

Communication- everyone's panacea for everything

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Abstract

Communication is part and parcel of life. It is fundamental to all relationships. According to John A. piece "**Communication is not only the essence of being human, but also a vital property of life.**" As communication is the back bone of each and every field, the same applies with engineering as well. Communication skills come as an integral part in engineers' grooming and effectively lead to a prosperous growth in future. According to a report of a survey, it came into light that more than 50% of engineering projects come to meet the failure just because of inability of manager to convey his message to the team due to various communication barriers. This paper seeks to elaborate the importance of communication and discuss practical tips and ideas to help the students to improve themselves as a good communicator. As we all know "Where there is a will there is a way." With their utmost efforts students can master the communication skills.

1. Introduction

Our first prime minister Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru rightly stated "The destiny of nation is shaped in her classrooms." This sentence is truly like big thing in small parcel which has a deep meaning. It is no one but youngsters only who are the inheritors of tomorrow. We need to be extra careful with our students who are standing on the threshold of adulthood, where, to participate and contribute through effective communication, is world's expectation from them. Employers want a candidate that can do much more than performing a set of assigned job. A candidate ornamented with good communication skills is welcomed everywhere by everyone. As the world is changing rapidly so is the case with communication also. In large extent Communication is a matter of attitude, a willingness to communicate, share ideas and information and a good communicator possesses all these.

In this modern era five years old, play games on his/her computer. Fifth standard student surf the internet. Communicating via satellite is norm. Present day perspective clearly shows that communication has become foundation of learning, life blood of every organization.

English has been truly recognized as International Lingo. It is one of the most popular and

most spoken in the technological world. Knowing good English has become need of the hour. Language has vital importance as it is the mean of communication. A person with fluent English never feels himself tongue tied. Each and every day we communicate in several ways, whether we just say hello or have a long conversation, whether we speak through word of mouth or write something, we feel the importance of something that is unanimously, communication only. English has certainly become vernacular of science and technology. There is no other language but English only that offers such a wide scope for scientific research and studies. As it has the prestige of the official language of airport and shipping so it's quite indispensable for a person hail to any sector to have a taste of English. It is rightly said "it is only English that can unlock the door of success".

Now a days as there is a boom of professional courses. Hence the demand of English and communication skills are also in towering heights. It's quite mandatory for our engineering students to feel at home with English because most of the theories in engineering are in English only. That's why English communication skills has become backbone of Academic and professional life. In National university of Singapore, students are required to take qualifying English test to assess their proficiency of English language. If the students are not able to pass the exam to certain level, there is a

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necessity for them to go for extra English module to polish their skills.

When an engineering students step out of his academic life, he starts to realize what an important place English actually has! Engineers have to work in team where they have to communicate with others. In most of the MNCs people hail to different part of the country, even different part of the world that have their own dialect and lingo. Now a big question arises in front of them what should be the medium of conversation and unanimously its answer is English because it is the most spoken language of the world. It has become an established fact all over the world that Indian people, while technically brilliant, somewhere lag behind in the field of communication skills soft skills as well. According to a newspaper report 50 to 60% of candidate cut a sorry figure due to poor communication skills. As first impression is always the last one, the very first demand of employer from its employee to speak fluent English. Infect candidate ornamented with good communication skills in addition to subject knowledge have an immense advantage over others lacking similar skills. The student coming from Non-English medium background possesses all the required caliber and potential. But what is needed to bring them out of their cocoon in which they are. The very first requirement is to train them properly to make them able to confront the challenges of the world of work. To fill them with positive attitude, confidence, what we require is to make them perfect in communication as it has now been declared the bench mark of success. Every Educational institute is making its utmost efforts to make its student perfect in the field of communication. Engineers feel great problem in their professional life as they are not master in the field of communication skills. The importance of communication skills in engineering can be seen in the following statement of an engineer.

But in here on any given day, for example, I probably don't spend more than two or three hours on looking at technical stuff. A lot of my time gets spent on interacting with people in marketing, sales, field support, and even other engineers in different disciplines. I'm an electrical engineer, but, you know, I have to work with mechanical and other engineers that are here to understand the big picture. And then, a lot of writing, documentation, and a lot of presentations."

2. Practicing Electrical Engineer

At every walk of life students face one obstacle that is how to communicate in English there are

several reason of this problem due to that they are phobia tic of speaking in English.

2.1. Parents illiteracy

This is the reason from where the problem actually starts. As the parents are the first teachers of a kid. They are his or hers first role model. The way they walk, they eat is blindly followed by their kids. When a baby takes birth he does not know any language but the language in which his parents talk he uses to understand and speak it automatically. If the parents are highly qualified they are concerned about their kids' studies, they provide them an aura to speak in English where as on the other hand if the parents are illiterate how they can provide them an atmosphere in which their kid can learn to speak English. Literate parents make their kids to realize the importance of English. They take active part in student-teacher meet and talk to teacher and counselor for the betterment of their kids. As a result kids of latter become more sincere and their English communication competences become stronger than the first group.

