

LANGUAGE TEACHING IN TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

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ABSTRACT

English is the most sophisticated language the world has ever seen or will see. The certain characteristics of this language take us to a comfort zone making us feel that it is not just a language but something more than this. The height of civilization, cream of socio-economic position, coveted honour, cherished wisdom etc. are very well associated with this international language. So, teaching-learning system has to be improved for professional uplift. The first job of English teacher is to implant a strong passion in the heart of all students. The students should be able to express their qualities freely and effectively in their professional life. The teacher should help students appreciate the right pronunciation with proper intonation and learn listening, speaking, reading & writing (LSRW) effectively. The students should be able to develop an acute sense to differentiate between General English and Technical English. Only on acquiring the necessary command over GE, the learner is encouraged to move ahead with TE. English certainly has got an immense potentiality in the job market. Naturally one has to be pragmatic about language development in his career. With due respect to our mother language, in this respect mother tongue even can be sidelined. The English teacher has to face a lot of challenges to make students comfortable with English as most of them come from vernacular medium background. But a good teacher can overcome them in due course with the help of continual practices.

KEYWORDS: Teaching-Learning, Professional, Pronunciation, Intonation, General English, Technical English

INTRODUCTION

English is the most sophisticated and charming language the world has ever seen or will see. Not because this is the language of the developed people of the world but because of the certain fine characteristics we find and do enjoy in our life. It takes us to such a comfort zone that we start feeling that English is not just a language but something more than this. It is the very essence of life. Whatever we require in our modern life we get in this language – height of civilization, cream of socio-economic position, coveted honour, cherished wisdom etc. In fact, had English not been there world would have been something else. The educated peoples all over the world are thankfully grateful to this international language. If we go back to world history we can see the long stretched hands of English language spreading all over the world and offering English education covered almost all the nations of the world. So in order to get our beloved students established, particularly in professional spheres of activity, the teaching-learning system has to be very necessarily improved. Then only they will sparkle like real gems in professional life. And that is true job of English teacher with the help of communicative skills and all sorts of grooming acumens including soft skills and personality development.

Inducement of Passion for English LSRW

The first job of an English teacher is to implant a strong passion in the heart of all students. They should be made able to understand and appreciate the magical importance of this language and its scope and practices. That the

quintessence of teaching English is to help students internalise the language, so that they can express their qualities freely and effectively in their professional life for the smooth development of their career has to be the theme of our teaching English. The right pronunciation with proper intonation should be there in every teacher's teaching English as it really carries the actual flavour of English. Unlike teaching any engineering subject the teacher should make students speak as much as possible on any topic convenient to them. They should be told not to worry about their mistakes. Rather they should be glad of their mistakes as mistakes lead to learning. The right essence of teaching English is 'more you mistake, more you learn'. The students should be well induced to realize that as a professional one has to have strong command over the English language to enhance his communication skill, which in turn will help him perform efficiently. However, English teaching is based on Listening, Speaking, Reading & Writing (LSRW) technique. Not only in the classrooms but also everywhere they go and everything they do they should use English fearlessly. They must understand all these four factors of English learning are inter-dependent. In order to be a good speaker one has to be an excellent listener and good habit of reading begets good writing.

General English & Technical English

General English is the English language spoken & written by the common people, educated or uneducated, having no connection with technical world. In order to develop general English one has to take care of developing writing competence, building vocabulary, knowing single words for a group of words and some useful phrases & idioms of everyday use and above all nurturing an acute sense of sentence structure & transformation. Technical English on the other hand is the specialized version of the English language spoken & written by the people belonging to the technical world for the purpose of fulfilling their technical missions. The purpose of technical writing may vary according to situation. The technicalities involved are subtle depending upon organizational objectives. General English concentrates more on the language in general. It aims at giving the learners a course that may satisfy the urge to know, understand and appreciate the language. When it comes to TE we have to give importance to needs analysis of the learners. General purpose English facilitates the learners to acquire a good knowledge of lexis, structures, content that enables the adequate level of mastery in all basic skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading & Writing. Even though the words used in TE are common words, yet they are being used to serve the needs of technical communication.

Necessity & Execution of Technical English

English for technical students is absolutely necessary because when they will join the industry they must be able to understand the language of the particular industry, failing which they will be discarded as dead coins. It involves the reading of research documents or academic journals that may enhance students' technical knowledge and is in a way a process of technical knowledge updating. The vital information gathered from experience and exposure needs to be shared with the community at large as a sort of return of favour. Only on acquiring the necessary command over GE, the learner is encouraged to move ahead with TE. Eventually the knowledge and competence he gains thorough GE enables and ensures sustained interest in the learning and usage of TE, resulting in the assertive use of TE at work place. Workplace requirement has now become much more demanding and complex. The success mantra today is sound technical knowledge and presence of mind complemented by proficient communication skills. In fact, many a time we happen to see that some engineering personnel lacking knowledge very well overcome the particular problem with the help of excellent communication skill. Knowledge of TE thus gained facilitates the access to the resources of new information and promotes active participation in various interdisciplinary cooperative programs at the international level.

Pragmatic Approach to English

In today's world people want to get education measured in terms of earning opportunities. It is not even regarded as important to pursue a certain course on the basis of one's liking. Of course, it will not be right to think that love for the subject does not matter at all. It matters. But one pragmatically realizes that love for the subject has to be timed with the present job scenario. Similarly, nobody thinks that as an educated person he must know his mother language very well. Respect to mother tongue, however, is altogether a separate golden idea and we must nurture it ideally, not professionally. If the particular language has no potentiality in the job market, then everybody thinks it is useless to learn that language, no matter it is his mother language. So they opt for that language, i.e., English which certainly has got an immense potentiality in the job market. In technical education also, students naturally are not at all interested to put any emphasis on vernacular. The vernacular development looks like a human ethics which does not sell in the market of career development. It may seem ideally wrong, but is pragmatically alright.

Use of English Language Software in Lab

General methodology followed in teaching English to technical students is to make them speak, write, listen & read rightly with the help of language software at the language laboratory in every technical college. At first, they are made to listen to good English speech through CD & Public Address System in the lab. Then whatever they listened they practise speaking in the same way with same intonation. They are made to read English newspaper & magazine for reading practice. Then they have to write in their own words and get corrected. More they practise all these things, more they learn the language sharpening their grammatical skill in the theory classes. They realize that their communication techniques learned in theory classes get a good dimension at the lab classes what they enjoy to the core. The speech they make using microphone, laptop, projector, screen etc. creates a storm of enjoyment in their mind. They are thrilled to see them speaking after video recording.

Challenges Faced by English Teacher

The recurrent challenges faced by an English teacher teaching English are i) students hesitate to speak English as the majority come from vernacular background, ii) many of them wrongly think that English is not much required for Engineering course, iii) their fear for the language and iv) a kind of social shame for not being able to speak English fluently. Then the teacher has to help them like a true friend by telling them convincingly so that they believe that one can even learn English effectively and be an excellent speaker. They should feel an urge at heart for English and be passionate about it. The teacher should induce in their mind that there should be no question of fear or shame about it because fear is the greatest enemy and if they can be rid of fear or shame they will surely learn. The only thing they need is sincerity.

CONCLUSIONS

Naturally finding solution for these challenges is very important. The only solution is to help students feel comfortable for English. The facilitators should help students grow a strong passion for the subject, so that they can overcome their problem and become sincere and dedicated to learn English properly and thereby get a mastery over the language. For this purpose, English cinema, theatre, story books & vocal music are very helpful indeed. Once they start relishing the language they will reach the goal.

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