

IMPROVING SPEAKING SKILLS OF ENGINEERING STUDENTS FOR BETTER EMPLOYABILITY

Dr. B. Thenmalar Bharathi, M.A, M.Phil, B.Ed, Ph.D

*Associate Professor, Department of English
RMD Engineering College, RSM Nagar
Kavaraipettai, Gummidipoondi Tk*

Abstract

Teaching and learning a second language is a great challenge to both the facilitator and the learner. This paper investigates the reasons for ineffective oral communication of engineering students. English Language Learning has two broad areas to cover namely language skills and language areas. Language skills are Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Language areas cover the grammar content of the language. Mostly it is generally accepted that Listening – Speaking and Reading –writing are binomials and they work accordingly with respect to skills development. Recently, this notion of binomial operation of skills development seems outdated as all the four skills are inter-related and interdependent. This research paper concentrates on how the habit of reading can improve the fluency in speaking among the English as second language learners. This paper depicts how reading could be considered a base to improve fluency in communication and how reading could help the speakers maintain their pace in communication and also the role of teachers in inculcating the habit of reading to enable students to communicate in English fluently is also discussed in detail.

Keywords: English Language Learning, Language skills, Reading, Fluency in communication.

In India English is either considered to be a Foreign Language or a Second Language as per the ethnic and cultural set up. Always expected that the students in India are supposed to master English language for the very purpose of being equipped to converse or communicate in a language that is common to create understanding between the talk and talked. Every skill is unique in itself pertaining to the use of it. Among four skills, the learners of English as a Foreign Language or English as a Second Language are expected to pay more attention to speaking skills.

Generally speaking, in general seem to be intuitively significant. The purpose of speaking in English language can either be for business or pleasure but the common notion and the motivation of the learners of EFL/ESL is to converse in English with the speakers of English language. This focuses on the reason why many learners are interested in developing speaking in English Language yet the real concern of lack of fluency is the biggest constraint that Indian speakers face. The main concern is an important aspect that has to be taken for study to enable the speakers of EFL/ESL to converse fluently without any hesitation or stammering.

Primarily it is the motivation of the learners to speak in English is overcome by the difficulties and ignorance prevailing behind developing that particular skill. That is the greatest challenge for many Indian learners inspite of its importance which leads the EFL learners to a strange conclusion that English is a difficult language to learn. Then the teachers of English should carefully divert students

from such strong conclusion and provide them avenues to learn micro-skills involved in speaking like pronunciation of words, stress and intonation and the usage of expressions to be used in formal and informal contexts. Those micro-skills can be developed by inculcating the practice of reading among the students that eventually actuates or develops the speaking skill of the students.

In spite of observing positive perception towards target language, it was being begun to sense the learner's depressions and disappointments. This is an aspect that is neglected by the most among the students of India from the elementary level to tertiary level and beyond. It is also considered as an involuntary development that is a part of human system. This attempt is absolutely untrue and the teachers of English are responsible to clarify this notion to be false among the students. Reading also can be developed as a habit only through conscious efforts taken voluntarily with an intension to become a good speaker or a communicator. The main interest in reading has to be consciously developed among the students. Today's educational scenario with respect to English language learning in India is the teachers of English read a lot and lecture thereby provide minimal opportunity for the students to taste the fruits of reading.

Language experts are very explicit in disclosing the fact that generally people read less but reading indeed brings wisdom. The need to develop the habit of reading daily can automatically equip students to master delivery skills precisely and promptly.

Vocabulary language and word power are the essentials to convert the thoughts into words with respect to speaking and is a usual scene that students when given a task of public speaking, they accept and confess their incapability of converting their thoughts into appropriate vocabulary to be conveyed. Common saying that they know what to speak but they search for vocabulary to disclose what they thought. This main problem can be suitably dealt with by inculcating the habit of reading. While reading, the readers come to realize new words, expressions and structures. While the readers are closely reading they imitate the words they come across and try to use it in formal or informal contexts appropriately. While one reads, he/she visualizes what is present in the text and the same is stored in the photographic memory. If saved, the words or expressions or structures can easily be retrieved for future use appropriately in the right place for the right thought.

