

Definition and Characteristics of A Good Dialogue

Dialogue is a conversation between two or more persons. Dialogue writing is a useful form of composition since it enables a student to express his views in a natural and colloquial manner. An average Pakistani student faces great difficulty in writing a dialogue since he does not have a chance to talk with English people. Moreover, he does not possess enough dramatic power to visualize a situation. Dialogue-Writing is a lively art. One should write as one speaks. When one speaks with a friend or an acquaintance, one does not speak in a polished or sophisticated style. There should be life in one's speech.

Qualities of good dialogue

A good dialogue must have natural and conversational language. The students should not use learned words, strange idioms or long quotations in a dialogue.

Example:

Hamid: (Rising), Hello Saleem! So glad to see you. Won't take a chair?

Saleem: (Sitting), I just dropped in to wish a farewell to you to the foreign land. Are you leaving to London tomorrow?

Hamid: Yes; I am bound for London tomorrow. It is so kind of you to come here and congratulate me on my success. The language used in the conversation mentioned above is quite natural, convincing and simple.

In order to make a dialogue forceful and lively, we must take care of these things.

- We must introduce digressions and side issues in our dialogue.
- There should be plenty of interruptions and jerks. One should not always finish one's sentence before another begins.

Qualities of good dialogue

The gestures and movements of the speaker must be indicated. When a man talks, he does not talk with his tongue only. His whole body talks. He makes easy, explanatory uneasy gestures. He walks with his feet. He nods his head and makes movements with his hands.

Example:

Bano: Dear, I am so thankful, your have come! I was worried that you might be delayed due to the huge volume of traffic.

Siama: (Sitting in the chair), How could I forget your birthday? I was late because dear mother fell ill all at once. How comfortable and cosy your room is. I wish I could have one such in my house.(With radiation of joy on her face)

Bano: Thank you, for your liking of my room. Please, take this chair, that one is not comfortable.

(She points out to an arm chair covered with black satin)

The gestures and movements make the dialogue lively.

Qualities of good dialogue

The tones of the various speakers voice should be indicated if possible. This will add realism and liveliness to the dialogue. In written speech, we cannot hear the speakers. So the tone of their voices should be indicated, so that we may understand the spirit of the dialogue more clearly.

Example:

Hamid: Oh, bad luck! "You failed once again". Destiny has played havoc with you.

Ahmad: Oh, no, I do not curse my fate. I did not work hard this time to deliver any good in the examination.

Hamid: Um! Very good of you to say so, your approach towards life is realistic and impartial.

Note:

The use of the word 'Oh'; 'bad luck', 'Oh, no' and 'Um' add to the realism of the dialogue.

How to write a good dialogue

1. Think little over subject. If it is controversial subject, jot down on a piece of paper. The pros and cons of that subject. One speaker should represent one point of view and the other speaker should oppose him. Arrange the pros and cons carefully.
2. Think out the character of each of your speakers. Each man should be given some mannerism or peculiarities. To do this you must have in your mind a clear idea of the way in which each character is to express his views.
3. Do not make a dialogue the monopoly of one speaker.
4. Let one speaker some time interrupt the other in real conversation. One person sometime interrupts the other, and breaks in on what he is saying of such interruptions are sparingly used. They add to its naturalness.
5. Bring your dialogue in an interesting way so that the reader's attention may be caught from the start. The conversation should lead to some definite conclusion. It should not end abruptly.