

Unit 3: Mastering Sentence Structure and Communication Skills

Subject: English (Communication for Health & Wellness)

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(Sentences & Types • Tenses & Structure • Punctuation • Essay • Letter • Paragraph • Group Discussions • Debates • Personal Interview Skills)

3.1 Sentences and Types of Sentences

A **sentence** expresses a complete thought and contains at least one **subject** and **predicate**. In professional communication—whether a clinic note or a university email—well-formed sentences convey safety, clarity, and respect.

3.1.1 Building blocks

- **Phrase:** a group of words without a subject-verb pair.
Example: “during **slow exhalation**”
- **Clause:** a group with a subject-verb pair.
Example: “**Patients breathe** slowly.”

3.1.2 Structural types

Type	Core idea	Pattern	Example (health context)
Simple	One independent clause	S + V (+O)	“The patient relaxes. ”
Compound	Two independent clauses joined by and/but/or/so (or a semicolon)	IC + conj + IC	“The pose is steady, and the breath is calm. ”
Complex	One independent + one or more dependent clauses	IC + DC / DC + IC	“ When anxiety rises, the exhale lengthens attention. ”
Compound-Complex	At least two IC + one DC	IC + IC + DC	“ The class began, we checked vitals, and because BP was high, we avoided inversions. ”

3.1.3 Functional types

Purpose	Punctuation	Example
Declarative (statement)	Full stop	“Slow breathing reduces stress.”
Interrogative (question)	Question mark	“Do you have knee pain today?”
Imperative (instruction)	Full stop (often)	“Please breathe through your nose.”
Exclamatory (strong feeling)	Exclamation mark (use sparingly)	“Excellent progress!”

Clarity cue: Prefer short, active sentences for instructions: “Sit tall. Place your feet hip-width apart.”

3.2 Tenses and Sentence Structure

Tense shows **time** and often **attitude** (habit, completion, continuity). Use consistent tenses within a paragraph unless the timeline changes.

3.2.1 Tense map (with practical use)

Tense	Core use	Form	Example (clinic/campus)
Present Simple	facts, routines	V1 / V1+s	"She practises at 6 a.m."
Present Continuous	actions now; ongoing plans	am/is/are + V-ing	"We are conducting a camp."
Present Perfect	past → present result	has/have + V3	"He has improved sleep."
Present Perfect Continuous	action from past continuing now	has/have been + V-ing	"They have been practising daily since July."
Past Simple	finished past	V2	"The session started late."
Past Continuous	past action in progress	was/were + V-ing	"We were recording vitals when she arrived."
Past Perfect	past of the past	had + V3	"BP had stabilized before cool-down."
Future (will)	decision/ prediction	will + V1	"I will send the report today."
Future (going to)	prior plan	am/is/are + going to + V1	"We are going to organise a workshop."
Future Continuous	action in progress at future time	will be + V-ing	"At 10, we will be demonstrating pranayama."
Future Perfect	finished before future time	will have + V3	"By noon, we will have completed registration."

3.2.2 Active vs passive voice

- **Active:** actor first → direct and clear.
"The **therapist explained** the modification."
- **Passive:** receiver first → useful for formal reports or when the doer is unknown.
"The **modification was explained** to the participant."

Clinical style: Use **active voice** for instructions and patient education; use **passive** carefully in formal reports.

3.2.3 Question & negative patterns

- **Yes/No question:** *Do/Does/Did/Is/Are/Have/Will* + subject + base verb...
"Do you **experience** dizziness?"
- **Wh-question:** Wh-word + auxiliary + subject + verb...
"When **did** the symptoms **start**?"
- **Negatives:** auxiliary + **not**
"She **did not** practise yesterday."

3.2.4 Sequence of tenses (reported speech)

- Direct: He says, "I feel calm." → **Present remains present** (same-time report).
- Reported past: He said **that he felt** calm. (Present → Past)

3.3 Proper Punctuation in Sentence Structure

Punctuation guides the reader's **breath**—much like pranayama guides attention.

