

Dynamic and Novel Role of Esp Teachers in Engineering Education System of Odisha in India

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ABSTRACT

Effective communication skills are indispensable for the growth of an individual today. The English language, in particular, has become vitally essential in the lives of young people who aspire to advance their careers anywhere in the world. At present times besides technical knowledge and hard skills, employers look for sound communication skills in an engineering graduate. Thus, the professional profile of a modern qualified engineer should include command on communication skills, which consists of verbal, non-verbal communication. This paper attempts to unravel the role of English Language teachers who have a special role to play in shaping the students future, as English is a skilled subject and requires a lot of patience, practice and expertise. Let's analyse how a teacher, his pedagogy, efficiency, training effects the engineering student's outlook and Skill. It is substantiated by Questionnaires, Surveys and case Studies.

KEYWORDS: ESP, Role of ESP Teacher, EST, Teacher Education, Status of Odisha.

1. INTRODUCTION

Effective communication skills are indispensable for the growth of an individual today. The English language, in particular, has become vitally essential in the lives of young people who aspire to advance their careers anywhere in the world. English language learning has therefore become the gauging criteria for selecting an individual. Language learning is not the same as learning any other subject, it is acquired by skill. It does not confine to represent information by rote learning the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking have to be practiced and expertise. Being able to communicate well is the most important factor when seeking a placement in a company or institution. Communication involves proper grasping, interpretation and transfer of information from individual to groups. In the era of LPG (Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization), good communication skills are the keys to unlock the doors of success. At present times besides technical knowledge and hard skills, employers look for sound communication skills in an engineering graduate. Thus, the professional profile of a modern qualified engineer should include command on communication skills, which consists of verbal, non-verbal communication.

Figure 1.Components of Communication skills

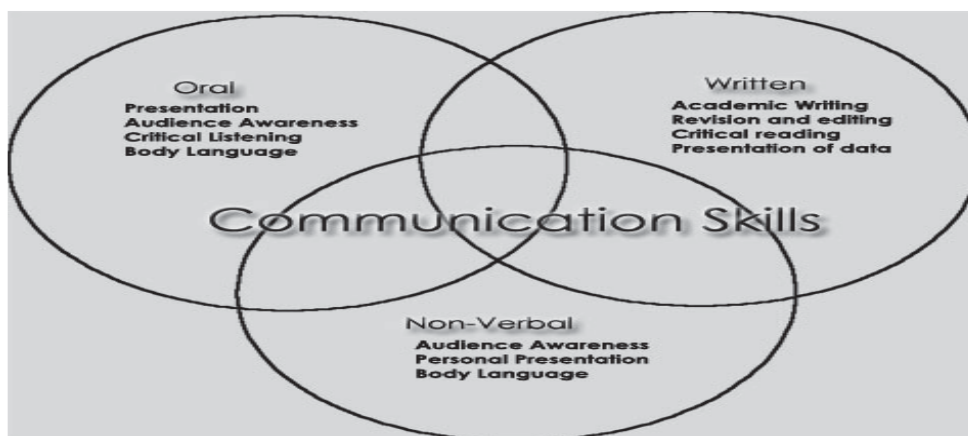


Figure Source: Scienceuniverse.edu.au.com

2. STATUS OF ENGLISH IN ODISHA

Orissa is a technically fast developing state. Previously a neglected aspect of the state, which was not a focus of the Indian government, **education in Orissa** is witnessing a rapid transformation. Its capital city, Bhubaneswar, is emerging as a knowledge hub in India with several new public and private universities. The literacy percentage of Orissa is 73.5%, which is marginally below of the national average of 74.0%. Engineering education has become the demand of the day improving highly. Due to the high standard of education in Orissa Students from all over India are coming to Orissa for higher studies. It gets students from heterogeneous capabilities and skills. Today engineering professionals who are proficient in communication skills have a considerable edge over those who have not. Statistics prove that Professionals who fall short of convincing soft skills are left back in the race of time. The main reasons behind this lacuna in Odia Students are as follows:

- Below average proficiency in English language.
- Lack of exposure and low level of confidence.
- Less usability of the language
- Less emphasis on speaking skills.
- Dearth of skilful trainers.
- Casual attitude towards oral and written skills.
- Inhibition to use the foreign language
- 8. High amount of Mother tongue Interference.

