

The Role of English Language Teacher in Developing Communication Skills among the Students of Engineering and Technology

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Abstract: Communication refers to the exchange of thoughts and ideas with the intention of conveying information. In the 21st century, acquiring basic skills in communication has become essential for personal and professional growth and success. Hence, a student of science and technology cannot afford to ignore communication basics. In the globalize context, students of Engineering and Technology need a specific set of language skills for their success both in education and career. Effective communication skills are indispensable to move up on the corporate ladder. Having this in mind, the English language teacher has to play an important role by taking a responsibility to help the students in developing their communication skills. This paper attempts to highlight the vital role of the English language teacher in developing the required communication skills among the students of Engineering and Technology.

Key Words: Communication Skills, English language teacher, Engineering and Technology students

I. INTRODUCTION

Effective Communication is all about conveying messages to other people clearly and unambiguously with as little distortion as possible. For a successful life in any sphere of activity, communication skills are of primary importance. Today's organizations are constantly looking forward for the candidates who have sound communication skills in addition to good technical knowledge. Those who cannot communicate well will lose out; they get much less credit for their achievements than they deserve. Thus, effective communication is a must to influence people and win their minds and hearts. Unfortunately many Engineering students do not possess these required skills and as a result they are not offered good jobs in the reputed MNC's. Having kept this factor in mind, the English language teacher should give utmost importance to the English communication development which is essential in the present scenario with an objective to make the job aspirants gainfully employed. Now let us see how an English language teacher can be creative and successful in teaching different segments of communication.

The Role of English Language Teacher:

The first and foremost important thing that the teacher of English has to do is to help the students in overcoming their fears about communication and motivate them to develop more positive perceptions of communication activities. He is expected to play the roles such as – counselor, motivator, communication skills trainer etc. The English language teachers must also be aware of the latest technologies, methods and approaches of language teaching, explore new ideas and having a certain amount of specialization in the concerned subject.

Teaching of Listening Skills to Engineering & Technology students – The Role of English teacher:

Listening is often a neglected skill. There is a good saying in English. "One cannot become a good communication unless one is a good listener". So, the teachers of English should make students to realize one important thing i.e., to become effective communicator, students should be good listeners first. Just as a child learns to speak after listening to his close ones, so do those who learn a new language. It is the responsibility of the teacher to drag the students' attention and concentration skills to the maximum extent. To develop listening skills among the Engineering and Technology students the English language teacher can effectively utilize the language labs. Scientific advancements have produced a number of innovative products to assist the learning process. With the help of head phones and ear phones the teacher can easily develop the listening skills by asking the students to listen and learn various sounds, rhythms, tunes and stress patterns of English language. In

In addition to this, the English teacher should insist his students to learn at their own pace and assess their proficiency by listening to various audio materials to enhance their listening skills. The teacher should also be well equipped to use all the latest technical aids available. The English teacher can also do the following activity to develop listening skills among the Engineering and Technology students.

Before the commencement of class, choose a short article from a newspaper or a magazine and read it to the class. After you have finished reading ask a few questions and ask students to write their answers on the sheet of paper. After giving a few minutes time again ask them if anyone knew the answers to all of the questions. It is unlikely that any one person will have answered all of the questions correctly. Ask students why they did not remember much after listening to the story. Discuss how they could improve their listening skills.

Teaching of Speaking Skills to Engineering & Technology students – The Role of English teacher:

Speaking, in English is a very important part of the language. But of late, not only the engineering students but also other students of different courses develop a sort of fear to speak in English. The teacher should come to their rescue and motivate the students overcome this fear as quickly as possible. Most of the students find it difficult to convey their thoughts, because of a strong influence of their regional language and mother tongue. In order to overcome this particular problem in the student community, the English teacher should first make the students feel ‘at home’ when he helps the students speak in English. This can be done through various fun filled activities such as – Group discussions, Debates, Role Plays, Just a Minute Sessions etc.

The teacher can adapt a student-centered approach to teaching. In this way, the student is made to speak most of the time and ample opportunities should be created for the students to use English not only in the college but also outside of it. Repeated exposure to the language will prove to be beneficial. Above all, the teacher should encourage the students of Engineering and Technology by asking them to try to become less hesitant and more confident while they are speaking with someone. Students should be constantly motivated to speak in English rather than in their mother tongue. The English teacher can also do the following activity to develop speaking skills among the Engineering and Technology students.

Debate is the best way that the teachers can provide their students with the opportunity to practice their communication skills. Research suggests that debate encourages different types of responses, help students to develop convincing arguments, and allows teachers and students to learn from one another. In addition to this, the English language teachers can also organize mock interviews, oral presentations to sharpen the communication skills of the learners.

Teaching of Reading Skills to Engineering & Technology students – The Role of English teacher:

Reading is an important communicative process and reading skills are probably the most important language skills required for academic and professional purposes. Comprehension in reading refers to the identification of the central theme, main ideas, supporting details, and writing patterns. Francis Bacon rightly said, “Reading makes a man complete”. Reading helps a student improve his vocabulary, develops the comprehension ability and increases the language style. Hence, the teacher should take this into consideration and help the student master the skills of reading.

To develop the Reading skills in the Engineering and Technology students the English language teacher can give a few Reading comprehensions in the form of stories, descriptions and narrations. The learners can be encouraged by allowing them to follow the different methods of reading such as skimming and scanning. Following this the students can be asked to pick out the difficult words and to derive the meaning of those words from the context. In this way, the students will improve their vocabulary besides comprehending the given passage without the help of a dictionary.

In order to be an efficient reader, one needs to develop visual perception skills. Visual perception is a basic requirement for reading effectiveness because we recognize a word through sight. Inaccurate visual perception may lead to visual misunderstanding and lack of comprehension. It may also lead to confusion and misunderstanding. The English language teacher should encourage his students to develop their visual perception skills.

Teaching of Writing Skills to Engineering & Technology students – The Role of English teacher:

Francis Bacon right opined that “Writing makes a man exact”. So to make a man exact the teacher should not forget to teach the students the skill of writing. But writing is rather a difficult task which requires the conscious efforts. Language laboratory will be a good resource for the English teachers to develop the writing skills of the students. Writing can be practiced through typing on gap fill exercises and model format for letters, reports and resumes. Later these can be observed and edited by the instructor/teacher through the teacher’s console. The English language teacher has to remind his students very frequently to brush up on grammar rules

which are essential to become a good writer. The English teacher can also do the following activity to develop writing skills among the Engineering and Technology students.

The English teacher can ask the students to write articles on recent issues and write descriptive essays about a person or place they have recently come across. Conduct writing workshops on letter, report, resume, poster and project writing and provide remedial feedback to the learners. One of the quickest ways to improve writing is through feedback. In this process, the language teacher needs to point out the errors and also help the students correcting them. The teacher should also guide the students to make a conscious commitment to strive for better writing every day.

II. CONCLUSION

Of late, teaching English to the Engineering and Technology students is a great challenge. Communication skills among these said students can be developed by rigorous training programmes and lot of practice work. It requires persistent efforts. Due to the unprecedented importance given to good communication skills, it has become imperative on the part of students to master them. As teachers of English, it is incumbent upon us to help students discover the astonishing power of the English language and it is our bounden duty to play a pivotal role in developing the four skills of English language among the students of Engineering and Technology.

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