Mark	Use	Example	Common error to avoid
Full stop (.)	Ends a statement	"Practice daily."	Run-on sentences
Comma (,)	Lists, after introducers, before coordinating conjunctions joining two ICs	"Before class, check BP, pulse, and SpO ₂ ."	Splice: joining two ICs with a comma alone
Semicolon (;)	Links two related ICs; complex lists	"The room was quiet; the breath was steady."	Overuse where a full stop works

Mark	Use	Example	Common error to avoid
Colon (:)	Introduces lists/explanations	“Contraindications include: glaucoma, hernia, uncontrolled HTN.”	Using after a verb directly (<i>are:</i>) in simple sentences
Apostrophe (’)**	Possession/omission	“patient’s report,” “don’t”	Its (possessive) vs it’s (it is)
Quotation marks (“ ”)	Direct speech/titles	She said, “Breathe slowly.”	Punctuation outside quotes in AmE
Hyphen (-)	Compound adjectives	“evidence-based protocol”	Missing hyphen → ambiguity
En dash (–)	Ranges/links	“10–12 minutes”	Substituting a hyphen in formal ranges
Em dash (—)	Emphasis/aside	“The aim—calm alertness—guides the class.”	Overuse in academic writing
Parentheses ()	Supplement info	“Bhrāmari (humming) is soothing.”	Burying essential info in brackets

Capitalization quick rules: Begin sentences and proper nouns with capitals; avoid All Caps for emphasis.

3.4 Essay Writing

An essay presents a **central idea** and supports it with **organized evidence**.

3.4.1 Structure (PEEL across paragraphs)

- **Introduction:** hook + background + **thesis**.
- **Body P1-P3:** Point → Evidence/Example → Explanation → Link.
- **Conclusion:** restate thesis + implications/recommendations.

3.4.2 Cohesion tools

- Transitions: **first, moreover, however, therefore, in addition, consequently, finally**.
- Lexical chains: *breath* → *respiration* → *exhale*; *stress* → *anxiety* → *arousal*.

3.4.3 Model outline (expository)

Topic: *Role of Yogic Breathing in Preventive Health*

- Intro: lifestyle stress; thesis—breath training is low-cost prevention.
- Body 1: physiology of slow breathing; example from class practice.
- Body 2: adherence and simplicity; campus routine example.
- Body 3: limitations/contraindications; ethical instruction.
- Conclusion: integrate 8–10 minutes daily; suggest community modules.

3.5 Letter Writing

Professional letters and emails follow a **clear format**, polite tone, and precise request.

3.5.1 Formal letter/email template

Sender’s address
Date

Recipient’s Name



Designation
Institution
Subject: [Concise purpose]

Dear Dr./Mr./Ms. [Surname],

Opening: context and purpose in one sentence.
Body: essential details (who, what, when, where, why, how).
Close: request or next step + thanks.

Yours sincerely,
[Full Name]
BVoc Yoga & Naturopathy, Sem-1
[Contact]

Example subject: Request for Permission to Conduct Community Stress-Management Camp (Sep 12)

Email closings (formal → neutral): Yours sincerely, • Regards, • Best regards.

3.6 Paragraph Writing

A good paragraph has **unity** (one main idea), **coherence** (logical order), and **adequate development** (enough detail).

3.6.1 PEEL model (within a paragraph)

- **Point:** “Slow exhalation reduces arousal.”
- **Evidence/Example:** “In our camp, participants reported calmer heart rate.”
- **Explanation:** “Longer exhale activates the parasympathetic system.”
- **Link:** “Therefore, we teach exhale-focused breathing in week one.”

3.6.2 Common organizing patterns

- **Chronological:** steps in a protocol.
- **Cause-effect:** diet changes → sleep quality.
- **Comparison-contrast:** yoga asana vs non-yogic exercise.

3.7 Group Discussions (GDs)

A GD assesses **content, clarity, teamwork, and leadership**.

3.7.1 Before the GD

- Research the topic; prepare **three points** and **one example**.
- Decide on **entry lines** and **linking phrases**.

3.7.2 During the GD

Skill	Useful language
Opening	“To begin, may I outline three reasons...?”
Supporting	“I’d like to add to Ananya’s point...”
Disagreeing politely	“I see it differently because...,” “May I offer an alternative view?”
Clarifying	“Could we define ‘therapy’ in this context?”



Skill	Useful language
Summarising	"We seem to agree that..., while we differ on..."

Do: listen, include quieter peers, keep examples brief.

Don't: interrupt, dominate, go off-topic.

3.8 Debates

Debate sharpens **logical argument, evidence use, and rebuttal.**

3.8.1 Structure (proposition: "Yoga should be mandatory in colleges.")

- **Speaker 1 (For/Against):** define terms; state **thesis** and roadmap.
- **Speaker 2:** develop arguments with **data/examples**.
- **Speaker 3:** **rebut** key points and **summarise** stance.

3.8.2 Building arguments (simple Toulmin)

- **Claim:** "Mandatory yoga improves well-being."
- **Data:** "Attendance-linked programs showed improved sleep scores."
- **Warrant:** "Better sleep supports academic performance."