Any perfect system has to have three ideal components, i.e. perfect MEN(that is Teachers, students, administrative persons), METHOD (that is perfect way to accomplish the desired goal), MATERIALS(syllabus, aids, books etc).so For any institute to prosper, Men or the teachers serve as the bone marrow and backbone. The English Language teachers have a special role to play in shaping the students future, as English is a skilled subject and requires a lot of patience, practice and expertise. Lets analyse how a teacher, his pedagogy, efficiency, training effects the engineering student's outlook and Skill.

3.ROLE OF THE LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN UPGRADING STUDENTS COMPETENCE

Prof. Humayun Kabir remarked that without good Teachers, even the best of the system is bound to fail; with good teachers, even the defects of a system can be largely overcome. It signifies that the whole of the system of education revolves around the teacher. A teacher is the spiritual mentor and intellectual father of learners. He leads the learners from darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge and understanding and helps to keep the lamp of civilisation burning.

The teaching of English for scientific, technological, and technical purposes as a specialized activity is now emerging as one of the most important and rapidly expanding branches of Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) / Teaching of English as a Second Language (TESL). It has assumed greater significance in the globalized context. Richards (1975), has said that Industrialization and technological innovation are a major aspect of national development in many countries in Southeast Asia today, and educators are increasingly faced with the problem of how English teaching programmes can most effectively meet the challenge created by these changes. This not only means the planning and the preparation of new courses and materials suited to the specialised language requirements of those engaged in Science and Technology, but also a re-examination and reorganization of English Language Teaching at all levels to ensure that language teaching objectives meet the demands of the society.

Fiorito(2005) points out an ESP teacher, one must play multidimensional roles of being an organizer of courses, to set learning objectives, to establish a positive learning environment in the classroom, and to evaluate student's progress.

3.1.To Plan and Frame Need Based Courses

The Teacher has to set learning goals and then transform them into an instructional program with the timing of activities. One of the main tasks will be selecting, designing and

organizing course materials, supporting the students in their efforts, and providing them with feedback on their progress.

3.2.Setting the goal and outcomes

She/he arranges the conditions for learning in the classroom and set long-term goals and short-term objectives for student's achievement. Teacher's knowledge of students' potential is central in designing a syllabus with realistic goals that takes into account the students' concern in the learning situation.

3.3. Creating a Learning Environment

Teacher's skills for communication and mediation create the classroom atmosphere. Students acquire language when they have opportunities to use the language in classroom with other speakers. Being their teacher, He/ She can structure effective communication skills in the classroom. Good language learners are also great risk-takers, since they must make many errors in order to succeed: however, in ESP classes, they are handicapped because they are unable to use their native language competence to present themselves as well-informed adults. That is why the teacher should create a student supportive classroom, boosting the learners self-confidence.

3.4. Student Evaluation

The teacher is an observer that helps students identify their language learning problems and find solutions to them, find out the skills they need to focus on, and take responsibility for making choices which determine what and how to learn. Teacher will act as a measuring machine of the student's progress. The role of the teacher undergoes fundamental changes with the delivery of a multidimensional second-language program. As the classroom moves from teacher-centred to student-centred and from a language-based to a needs-based approach, the teacher's responsibilities also change as it is a paradigm shift from Pedagogy to andragogy.

3.5. Create meaningful Contexts to use the Language

The primary role of the teacher in a multidimensional language class is to establish relevant and meaningful contexts where the student can practice language. It is the teacher who acts as facilitator, resource person and language model for the second- language classroom. If developing units, the teacher needs to predict the possible needs of the students and have communicative language activities readily available to meet these needs. The activities should be designed so that the students experience a high degree of success. Positive experiences in the classroom lead to an excellent attitude toward language and culture.