English teacher's role is indomitable in instilling the interest on reading in students. The students must be encouraged to reading in the class spending little time allocated for the same in the class itself. A slight spark is essential to catch a big fire. This beginning in reading practice in the classroom would gradually make reading a habit. Once it becomes a habit, naturally the fluency in communication is achieved.

Practicing Reading

In the first step the teacher can make pieces of small sentences with only one or two word sentences to remove fear from the mind of the students and conduct the step and found that the students were writing with confidence. The teacher should encourage them to write with confidence whenever they feel to convey and also give them task in pairs and groups which prove to be very fruitful as they could express themselves in groups. There is a great divide in the same engineering class as segmented into the medium students in majority and the English medium in minority. It is necessary to isolate the regional medium students for giving them the benefit of special classes. It is for understanding English in its grass roots. Their standard of English in respect to using it in doing the four language skills such as LSRW are low. It is so for the simple reason that they learn their secondary English by rote or memorization. The urban students are found sailing in the same boat in the sense that they are no better than their rural counterparts with regional medium. The major reason is that neither of these two segments of the same class is

found with practical experience with English in use. It is truer of the rural students coming from the backward areas with no exposure to urban culture with industrial environment.

- English Language Learners in my classroom are highly heterogeneous
- My institution is located in the outskirts of urban
- Chennai catering to both urban and rural learners
- 46% of my learners are from rural background

Read & Reflect

In the next step the teacher can prepare a 'Cloze test' is an **exercise**, test, or assessment consisting of a portion of language with certain items, words where the participant is asked to replace the missing language item and divide thirty students in groups and give them the activity. First demonstration should be done how to perform it. They immediately get the idea and observe the pair work and motivated the weak students to take part in the activity. Special attention should be given on the grammar and vocabulary. Now they start writing fearlessly. It is now good atmosphere in the class and ask the class advisor to observe all students if they could write confidently. This observation in the class and suggested me to give the students some lengthy sentences to trigger their activity. As per the suggestions the teacher can give a bigger one and they attempted to do so.

The English teaching methods as involved in teaching business English are with their accent on developing communicative competence in terms of business message, given and taken by oral or written presentation. Methods are more result-oriented in terms of tangible dividends of curriculum objectives in realization. It is for the consistent selectivity of the right word for the right place. It sustains the ongoing IT Revolution and its accessories like computer and internet in our country.

On the other hand, techniques in teaching English are more imaginative and innovative in their conceptualization while aiming at the linguistic comprehension most. Furthermore it is for the romantic selectivity of enjoyable words which are capable of recapturing the beauty of the emotional intensity on the part of the creatively inspired literary producers. Altogether the methods of regimental orientation are in contrast to the innovative and indulgent techniques of teaching as involved in terms of teaching English literature as such in terms of Prose, Poetry and Drama. Precisely, the methods and technique are not

dichotomous but diverse in their content and execution. They are not interchangeable, either.

References

1. Burns, A., & Joyce, H. (1997). *Focus on Speaking*. Sydney: National Center for English Language Teaching and Research.
2. Otero J, Kintsch W. 1992 Failures to detect contradictions in a text: What readers believe versus what they read. *Psychological Science* 3(4): 229–35
3. Perfetti C A. 1985. *Reading Ability*. Oxford University Press, New York.
4. Sadiku, Lorena Manaj. 2015. The Importance of Four Skills Reading, Speaking, Writing, Listening in a Lesson Hour. *European Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, Vol.1, Nr. 1, 29-31.
5. Swain, M. 1995. Three functions of output in second language learning. In *Principles and practice in applied linguistics: Studies in honour of H. G. Widdowson*, ed. G. Cook and B. Seidlhofer, 125–44. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
6. Ur, P. 1996. *A course in language teaching: Practice and theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.