

Role and Importance of Communication Competence for Engineering Students

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Abstract: Till date, the notion of communicative competence for the development of engineering professionals is considered 'fuzzy'. An understanding and learning of technical aspects in engineering syllabus are given utmost importance compared to development of communication skills and proficiency. And hence, in present day competitive world, much of the success is based on communicative competence of the students, where in they would be competing for job positions with global force, it will be their English Language Proficiency that would be tested to maximum, since English has been given the throne of global language. With all these given factors, engineers need to communicate with its colleagues from diverse backgrounds and work in different counties across the globe. Language acquisition is essentially a skill-based learning experience, and technical colleges must prepare their students in the skills that will enable them to advance in the corporate sector. However, English is treated lightly in most engineering institutions, and as a result, the course has yet to meet its intended objectives of increasing communicative competence among students.

The concept of ESP (English for Specific Purpose) can be utilized as a tool to help students improve their communicative skills. By focusing on the learner's motivation for learning, ESP can assist in the development of content and teaching techniques that are suited for technical students. Language teachers must engage students in interactive teaching techniques such as allowing them to deal with real-life situations, requiring them to give presentations, dramatize situations, hold group discussions, or complete collaborative assignments, as well as moving away from the traditional lecture-based method and toward more student-centered activities. ESP, or extrasensory perception, is a concept that has been around for a long time. As language learning is a skill-oriented activity that necessitates a completely distinct pedagogic approach, the concept of ESP can be considered acceptable for teaching English to engineering students. As a result, the goal of this research is to underline and highlight the strategic function of ESP in English Language Teaching in order to assist students in learning English.

Keywords: Communicative Competence, English Language, Engineering, professionals, ESP.

Introduction

Engineering students need infinite skills to hold its relevance in the global surroundings in the new millennium. Communicative competence is crucial and is recognized by academic institutions and corporate industry. ABET Engineering criteria 2000 gives out 11 outcomes required by undergraduate engineering students. And such skills are vital for engineering aspirants to survive in the global arena.

The core competence of professional students is based on their confidence and in speaking and writing as well reading and listening. With the escalation of English medium institutions, during the course of time, our students seem to be accustomed to speaking in English fluently while conversing. Modern Professionals need to be exhibited to professional settings and presentational skills as a day-to-day necessity. The improvement in the country's economic front has resulted in the upscaling of communication technology. The advent of the internet, have vastly leveraged the promotion of education across all verticals. But at the same time, the idea of Equity and Equality needs to be redefined in the present context of the newly established notion of 'Inclusivity'.(Oza,2019) Yet there's adequate proof that graduate engineers lack the caliber required of communication skills, especially while compared to the desires of industry internationally. Communication skills are a constant feature of engineering jobs in industry; some graduates employed in the industry believe that, given the needs of the industry, communication skills education needs to be improved. In fact, communication skills are considered a valuable career booster.

Importance of Communicative Competence for engineering students

Engineering is the most popular field of study on the planet. To begin with, English is a tool that has a tremendous impact on engineering students' academic lives. While the majority of engineering topics are taught in English, solid English communication skills are required. Engineers must cope with a plethora of English lectures, tutorials, labs, and project reports during their academic careers.

It is critical to learn English skills during the job search process, including interviews and group discussions. They are forced to work in groups after obtaining the job because their tasks are rarely solved by an individual. As a result, being an engineer necessitates collaboration and communication with people from all over the world. To a significant extent, English is used as a working language. Engineers must be able to communicate with their co-workers in fluent English. As a result, English communication skills are critical in the academic and professional lives of engineering students.

English for Specific Purposes

There is a perspicuous necessity for powerful English conversation capabilities for engineer's withinside the present-day globalised environment. A syllabus in English will

intensify English language schooling and engineering students' communication skill capabilities. And this learned skills will assist and promote globalization of education. The idea of ESP attains further development in educating engineering students by focusing the learner's attention on specific terms and communication required in engineering fields. When English is taught for unique purpose (ESP), it is imperative to develop the communicative competence of the students for profession development. "ESP is a method to language coaching wherein all choices as to content material and method are based on the learner's reason for learning". (Tom Hutchinson and Alan Warters, 1987, p.19).

English in schools is less competitive by nature, but it has more syntactic restrictions. English is taught in technical institutes as a requirement for employment, vocational training, academic study, and professional development. Teachers must also establish an effective pedagogy to teach English to engineering students, as the notion of ESP is appropriate for teaching English to engineering students. Because students' learning styles differ, a language teacher may have a diverse group of students from various educational backgrounds. A teacher, on the other hand, is significantly more likely than his or her students to be sequential, conversational, and introspective. Students at engineering colleges or technical institutes learn best when they participate in active learning by completing assignments. Teachers are required to engage students in interactive teaching techniques by allowing them to deal with real-life situations, having them give presentations, dramatize situations, have group discussions, or have them do collaborative assignments because students need to develop their skills in learning the English language. Assessing students' prior knowledge is also an important part of teaching because the knowledge and mental framework they bring to class might influence their willingness to learn. ESP is not a single language product, but rather a method of language education that is guided by a specific and obvious objective for learning.

