

Teaching Through Innovative Tools To Enhance Speaking Skills Of First Year Engineering Students In The Coastal Districts Of Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract:

Language is a system of communication. Languages endure and prosper by virtue of their role and capacity in the society. To comprehend social relations, there is a need for a typical language. English is the most renowned language globally and the key force of it is universal. In the process of teaching and learning English language, we always need to talk about the communication skills. Communication skills are crucial for a student's scholastic achievement and future career opportunities. In the current scenario, students must possess academic excellence as well as requisite abilities to improve their learning and employability possibilities in the future. Learning English is always a complex task for the second language learners, mainly in the context of developing listening and speaking abilities. It is monitored that most of the engineering graduates, today, lack communication skills, mainly speaking skills or oral skills. Speaking Skills are very crucial to have good communication, especially in global communication. Hence, Students, from their first year onwards, must have a focus on improving this ability. This paper mainly adumbrates the significance of developing speaking skill as it is a prerequisite to the first year engineering students to meet the needs of the companies using various tools and methods.

Key words: Communication Skills, speaking, engineering students, employability

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the years, English speaking has become a significant instrument for communication, at both domestically and globally. An individual needs to be aware of, comprehend and convey adequately in English language to be effective in any field. In the field of technical or engineering education - regardless of whether to gain information from books or to give talks either in the classes or meetings English is utilized as a distinctive means of communication in each stage of professional life. "Good English Communication Skills are a vital element of an engineer's profession and the lack of such skills only undermines the image of an engineer." (S. Shikha, 1:2012).

Engineering students may think that it is hard to comprehend the idea communicated by the authors of the books or the speakers, if they are not good at English. Hence, fluency and a good knowledge in English language assume an imperative part for engineering students in order to succeed in their profession. It is observed that the majority of engineering students are deficient in speaking skills. Hence, the principal issue lies in the significance of furnishing our students with these skills and reducing the hindrances they face while executing them.

2. IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR ENGINEERS

Today, it is not only enough to equip engineering students with technical skills. They need English communication skills as well as extra human-associated skills. Engineers need to develop rapport with all sorts of humans. They have to discover ways to exhibit their interests in studying different people at some point of the first meeting of their employer and deal with everyone with reverence and courtesy. While exchanging ideas, engineers need to understand people who have different attitudes and perspectives due to their diversified backgrounds. Researchers found that practicing engineers spend a majority of their time communicating in written and oral form (Dannels, 2003). Workplace communication etiquette additionally teaches engineers to pay attention and try to comprehend messages transmitted to them. They need to look their place of work as a possibility to develop international relations and adapt to their surrounding steadily. Besides, being touchy to different wishes and demands, engineers get an opportunity to develop relationships and networks particularly with potential customers and investors.

Team operating is likewise emphasized due to the fact that engineers will constantly be operating with different humans in assembly and working with the deadlines. A Project primarily requires communication skills for engineers to tolerate with every different aspect, expect hard questions, coordinate things, progress, marketing, place items and have interaction with others. Without appropriate communication at their place of work, engineers are certain to misconceive and get the incorrect concept of one's phrases and intentions.

3. DYNAMICS OF SPOKEN LANGUAGE

The characteristic of a good student communicator is that he/she has mastered the art of preparing, organizing and delivering successful oral presentations. Speech includes real-time presentations, video presentations and interviews, with accompanying visual aids akin to handouts and power-points. Message is the key to a polite spoken language. The essence of the presentation should be relevant to the audience and goals of the presentation. Self-awareness is the starting point of a good communicator. A person who is aware of his strengths and weaknesses can put up with the specified efforts to reinforce communication skills. Confidence is another vital aspect of fantastic communication. Someone may know the topic and yet not communicate adequately if he lacks confidence.

Simplicity in messaging requires a good communication as integration of the message is directly proportional to the clarity of its presentation. Awareness of the audience is a fundamental tool within the hands of an efficient speaker.

A good oral communicator can keep the audience engaged by asking questions and soliciting opinions on the topic at hand. This might also help in fine tuning the message and magnificence of presentation, supported by the feedback received from the audience. The

tone or voice of the presenter carries plenty of weight in delivery of the message. A confident tone keeps the audience engaged, whereas an occasional and monotonous tone may be off-putting. Voice modulation may be used to highlight the key points within the presentation and retain the eye of the audience. Body language is a vital component of effective oral communication. The presenter should adopt a stable and assured posture, make appropriate gestures, avoid being fidgety and establish eye contact during the presentation.