The constant re-entry and review of linguistic content throughout the different units enable the students to practise and internalize the language. Although this spiral approach is ideal in language learning, the teacher must be aware of the program objectives and ensure that the objectives are being met. Instruction and evaluation must reflect these objectives.

3.6.Changing Status of the Language Teacher

The Teacher continues to serve as a language model for the students. While remaining the person with whom the students will communicate most often, one of the main functions of the teacher will now be to discover or invent ways to encourage students to communicate meaningfully with each other. Instead of actively directing and controlling all activities the teacher will aim to set up conditions for meaningful practice and then take on the role of a resource person. As the teacher moves toward being a facilitator of language learning, the students acquire skills that will enable them to be independent language learners.

Teachers should have more knowledge about theories and methods of second language instruction. This can be done through reading and attending workshops, professional development days and conferences whenever the opportunity lends itself. Mini-immersion or immersion courses are instrumental in providing the opportunity for improvement/maintenance of communicative competence. He/She enters an Engineering curriculum.

3.7. The list of teacher ideal qualities selected by the students

Table.1. Qualities of an ESP Teacher

Teacher roles	Primary qualities	Secondary qualities
Organizer	3.1%	30.2%
Instructor	4.5%	14%
Controller	2.2%	7.7%
Facilitator	13.5%	66.2%
Counsellor	19%	24.8%
Participant	20	28.8%
Expert, resource	11.7%	13.1%
Evaluator	0.9%	8.5%
Creator of conditions	7.7%	68.
Motivator	22.1%	61.7%
Learner	9.9%	22.5%

4. ROLE OF TEACHER EDUCATION

In CV Wood's *Dictionary of Education*, teacher education has been defined as "all formal and informal activities and experiences that help to qualify a person to assume the responsibilities as a member of educational profession or to discharge his responsibilities more effectively". On the other hand, Munroe defines it "Teacher education refers to the total educative experiences which contributes to the preparation of a person for teaching position in school but the main aim is more commonly employed to designate the programme of courses and other experiences offered by an educational institution for the announced purposes of preparing persons for teaching and other educational service and for contribution

to their growth in competency for such service. Such teacher education programmes are offered in teachers' college and normal schools and colleges and universities.

4.1. Aims and objectives of teacher education:

- The formal training of teachers is supposed to assist the teacher in understanding the traditional principles, approaches and techniques as well as the recent developments and researches in pedagogy of teaching.
- It helps the teacher to understand the nature and background of learner- their aptitudes, abilities, instincts, emotions, sentiments and ambitions.
- Teacher education helps the teacher organising various programmes and co curricular activities.
- It equips the teacher in assessing and evaluating the performance and attainments of learners methodically.
- Teacher education may be regarded as one of the pre-requisites for the promotion and continuation of more purposeful and better planned education.

So the system of teacher education determines to a great extent the character of an educational system. It cannot be denied that a teacher in general and particularly a teacher of English requires a Professional training in order to be groomed for a teaching career..To quote Dr. A.K Sharma, "That professional training provides the teacher an insight into theoretical and practical problems of English Language Teaching is undeniably justifiable. Equally important, however, is the teacher's genuine interest in teaching language, without which all his knowledge and training will, we are afraid produce no result."In this regard Prof. Krishnaswamy observes we generally think of teaching as what we do in the classrooms with students. Unfortunately, this view leaves unseen the important aspect of teaching, like private thinking, analysis, reflection and research that underlie the teaching profession. No doubt, language teaching is primarily a practical activity but practice on its own can only be understood and improves when it is systematically examined and explored."

4.2. SURVEY

A teacher can be a true guide and mentor. Taken a survey of some B. Tech students regarding the teacher qualities of being a motivator, their responses are as follows

Table.2. Questionnaire on Teacher Motivation.