3.8.3 Rebuttal language

- "That conclusion assumes..., but evidence suggests..."
- "Even if X is true, it does not follow that..."

Fallacies to avoid: ad hominem, false cause, straw man, hasty generalisation.

3.9 Personal Interview Skills

Interviews test **fit, clarity, attitude, and ethics.**

3.9.1 Before

- Research the organisation; match your skills to its needs.
- Prepare **STAR** stories (Situation-Task-Action-Result) for teamwork, conflict resolution, patient care.

3.9.2 During

- **First minute:** greet, sit when invited, posture open, phone silent.
- **Answering:** use **PEEL/STAR**; be specific; avoid jargon.
- **Ask back:** one thoughtful question: "How does your clinic measure program outcomes?"

3.9.3 After

- Thank the panel; send a brief **thank-you email** the same day.

3.9.4 Common questions (health & wellness)

- "Why Yoga & Naturopathy?"
 - "Describe a time you handled a difficult participant." (*STAR*)
 - "How do you ensure safety during group sessions?"
 - "What would you do if a participant fainted?" (*protocol awareness*)
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**Answer frame (sample, STAR):**

“**Situation:** During a community session, a participant felt dizzy. **Task:** Keep group safe and support her. **Action:** Paused class, seated her, checked vitals, opened ventilation, informed supervisor, documented event. **Result:** She recovered in minutes; we revised screening questions for the next session.”

Unit Summary

Strong communication begins with **clean sentences**: choose the right **structure and function**, keep tense **consistent**, and apply **punctuation** that guides the reader. Academic and professional writing grows from **coherent paragraphs** into **organized essays**; real-world communication requires **precise letters/emails**. Spoken performance improves through **group discussions** and **debates**, where evidence-based, polite, and inclusive language matters. **Interview readiness** combines self-knowledge with structured answers and ethical awareness. Across all forms, clarity and courtesy are your core professional tools.

Key Terms

- Independent/Dependent clause • Compound-complex sentence
- Active/Passive voice • Sequence of tenses
- Comma splice • Thesis statement • Topic sentence
- Cohesion/Coherence • Rebuttal • STAR method

Self-Assessment

A. MCQs

1. Which sentence is **compound**?
 - a) “Because BP was high, we modified poses.”
 - b) “We checked vitals, and we documented results.”
 - c) “Checking vitals before class is essential.”
 - d) “Check vitals.”
2. The best tense for a **routine** is:
 - a) Present Simple
 - b) Present Continuous
 - c) Past Perfect
 - d) Future Perfect
3. Identify the **comma splice**:
 - a) “The clinic opened on time, the participants arrived late.”
 - b) “The clinic opened on time; participants arrived late.”
 - c) “Although it rained, the clinic opened on time.”
 - d) “The clinic opened on time, and participants arrived late.”
4. Choose the sentence with correct **apostrophe** use:
 - a) “Its a useful protocol.”
 - b) “It’s guidelines are clear.”
 - c) “It’s a useful protocol.”
 - d) “The patients record is incomplete.”
5. In a debate, the function of **rebuttal** is to:
 - a) introduce the topic
 - b) summarise the opponent’s view without comment
 - c) provide evidence for your claim only
 - d) challenge the opponent’s reasoning with evidence

Answer key: 1-b, 2-a, 3-a, 4-c, 5-d



B. Short Answer

1. Write **two** simple sentences and **one** complex sentence giving safety instructions for a pranayama class.
2. Convert to **passive voice**: “The instructor reviews the consent forms.”
3. Draft a **formal email subject** and **opening line** requesting access to the college auditorium for a wellness talk.
4. Provide a **topic sentence** and two supporting sentences for a paragraph on “Benefits of early dinner for better sleep.”

C. Application Tasks

1. **Essay (300-350 words)**: *Should universities include a mandatory module on stress management?* Use PEEL and at least four transitions.
2. **Letter (150-180 words)**: Write to the Medical Officer requesting permission to conduct a free screening camp.
3. **GD practice**: Prepare three points **for** and three **against** the motion “Short guided relaxation should end every lecture hour.”
4. **Interview drill**: Prepare one **STAR** story about collaboration and one about handling feedback.

D. Reflective

After your next reading-aloud practice, note:

- two pronunciation improvements,
- one punctuation habit you corrected,
- one strategy that made your sentences clearer.

End of Unit 3: Mastering Sentence Structure and Communication Skills