Oral communication isn't merely the power to talk, but also the capacity to capture the attention. An honest communicator is one who is attuned to the audience and is ready to calibrate his message accordingly. An aspiring oral communicator should be willing to amass and hone his listening skills over a period of time.

1. *Objectives of Teaching English Speaking Skills to Engineering Students:*

There are certain objectives of teaching English speaking skills to engineering students. They are:

- Higher Studies
- Getting Placement
- Motivation
- Enhancing Social Relationships
- Developing Accuracy and Fluency in English Speaking

2. *Tools used to Improve Speaking Skills:*

Since the present era is being digitalized, technology plays a very crucial role. There are various research tools for developing the English language skills in English. Some of the technological tools which help in enhancing the specified skills are NETFLIX, Instagram, Tik Tok, etc.

2.1 *NETFLIX:*

NETFLIX is a platform where we can watch videos of different cultures in different languages. It has gotten on to the language learning pattern, with numerous people now turning to this global organization for an open and simple technique to rehearse passive listening skills.

While it may not really be the most extensive platform to improve students' language capacities but guided watching can take Netflix study session to the next level. This platform can explicitly be explored for acquiring the language skills. It can also be a benefit to students to obtain some knowledge in pop culture in an English classroom.

2.2 *Instagram:*

Instagram is a social media platform. English language students can use this platform as an effective tool to improve their language skills. By following the key hash tags, like #learn english online, #learn english with fun, #learn english words, etc., the students can get much input as well as enough exposure to English language in the new era of digital education.

2.3 *Tik Tok:*

Though it is also a social media platform, the students can learn and improve the language skills with fun in this platform. Tik Tok has, indeed, leaped on to the trend of digital education by initiating the India-based program Edutok in 2019. Through this application, the students can perceive various videos of English language for enriching their skills.

4. METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this study is a classroom action research. Classroom action research is an organized study done by the researcher and the students in teaching-learning milieu to accumulate data about consequently developing the system of learning process of the students. Since the aim of this research is to develop the speaking skills of engineering students, it is designed to improve the quality of speaking activities of the first year engineering students. In order to achieve the main objective of the study, the researcher acted as a teacher/facilitator in the classroom, formed the students as teams and worked with them to identify the problems faced by them.

3. Problems faced by the students while speaking:
 - Circumstances
 - Mother-tongue influence
 - Lack of accuracy
 - Shyness
 - Lack of confidence

5. TEACHING SPEAKING SKILLS

It has been felt that developing effective speaking skills is an important thing and probably the most difficult thing. It includes articulating words effectively, utilizing suitable jargon and constructing a meaningful sentence. The least difficult action for improving speaking skills among the students is to request the students to work in pairs focusing on fluency. This action can be applied to text and understanding images or symbols as well.

Instructors of English do not generally allocate ample time to students to practice; hence, it may sometimes lead to absence of accuracy and fluency. Basic procedures, for example, posing questions, noting inquiries, reiteration, replacement, question-answer discussions, everyday articulations, coordinated dialogues, depictions and role-play can be utilized to improve speaking skills. Training on pronunciation involves internationalization of the explanation of consonants, vowels and diphthongs utilized in English language. The procedures of effective pronunciation and differentiation are discovered through pronunciation drills and practice in the language laboratory. Sounds of the language, inflection and pitch can be taught by various online and offline exercises which are specifically designed for it. This encourages the students to have confidence on their own correspondence.

There are various means, methods, approaches, and activities a teacher of English can follow to develop speaking skills of the students of engineering, viz.

- Communicative Approach
- Humanistic Approach
- Introducing Language and Communication Improvement Courses
- Computer Based Activities
- Group Discussions/Debates
- Task-Based Activities
- Conducting Presentations

- Organizing Interviews/meetings

6. CONCLUSION

Today's engineer should compete with the present world, for securing employability, with two weapons – technical skills and communication skills. An engineering student, nowadays, gets enough exposure to technical skills, since he/she practices more on core subjects of his/her stream. In this process, the student lacks the ability in English language communication. So, to excel in this competitive technical world, an engineer needs to be a multitasking person. The industries demand effective communication skills, especially speaking skills, in the students to offer a job. Hence, to meet the needs of the companies or industries, the students have to concentrate more on developing their English language speaking skills and the teachers should give more time to the students to practice what they have learned in the language classroom.

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