Statement: I get motivated when:	Agree in %	Disagree in %	Don't know
Teacher calls me by Name	90	8	2
The teacher has good personality	76	18	06
The teacher has good pronunciation and vocabulary	78	20	02
The teacher has good Subject Knowledge	90	08	02
Clear doubts of English convincingly	96	01	03
Allows me to use the language freely without intervention	67	24	09
Creates meaningful contexts to use the language	86	12	02
Corrects me frequently	60	35	05
Teaches grammar prescriptively than descriptively	32	66	02
Has good presentation skills	98	02	00
Teaches Sometimes in bilingual method	40	30	10
Organisation activities based on LSRW	95	04	01
Does Error analysis in order to rectify	70	28	02
Does a lot of language activities	75	23	02
Appraised me when i was correct	100	0	00
Gave me time to rephrase, restructure language	87	17	05
Cross checked the instruction	90	06	04
Reinforced important concept and studies	97	01	02

often			
Used Plenty of multimedia and audio visual aids	90	08	02

Table.2. Teacher Motivation questionnaire,

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

From the above questionnaire it is clear that most of the students get motivated by the teacher's appraisal (100%), by reinforcement of concepts (97%), use of multimedia (90%), the expertise and subject knowledge of the teacher. With the rise of motivation level, the performance factor of the students also increases tremendously. They want the teacher to be a facilitator rather than a dictator.

6. CHOOSING THE CORRECT METHOD OF TEACHING TECHNICAL ENGLISH

A method determines what and how much is taught (selection), the order in which is taught, (gradation), how the meaning and form are conveyed (presentation) and what should be done to make use of the unconscious. (Repetition). A teacher of English should be very particular about selecting the correct method.

6.1. Factors determining the choice of the method:

While deciding a method a number of questions come to mind:

- 1) What kind of English is being taught?
- 2) What will be the use of ability in English?
- 3) How much knowledge in English is required to carry out the purpose?
- 4) How long the course should be?
- 5) What examinations will be imposed and how are they related to the aims of teaching?

What teaching method is to be followed? etc, so we need a comprehensive approach.

6.2. The Need for an Eclectic Approach

At present, teachers of English around the world prefer some form of communicative teaching and learning, rather than the audio-lingual method and its derivatives. However, we must remember that a successful teacher is not necessarily biased in favour of one method or the other. He should be first of all competent in and comfortable with the methods he wants to use. He should be able to select from different teaching strategies and methods to suit the needs of the students and the classroom situation. It is important that the students are given ample opportunities to practice English in the class as well as outside. Internalization of the linguistic structures and their ready and easy retrieval for communication are thus achieved in many ways. His own English speech, pronunciation, and writing should be as close to the “standard” as possible, or native-like, if he is not a native speaker of English. He may use regional characteristics of English to inform and entertain, but he should be able to switch to the “standard” for presenting his lessons.

6.3. Some Classroom activities used in CLT in engineering streams in Odisha

Example Activities

Role Play

Interviews

Group discussion

Presentation

Information Gap

Games

Language Exchanges

Surveys

Pair Work

Learning by teaching

Despite of the fact that Orissa has rich potential for engineering education, to sum of the discussion I would like to take up some deficiencies which are found in Orissa with regard to Men, Method and Materials for overcoming them, there is a big role of the teacher to play.

