

Motivating the Tertiary Level Students to Utilize Technology for Enhancing Communication Skills



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Abstract—Motivation gives energy to human beings. Motivating the students to enhance their communication skills is equally important to teaching the skills. English language teaching for tertiary level students needs special skills as many students do not pay much attention to language subjects. ELT teachers should be more conscious of the mentality of students to teach the communication skills. College students are very much attached with electronic gadgets especially smart phones. Teachers can customize this attitude of students to improve their communication skills by making them to understand the ownership of learning. Students should be made to realize the necessity of proficiency in English language. The youngsters are aware of the importance of mastery in English language in the globalized era. So, teachers have to sensitize and explain using mobile phone to attain the goal. Encouraging the students to utilize modern electronic gadgets like smart phones to develop the English language skills has a very good effect. The teacher should also go beyond the syllabus considering the application and practicality of language learning. Assessment method for non-native speakers should synchronize with their language learning. Written examination alone is not sufficient to evaluate the language competence of the students. All the four skills-LSRW- should be examined at graduate level students. If the students get motivated to use the technology for developing their communication skills, the teachers can easily impart language skills.

Key words: Technology, Communication skills, Motivation, Tertiary level students.

I. INTRODUCTION

Communication skills in English are vital to have comfortable life in this 'globalised village'. Insufficient language skills will pave the way not only to ineffective communication but also to miscommunication. All we learn from the educational institution may not be used in our day-to-day life but once we learn effective communication skills, it would be an asset to the rest of our life. Sometime we may have knowledge in some specific field or area, if we want to convey it to this global society; we should have reasonable communication skills in English.

Thiruvalluvar says in his famous couplet on communication, "The learned lacking expressions are flowers without fragrance". Those who have learned something and if they are not able to explain it to others, they are like flowers without fragrance.

Motivating the college students to learn communication skills is equally important to teaching the language skills. Everybody knows the importance of English language but the youngsters do not realize how it would affect their life in the globalised era. Generally college students do not give importance to the language subjects as they give to core subjects. Two reasons are there for the students to have such a tendency.

1. Evaluation pattern of the language subject (he /she can clear the subject even if he / she does not possess the reasonable skills in the four forms- LSRW of the language).

2. The students have a belief that they have learnt this language subject in their school itself and it does not have any new concepts to learn (so he /she does not get attracted to it)

Younger generation especially the student community is fond of using electronic gadgets like computer, smartphone. This tendency of the students can be utilized to improve their communication skills.

II. COMMUNICATION IS AN ART

Language teachers should be more conscious of understanding the mentality of the students to reach the objective. Students should be highly motivated to understand that appropriate words should be used in appropriate situation in oral as well as written to have effective communication. It is a lifelong process but it is an art. The Teacher should make the students to understand the ownership of learning. Then the students get motivated and the teachers can reach the goal even if they take less effort. One can be a good or effective teacher only after understanding the mentality of the students and the natural sphere of the subject. The teacher should take freedom from university curriculum or the teacher should go beyond the syllabus considering the application and the practicality of the language learning. The university is testing merely the memory power and the writing skill of the students. Some students are able to find short cuts to clear the written exams like mugging up an essay and writing it in the examination. Memorising some rhymes or poems may be good for students. Mugging up and memorising is not the same.

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Mugging is a type of memorizing, but it does not follow the logic of memorizing a thing. Our brain works on patterns. Mugging things does not create any patterns on the contrary, a set of neurons that have whatever one learns. This will make it harder for us to remember the information we store. However, when we memorize, we apply logic and patterns on the concepts we are learning, therefore, retrieving them better. So the teacher may encourage the students to memorise formulas and rules and discourage mugging up things.

Every language has a set of pattern that has to be acquired for which the environment should be created to acquire the pattern. Saraswathi (2019) says, "The word order is very important in English. We often forget this because in Indian languages you need not worry about the order of words in a sentence. Whether you say it in the active voice or the passive voice, the meaning remains the same. Our languages are inflectional, but English is not." Lot of listening exercises should be given to the students to grasp the word order in English language.

The teacher should take effort to conduct activities such as giving chance to make Presentation in front of the class, working in pairs, Role Play and Group Discussion. Imaginary situations can be given to the students who may be asked to take decisions, to perform according to the situation. The topics for group discussion can be assigned current issues which are popular among youngsters and discussed in the media. When the students participate in the discussion, they may even deviate from the topic given to them. The teacher need not restrict them. The students can be asked to give feedback and finally the teacher can give feedback on the activities. The teacher can ask the students to watch videos related to this topic in social media in English. Robin R B, (2009) describes "the digital storytelling has emerged over the powerful teaching and learning tool that engages both teachers and their students." These kinds of activities make the students to continue their learning after college hours.

