading when the speaker is giving the speech is more interesting than the speech itself.

So, he is more looking at the book and suddenly he is faking attention that he is listening to the speaker. So, paying attention to other subjects other than the one that is given can also cause disinterestedness in the subject or the topic that is being discussed. Then to give an example if students were to be shown a video on let us say even this listening skills on group discussion or generally on any education, and then the students are also shown a cricket match. Now, at the end of it if you give them a questionnaire in which you are putting some questions related to the educational video content and then you have also put questions related to the cricket match they saw.

So, you ask them the score you ask them anything about cricket they are able to give 100 percent satisfactorily correct answers. But they are not able to answer the questions related to that video on educational content, just because of the fact that cricket is something that is passionately appealing to them whereas the one on the educational content does not show or generate that much interest among the students. So, overall disinterestedness can come from different corners, it can come because of the general

lack of interest in the subject, because of other pressing subjects which are much more interesting than this subject or because of one's own passionate obsession for some topics much to the negligence of some other topics. So, this is how disinterestedness will be generated, lack of interest will be generated. So, this can again sort of function as a barrier to active listening. The next barrier arises because of pre-judging.

(Refer Slide Time: 49:09)

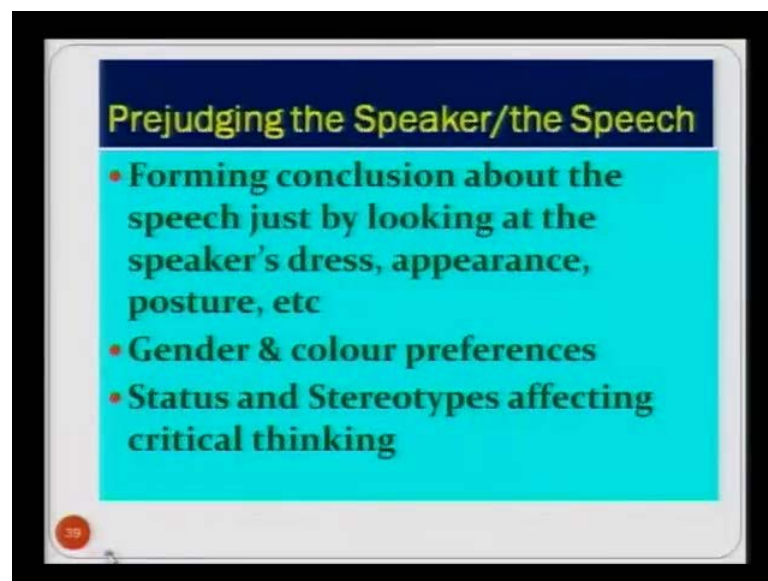


The speaker as well as and or prejudging the speech also. Now, what does it mean? This means forming conclusion about the speech or the speaker just by looking at the speakers dress, speaker's appearance, posture etcetera just by looking at the topic of the speech. So, what does it mean speakers dress? Now, if suppose the speaker is not neatly dressed, not shaven his beard and all that looks like very uncouth and shabby. The audience would get an expression that what this person can deliver and then they also say that speakers have preference over gender. So, in a group of male audience, a very attractive female speaker will have lot of appeal. Now, the same thing goes against somebody, whether female or male who looks ugly. Now, ugliness the speaker has nothing to do with that the speaker is just not looking very attractive not charming. Now, immediately a major portion of the audience would prejudge by just looking at the appearance and think that the speaker is looking ugly the speech will also be ugly. Of course, a very good effective communicator would defy all these kind of barriers. That is a different thing which we had already discussed enough in the previous one on communication.

But if you look at this as a kind of deterrent, if you look this as a kind of major barrier, people formed this kind of preconceived conclusion judge. The speaker just by looking at the way he or she has dressed, just by looking at the way the person is appearing and looking at the topic deciding that this will be boring, the speaker cannot speak well. I said gender it also goes with color preference if a speaker has the prejudice that the person who is white in color will be intelligent and will be able to speak better.

So, obviously the person is again prejudging the speaker, if the other person is yellow or brown or black in color. So, immediately the person thinks that this person cannot speak at all. So, look at the color now, this happens at the psychological level. It is believed it is said that through lot of research that depending on gender preferences, one also looks at in a very receptive manner towards the speakers. As I gave the example male dominated audience would obviously look for a esthetically appealing female speaker and vice versa.