7. FINDINGS

7.1. Deficiencies found in the system:

- i. **The Mother Tongue interference:** Most of the students come into the engineering stream from vernacular medium, so therefore there is some amount of mother tongue interference in there communication which puts them backward in campus selection and shatters their confidence level
- ii. **Large, unmanageable number of students in one class:** though in the lab classes the students are comparatively less but the number is huge in theory classes, like 70-80 therefore the class becomes too noisy and it's not possible for the teacher to pay individual attention to each student nor carry out any group activity, as it turns out to be a pandemonium.
- iii. **Poor standard of English of students from school level:** for students from vernacular mediums English becomes a dreaded subject. They struggle hard to pass the examination, therefore they don't have a flair for it, nor do they have they well trained teachers there. Due to this poor standard they really don't do well in this subject.
- iv. **Lack of Audio-visual aids and Tools of demonstration:** Each session new number of colleges are mushrooming all over ain the state ,sometimes there is no adequate tools of demonstration, Language and proper audio visual aids in the newly run colleges.
- v. **Unpragmatic curriculum:** Sometimes it's practically impossible to finish up all the theory and lab classes in the he stipulated time of three to four months within a semester,. Even the examinations are sometimes delayed the evaluation work clashes with the time table therefore it becomes extremely burdensome for the teacher as well as student.

- vi. Language idiosyncrasies in a country like India:** Orissa culture is rich so sometimes cultural variations occur, equivalent terms are not used
- vii. Lack of exposure, rustic background, impoverished status:** Language is a skilled subject .The more one gets rigorous practises the more he/she becomes efficient. but how will one practice unless one gets exposure to it? therefore exposure is a must, nut in a state like Orissa most of the students come from rustic background and family of farmers who don't have enough resources to train their children and give them a proper education, therefore they don't get enough chance to get exposed to English.
- viii. Lack of conducive ambience**
- ix. Inferiority complex** among the students
- x. Nervousness and stage fear**
- xi. Poor body language,** making them unfit for placements
- xii. The unskilled/untrained teacher:** most of the teachers are unskilled and don't have any formal ESL training.
- xiii. Lack of charisma, motivation, inadequate pedagogical skills, lack of proper lesson planning,** on the part of English teacher.
- xiv. Shortage of question banks, language laboratories,** in the colleges
- xv. Dearth of trained teachers,** teachers not joining by choice, but by compulsion as the rate of unemployment is quite high these days.
- xvi. Parroting habit of teacher ,**not facilitator, but a performer for captive and passive audience,
- xvii. Tiresome stretch of class hours:** English is generally the last class in the time table and the students are really tired and bored towards the end of the day.
- xviii. Poor proximity between learner and the teacher,** due to fear of the subject.
- xix. Faulty system of evaluation:** Memory instead of application is tested in the examination.
- xx. Lack of time,** to complete the syllabus.
- xxi. Communicative barriers:** Physical, semantic and psychological.
- xxii. Disinterestedness for the Subject:** students are engrossed in the technical subject more.
- xxiii. Lack of incentives and motivation for the teacher.**

8. STRATEGIES TO BE ADOPTED BY THE TEACHER IN A CLASSROOM:

- Make the students feel free and comfortable.
- As most of the students belong to an Oriya Medium background, the teacher should try to help to make them identify their mother tongue interference, and bring about accent neutralisation in them.
- Help them unlearn some erroneous concept and provide them with proper error correction.
- Help and make the students learn and use different language functions: informative, instructive, narrative, persuasive, social etc.
- Make them do tasks and make them learn by doing
- Help them to bring out creative as well as critical thoughts in them.
- Give them ample time and remedial exercises.
- Adopt a more task orientated, team oriented pedagogy.
- Always keep all the students engaged. i.e. if one team is performing, all other teams should be observers , who will give a feedback at the end. In this way all the students have a role to play.
- Compose task which is an amalgamation of all the four skills, i.e. LSRW skills.
- Help them identify their weak areas and make them work on it.
- Make activities to which they can relate to, like real life experiences, interviews, presentations, which will be helpful for their campus placements.

9. CONCLUSION

World is changing in a rapid pace. Each individual must change his perception and role according to the need of the hour. There is a shift in paradigm of the ESP teachers role, there is a shift from teacher centric classroom to student centric classroom, from pedagogy to andragogy, the teacher is now a facilitator, organiser, rather than being a dictator, boss. So it is high time we accept this change and modify our pedagogical approaches for the fruitful future prospects of the students.

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