2.2. Our defective education system

The main drawback of our education system is that it is based on theories. Every time the main focus is given on theories or bookish knowledge. Communication is all about LSRW (Learning, Speaking, Reading, and Writing).



Fig: 1. Communication System

All the four mentioned here are equally important and should be deal all and sundry. But unfortunately all the focus is being given to writing

and writing only. Teaching-learning process is exam result oriented. Exams are the only criteria of evaluating IQ level. That's why student becomes habitual of heart method. They memorize each and everything and just vomit in exam and obtain good marks. They carve for the good marks only. As the result of that a student becomes trained in writing and reading only, if a student writes a lot in the examination, he automatically comes under the category of successful and intelligent student. But it would not be sufficient to serve the purpose. Equal weightage should be given to writing as well as speaking. Learning is a key to speak a language. Example of a little baby will be adequate in this regard. When he listens to a word frequently, he uses to speak those words without any extra effort. When parents communicate in their dialect he becomes acquainted with that. Learning of a language is possible with the help of active listening only. Teaching pedagogy should be designed in the way where the entire four (LSRW) play vital role.

2.3. Lack of modern teaching tools

Where the modern teaching tools like language labs, projectors, software, and internet power point presentations have been introduced, some institutes lag behind in this regard. They are still comfortable in teaching with boards only. In these institutes students don't get the chance of being familiar with these modern tools and it affects their performance. There is another darker side in this aspect because even where these facilities are available, they are not properly utilized as the students as well as teachers feel it hectic and wastage of time and energy as well. As far as language lab is concerned according to students it's of no use.

2.4. Shortage of skillful and trained faculty members

Students are too unfortunate to get trained and skillful teachers. Most of the teachers are untrained and don't possess even a single skill of teaching. They lag behind in the knowledge of modern pedagogy and teaching tools. Their main focus is on completion of syllabus only. They are not at all concerned to know whether students are getting what they want to teach them or not. After completing the syllabus and conducting examinations they feel quite satisfied as only these two come under the area of their profession. When they themselves are not enthusiastic about their responsibilities how they can be expected to motivate their students. On the other hand student also gives preference to their technical subjects in comparison to communication skills. Here starts the role of faculty. Teachers should make them

realize that it is the English only that can unlock the doors of success. During the job seeking process the very first requirement is to communicate in English. To have mastery in English proficiency will be cherry on cake. They can't afford to neglect its importance.

2.5. Lack of English speaking aura

Since the very first day of the birth students live in that aura where they listen and speak either their mother tongue 'Hindi' or their regional language. So they become perfect in that, they feel themselves at ease while speaking these languages but when comes the question of communicating in English, they just become mum. They feel hesitated even when they know the answer that has been asked to them. They have the fear of being criticized. Even when they initiate to learn English, their family members, their friends start to criticize them in place of motivating them. Here they feel de-motivated and inferior to those who have mastery over English. Even the meritorious student fails to get the desired success due to lack of communication skills, confidence and personality.

2.6. Controversy upon learning grammar of English

"Grammar is only needed to get good marks". This is the opinion of several researchers. They raise a question "Had we learnt grammar of our mother tongue when we learnt it?" Even the students also feel the use of grammar in day to day life is not so important so they feel there is no need of learning grammar. Generally students of technical fields are less interested in learning grammar.

3. Remedies

When English is so much indispensable and its demand is increasing day and night so it becomes must for the student to have proper knowledge of it. The reasons by which students face problems should be removed at any cost. In this regard following remedies can be suggested.

3.1. Parents should pay attention towards their children

Parents should consult to their teachers time and again about the performance of their children. Instead of criticizing the children, their motivation will serve the purpose. They should encourage them to speak more and more in English. Being the first teacher of their child the parents should make them realize the importance of English and communication skills in life.

3.2. Change is required in present education system

Need of the hour is that education system in which practical knowledge can get more preference as compared to theoretical knowledge. So that when a student steps out in practical world, he can achieve flying colors. In classrooms students should get more and more time to speak. Meaning of technical words should be clear to them. In fact a technical words dictionary should be given to them and meaning of each and every word should be explained even in their own dialect. During the interactive sessions the students should get the motivation to take part in various activities in which they can remove their phobia of speaking .It will help them in developing English communication competence.

3.3. Faculty Members should be aware of their duties

It is moral duty of faculty members to do their utmost efforts to improve the communication skills of students. The area of their responsibilities is not limited to the completion of the syllabus but it is wide enough. When Students are forced to communicate in English, they feel it as herculean

task. They should be motivated in that manner in which they can take pleasure in speaking English. The teaching pedagogy should be based on infotainment.

3.4. Grammar should be taught in interesting way

When we learn our regional language, we need not to learn its grammar because what we listen frequently, we use to speak that. But when comes the question of learning English as second language, we feel the need of learning its grammar to speak confidently. But most of the students do not take interest in learning grammar. So it should be taught in a practical manner in which all the rules of grammar should be taught practically.

3.5. New teaching tools should be introduced

In most of the universities and institutes modern teaching tools like language labs, software, projectors headphones are available but some institutes still lag behind in this aspect. Students should get the chance of learning through these tools. Definitely it will help in developing their English communication competence.

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