(Refer Slide Time: 52:28)

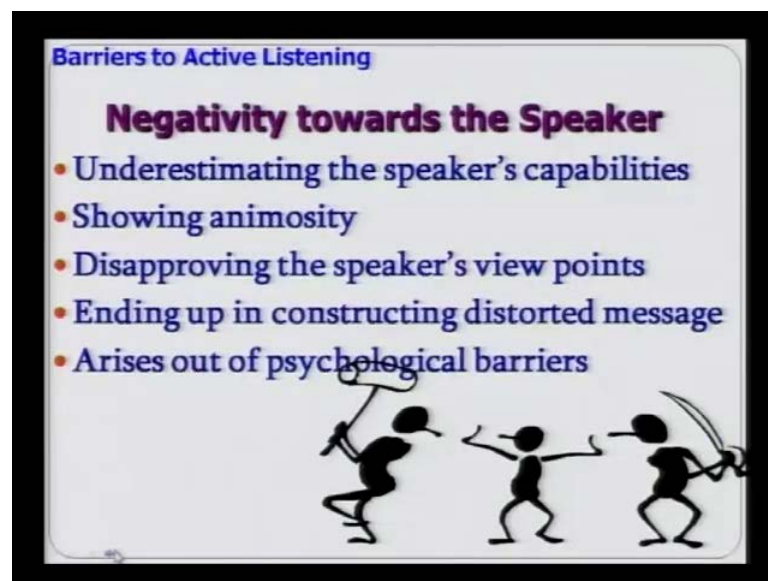


Status and stereotypes could also affect critical thinking which also would let the person prejudge the speaker. So, what do we mean by this status? Now, suppose the person is the director, the person is the highest official in that company, the person is the most eminent scientists, the most experienced book writer. Now, audience generally would feel that they will be faultless; they will not be able to commit any mistake. So, they again judge the speaker even if the speaker will commit errors, they will overlook they

would not even pay attention. But the converse will also happen if the status of the person is lower than them, again they will underestimate the person. The senior underestimating the capabilities of a junior student, senior experienced teacher underestimating the capabilities of a junior teacher and so on. Stereotypes also would affect.

So, the belief that somebody from that part of the country, somebody who is dressed up in that manner, somebody who speaks that kind of language so will not be able to talk like this will not be able to talk. Somebody coming in India for instance somebody coming from that caste particularly so people from some other caste will have a feeling People from that caste can never speak sense. So, these are stereotypes so this can also prejudice the speech as well as the critical thinking.

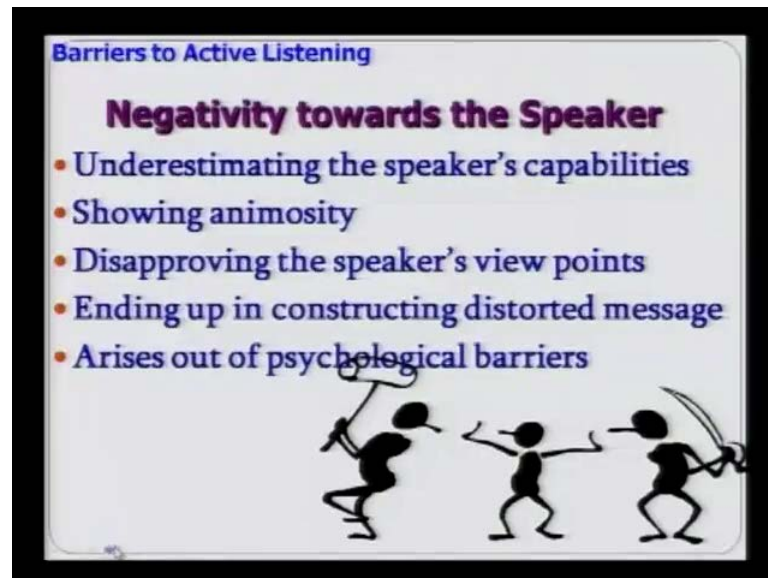
(Refer Slide Time: 54:20)



Now, the worst of all barriers is showing negativity towards the speaker. I would say even most of the other barriers one can try to overcome, but if one is showing negativity towards the speaker it is something that the speaker is totally helpless. The speaker cannot do anything about it, except showing some kind of peaceful transactive signs, but other than that it is very difficult. Once again from the side of the listening, one should be able to somehow curb this tendency. Now why I am saying that this is the worst of all and why it is dangerous because it generates lots of hatred, lot of antipathy and if you

remember while talking about barriers to communication as such, I mention that emotions especially strong emotions act as barriers

(Refer Slide Time: 55:09)




And then I also emphasize the point, that good emotions as against bad emotions are better. Conversely negative emotions act as major deterrents major barriers generally in communication. So, if you have negativity towards the speaker, if you have antipathy towards the speaker, what happens is you will underestimate the speaker's animosities, the capabilities because of your animosity you will underestimate the speaker's capabilities because you suffer from an animosity feeling. And you show it you show the hatred sometimes in the way you are aggressively asking questions in the way you are disagreeing firmly. The speaker is putting a view point suddenly you get up and say I am sorry I do not agree with this view. You snub the speaker because you do not like the speaker dislike. Ending up in constructing distorted message is what happens finally, misinterpretation of the message, distorting the message. If you look at all these things, these are generally arising because of mental and psychological barriers. So, mentally and psychologically already there is some kind of negative thinking about the person or once own insecurity is also making the person think negatively against the speaker