This explanation underlines the importance of a learner-centred approach in order for pupils to develop communicative competence. There are always specific goals in mind when learning English, such as technical, professional, or academic courses. The emphasis is on teaching approach rather than just the content of the subject. Because engineering students' levels of English proficiency vary, active feedback from the academically weaker students is not always possible.

Role of Communication Skills Lab in Empowering Communication Competence in Students

In India, an engineering student's success in "on campus recruitment" is largely determined by his or her ability to communicate. A Communication Skills Lab (CS Lab) is a facility where a student can develop his or her speaking and listening skills by learning a language with the support and guidance of an instructor through a system. The

Communication Skills Lab can accept input from tapes, audio and video recordings, CDs, and other sources. The sole external prerequisite for monitoring pupils during the learning process is an instructor who is fluent in English.

He can break the students into small groups so that they can either listen to or reply to the instructor's programme material or engage in conversational activities with one another. These labs include excellent remote monitoring capabilities, allowing the teacher to keep an eye on all of the students from a central location.

Role of Teachers in influencing Communication Competence

The human life has gone through the tremendous changes during the history of mankind and some of the best things what we enjoy today in life like Liberty, Freedom and Harmony have come to us after a lot of struggle. In the world of higher education also, this ideology has gone through many phases, throughout the world in general and in India in particular. (Oza, 2018)

Teachers' ability to handle such communicative sessions will be heavily influenced by the training they receive from experts. "Teachers must use varied instruction to accommodate pupils with diverse learning styles." (According to Tomlison, 2001). Teachers may be trained in pre-service or in-service scenarios to develop lessons, tasks, activities, learning resources, and materials that are appropriate for their purposes. (Hubbard & Levy, 2006, p.4 in Asmari). A good learning environment, together with appropriate resources, lessons, and worksheets tailored to the learners' needs, would aid in the development of a set of generic abilities that would be part of graduating engineers' academic and professional development. Students cannot be "taught," but they can be assisted in their learning.

The teacher's purpose in a student-centred classroom is to assist and encourage students to develop their abilities while maintaining their more traditional position as a source of information, advice, and knowledge while the students have more "talking time." Student-centred activities such as grammar and vocabulary classes are ideal. They have the ability to elicit vibrant debate and genuine communication in English. The goal of an English course in an engineering college is to teach students how to use English correctly and effectively in written and oral communication, as well as to provide them with a basic understanding of the content and format of technical reports and to expose them to different cultures through literature.

Criteria for Assessing Communication Competence.

- Adaptability (flexibility)
 - a. The ability to alter one's conduct and aims in response to the demands of others.
 - b. Consisting of six elements

- 1) Social contact - engagement in a variety of social situations
 - 2) Social composure - this refers to maintaining one's composure through accurate perception.
 - 3) Social confirmation - acknowledgement of a partner's objectives.
 - 4) Appropriate disclosure - being touchy to quantity and sort of info
 - 5) Articulation - cap potential to specific thoughts thru language
 - 6) Wit - cap potential to apply humour in adapting to social situations; ease tensions
- Conversational Involvement
 - a. Behavioural and cognitive activity;
 - b. cognitive participation as evidenced by interaction behaviours
 - c. Three factors were used to evaluate you.
 - 1) Responsiveness - knowing what to say, understanding roles, and interacting
 - 2) Perceptiveness - being aware of how others perceive you
 - 3) Attentiveness - listening without being distracted
 - Conversational Management
 - a. How communicators manage their relationships
 - b. Social situation adaptation and control
 - c. Who is in charge of the interaction's ebb and flow, as well as how smoothly it moves along?
 - d. How topics progress and change.
 - Empathy
 - a. The ability to show understanding and share emotional reactions to a situation
 - b. Does not have to result in the other person being "helped"
 - c. Cognitive understanding
 - d. Parallel emotions
 - Effectiveness
 - a. Achieving the conversation's goals
 - b. Achieving personal ambitions
 - c. A basic criterion for assessing competency
 - Appropriateness
 - a. Maintaining expectations in a specific setting
 - b. A basic criterion for assessing competency

Conclusion

Engineering students' English communication abilities are acknowledged as a critical component in their academic lives and careers. It necessitates the application of integrated methodologies in order to support sophisticated communication abilities, which are in high

demand in both industry and society. Writing can be taught and must be taught, although many a poor beginner has stalled on the fantasy that it is all inspiration to be waited for, or has defended bad writing on the grounds that it is straight from the heart and not to be tinkered with by those who apply unfeeling editorial techniques. Everything can be taught. Mozart took music lessons. Mika Häkkinen took driving lessons. Perhaps they had something innate to start with, but perhaps it would have stayed innate had they never had lessons. (Oza,2019)Language and communication enhancement courses are a vital part of continuous learning, and they will eventually contribute to the process of lifelong learning. By streamlining essential communication abilities, this should aid developments in engineering and, therefore, engineering education.

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