Man being a social animal cannot live without having communication with society. The life span of the human being should always have compulsion to communicate with society. We cannot do anything with this birth and death but we can do something with this life. Every social change or activities will have an effect in individual's life. An individual's development varies on the basis of his communication and interpersonal skills with the society. [As the famous epigram appears in Chennai city auto rickshaws "Un vazhkkai un kaiyil" (Your life is in your hand).

III. INDIAN ENGLISH

We can no longer say that English is a foreign language. It is our own official language. Now, India is ruled by Indians. Our representative (M.P.) is saying our problems to the Prime Minister in our Parliament in English. Our President and our Prime Minister are addressing to the nation in English. We can no longer say; "I'm a Thamizhan or Indian". We are global citizens. We are forced to be global citizens. One may even be an ardent lover of Tamil language but as a global citizen one has to have good communication skills in the global language for comfortable survival.

Indian English Writing is a course studied by the students of English literature in India. In this course, novel, poem and prose written by Indian natives have been prescribed. In addition to this, writings on science and technology are always done in English.

Ushioda, E portrays "L2 motivation is currently being reconceptualized in the context of contemporary theories of self and identity – that is, people's sense of who they are, how they relate to the social world and what they want to become in the future."

Since India is a multilingual country, we use English as a second language and link language to communicate with the other language speakers within India and the rest of the world. So career planning and goal setting are very related with English language proficiency.

IV. SUITABILITY OF ANDRAGOGY & RESULTS

In Indian education system, English language has been introduced in the entry level itself. This makes the students to familiarize the English language. But, the students who studied in vernacular medium are not able to communicate well because they studied English as a language subject and other subjects in vernacular medium. As a result, they lack communication skills. Many students who studied in English medium schools also do not have sufficient communication skills because they did not have speaking practice. Both these category students can improve their communication skills if andragogy method is practised with the help of technology. The difference between Andragogy and pedagogy should be understood well.

S.no	Particulars	Pedagogy	Andragogy
1	Definition	The methods and practices used in teaching, especially of children.	The methods and practices used in teaching adults.
2	Focus	On a teacher's methods of transferring knowledge to a student, who is dependent on the teacher's methods and understanding.	On independent, self-directed, and/or cooperative learning among adults.
3	Authority	Teacher controls the learning experience for children, and much of what is taught is based on rigid curriculum.	Adults have control over much of their learning experience and must be motivated to learn. Can often seek out new or different learning experience at will.

When we consider the nature of language learning, andragogy is more suitable than pedagogy. Thiruvalluvar on learning said, 'For a learned person, wherever he goes, he can feel that every place and country is his own. When reality is being like this, why there are people who are not at all learning until their death.'

Even if we take the exact couplet in which the word 'learning' itself gives extensive meaning of language learning and knowledge learning. Then this language must be global English language.

For improving communication skills, Inter-college interactive programmes can be arranged. The students of different colleges can be permitted to participate in the language-based activities with the presence of a facilitator. It should also be videotaped and then displayed to the same group of students while the facilitator make the students to understand effective and ineffective standard of their own communication capabilities.

It's a known fact that those who succeeded in their life have good communication skills as well as interpersonal skills. Communication skills and interpersonal skills are interrelated with one another. Experts say that interpersonal skills may vary from person to person depending upon their nature. Communication skills and intrapersonal skills will have a serious effect on attitude and interpersonal relations. The attitude of a person is evaluated based on his/ her communication and interpersonal skills. So the students should be made to understand the natural process of language learning. "Learning is about how we perceive and understand the world and finally making meaning" (Marton and Booth, 1997). So, students should be clarified on language learning and knowledge learning. By making the students to realize these aspects, they would be longing to improve their communication skills using technology. Presenting some data and facts of the language learning and its benefits, adult learners would be motivated to utilize technology to enhance their communication skills apart from classroom activities.

The following start up motivations can be given to the students for improving communication skills:

1. Imagine yourself in the future
2. Remember that you are already good
3. Remember there is a lot that you don't know
4. Use your English whenever you can
5. Talk to people about English
6. Find a friend who is learning English
7. Spend some money on learning English
8. Remember that learning English requires action
9. Try to observe great people's interpersonal skills
10. Have a habit of reading good text.

V. CONCLUSION

Motivation gives energy and makes behavioural change which will pave the way to achieve success in the desired field. Therefore, English language acquisition for second language learners could be made easy through technology. Motivation gives energy to human beings. Motivating the students to enhance their communication skills is equally important to teaching the skills. English language teaching for tertiary level students can be made easy through motivation so that the adult learner would pay attention to language subjects. By making the students to realize the necessity of proficiency in English language to achieve the goal through mobile like electronic gadgets, the ELT teachers can succeed in their business. The youngsters are aware of the importance of mastery in English language in

the globalized era. Hence, learning has to be sensitized and linked with technological developments.

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