(Refer Slide Time: 56:37)

Barriers to Active Listening

Diffidence

- Suffers from a defeatist attitude
- Undermines self-capabilities for fully understanding the subject
- Students and conference participants suffer from this




The next barrier is diffidence that is showing lack of confidence. The person suffers from a kind of defeatist attitude, what do I mean by this? Even before attending the speech the person thinks I will not be able to understand this. May be so many reasons I come from a very humble background, my language skills are very bad and my IQ level is poor. So, I cannot understand this, generally, I am a very weak fellow I cannot understand. So already a defeatist attitude even if the speaker is very motivating encouraging speaks in a low level vocabulary that will be understandable by all, this person is going with a defeatist attitude which acts as a barrier. So, what he does he undermines self capabilities for fully understanding the subject. Mostly students and conference participants suffer from this. Especially, if they are young when they enter the conference room itself they will have a feeling that no such great eminent personalities, I have no knowledge of this, I will not be able to understand this.

(Refer Slide Time: 57:53)

Barriers to Active Listening

Over-enthusiasm/Intolerance

- **Overenthusiastic to supply gaps in the speaker's ideas**
- **Intolerant to wait till the end of the speech**
- **Advances questions and interferes quickly**
- **Anxious to wind up the communication process**



Combined with this, the next barrier is over enthusiasm and intolerance which is generally coming out of impatience. Sometimes, the person at the other end as the receiver in the listening side would be over enthusiastic to fill the gaps. The speaker says something passes to think over immediately the listener fills the gap. This indicates that the listener is intolerant to wait till the end of the speech, is very impatient, anxious, advances the questions too quickly, interferes and he is quite anxious to wind up the whole speech as quick as possible. He is not letting the speaker to finish it on his or her own pace, but he is trying to thrust a space, because the person is actually impatient.

(Refer Slide Time: 58:47)

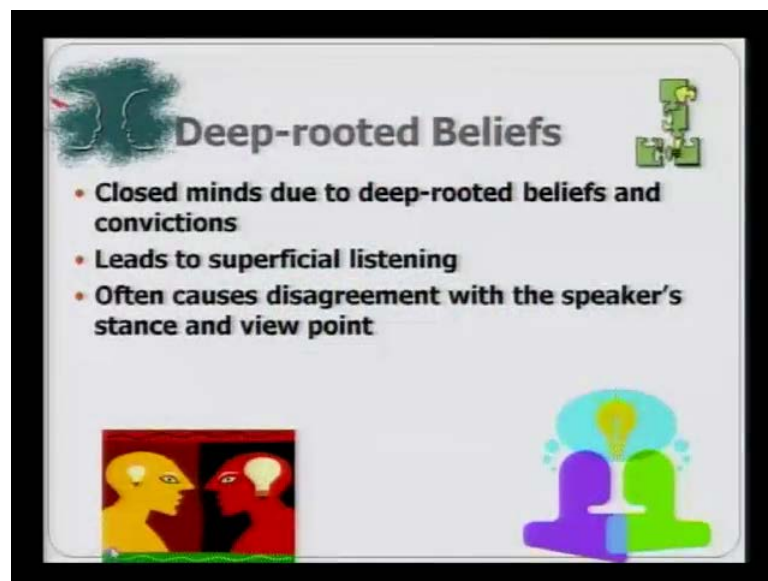
Deep-rooted Beliefs

- **Closed minds due to deep-rooted beliefs and convictions**
- **Leads to superficial listening**
- **Often causes disagreement with the speaker's stance and view point**



Now, the final barrier to active listening is one's deep rooted beliefs. What do I mean by this? Sometimes, one tends to become close minded due to deep rooted beliefs and convictions. The beliefs and convictions have become, so strong and firmly rooted in one's mind; it is very difficult to change it. Suppose, let us say one person has the deep rooted conviction that only arranged marriage is good in society if somebody is giving a talk on love marriage with lot of statistics to indicate that that is also a healthy thing this person can never accept that idea, then this will lead to superficial thinking.

(Refer Slide Time: 59:27)



The person will not pay full attention; this will often cause disagreement with the speaker's stance and view point. The person will disagree vehemently oppose just because of this deep rooted beliefs. Now, we have looked at the most important barriers eight of them. Now, I would suggest that you think over these barriers, see whether you are coming under any of these categories, see whether you are nurturing some of these barriers and keep telling yourself that you should overcome them. I will also give you some tips as how you can overcome these barriers and how you can finally emerge not only as active listener, but also as the very effective and powerful communicator. So, till then I would say bye and thank you keep thinking over the barriers and think how you can improve on the situation. We will continue in the next lecture.

Thank you so much.