



# ISSUES IN TEACHING COMMUNICATION SKILLS: A SURVEY

**Mr. Chandrakant Brahmshatriya**

Research Scholar,

S P University, Vallabh Vidyanagar

**Dr. Chiragbhai M. Darji**

Research Guide

S P University, Vallabh Vidyanagar

## **Abstract**

In order to develop communication skills among the students, the teachers have been adopting many innovative classroom teaching pedagogies. The students are practicing the language related activities to develop expressional and receptive language skills. Generally the students prioritised learning communication skills based upon the disciplines that they pursue. The students of Engineering focus more on developing their mastery over the specialisation rather than developing communication skills. Though English is considered as a medium of communication, it has been neglected by many students during the learning process. In order to study the issues of teaching communication skills, the researcher carried out a descriptive survey study to know the major areas where the teachers face difficulties. There are many factors affecting in developing communication skills at the engineering colleges. The population for the study is the teachers teaching communication skills in engineering colleges of Gujarat state. The researcher used random sampling technique and selected the engineering colleges of Anand and Vadodara district. In all, 100 teachers were included as a sample for the study. The collected data were analysed through percentage analysis technique. The findings for the study are the teachers create ample of opportunities and efforts to teach communication skill but the interest of learners is not upto the mark. Some students don't attend the sessions of communication. Most of them just prepare the assignments, projects and submit for the examination. Students are limited to assignment, viva and marks. Therefore, the major affecting in teaching communication are in this order i.e. interest of the learners, nature of the curriculum, infrastructure facility, teaching learning strategies and evaluation and assessment. It is suggested that the students of Engineering must be made some kind of compulsion to develop the communication skills as language plays a vital role to communicate once skills qualities knowledge and talent. The curriculum should carry certain weightage for the classroom participation and performance based assessment.

**Key Words: Communication skills, Major Issues, Teaching**

## Introduction

English language is considered as a Global Language. One must be competent and sound enough to exchange ideas, thoughts, belief and feelings with one another across the globe. It has been observed that the English language education started in India before approximately 180 years back and India is still struggling to enhance the competency in English. There are four language skills LSRW. Out of which, Listening and Reading are considered as receptive skills and Speaking and Writing are considered as expressional skills. Developing communication skills, is a farmost requirement of among the prospective citizens of the nation. Communication skill is also considered as the base of English language learners. The textbook, the curriculum of schools and colleges are based upon the communicative approach which focuses on developing the linguistic skills rather than content understanding and linguistic competencies among the students. As it has nothing specific to evaluate during the paper pen tests, no preparation requires before a day of exam, the students take it lightly.

Natraj S.(2012) in the book *Developing Communication Skills* focuses on teaching communication through Task based learning. Further, various tasks including a set of activities are recommended in order to teach the communication skills to the students. There is a shift from teaching language traditional style to modern Task based Language Teaching (TBLT) and constructive style of teaching English.

## Rationale of the Study

There are many research studies carried out on evaluating the learning styles and competency among the learners but very few survey research studies on opinions of teachers teaching in Engineering colleges. The study focuses on collecting the opinions of teachers teaching communication skills in engineering colleges on five major issues. They are Infrastructure, Curriculum, Teaching-Learning Strategies, Interest of the students and Evaluation and Follow up. **Pancholi, M (2018)** found that the teaching of communication is a mutual process between the learners and the facilitators as communication desires exchange of opinions, thoughts and feelings. It gets broken if the communication skills of people are inappropriate. **Chauhan, B. (2015)** studied enhancing skills requires highest level of commitment, motivation and excitement. The prevailing classroom teaching pedagogies for teaching communication require more exposure and motivation. Further, it has been observed by the researcher during the need analysis process, the students of engineering and science pay less attention and considers English communication as secondary subject.

Therefore, the researcher studied the opinions of the teachers on major issues affecting in teaching communication skills among the engineering students.

## Objectives

1. To study the opinions of teachers teaching communication skills at engineering colleges
2. To provide suggestion to overcome the issues in teaching communication skills among the engineering students

## Research Questions

1. What are the opinions of teachers teaching communication skills at engineering colleges?
2. What are the major issues affecting in teaching communication skills?
3. What are the ways to overcome the issues in teaching communication skills?

## Delimitations of the Research

The study is limited to the following key issues.

- Interest of the students, Nature of Curriculum, Infrastructural resources, Teaching-Learning Strategies, and Evaluation and Follow up
- The study is also delimited to the opinions of teachers teaching communication skills at Anand and Vadodara district.

## Research Methodology

### Research Type and Nature

The research is descriptive survey research method was used. The study was quantitative in nature.

### Population

The population of the study comprised all the teachers teaching communication skills at the engineering colleges in Gujarat for the academic year 2021-22.

### Sample

The researcher selected the sample through simple random sampling technique.

The teachers teaching communication skills in Engineering colleges of Anand and Vadodara were selected as a sample of the study. In all, 100 teachers teaching English communication at the engineering colleges of Anand and Vadodara districts were selected.

### Research Tool

The researcher used opinionnaire on the above mentioned components. Likert three scale opinionnaire was prepared and administered. In all, 50 statements were prepared for each of the five components.

### Data Collection

In order to collect the data, the researcher prepared a list of all the engineering colleges of Gujarat state and based upon the list, strips were prepared for each district of Gujarat and any two strips were picked up by the researcher in order to select the sample randomly. All the engineering colleges of Anand and Vadodara districts were included as sample of the study. The researcher visited all the colleges and shared the details about the research. The teachers were provided all the necessary instructions before collecting the data. All the teachers were provided sufficient time for the answers. The quantitative data collected through the survey were classified based upon the other components.

### Data Analysis Technique

The researcher made use of percentage analysis technique to analyse the research data as the data were only in the quantitative form.

## Analysis and Interpretation

The analysis and interpretation of the opinionnaire are as follow.

Sr. No	Component	Vadodara District	Anand District
1	Interest of the students	70%	80%
2	Nature of Curriculum	76%	68%
3	Evaluation and Assessment Practices	80%	74%
4	Teaching-Learning Strategies	44%	52%
5	Infrastructural resources	64%	78%

The above table explains the opinions of the teachers on each of the selected issues. They are in the given order Interest of the students, Nature of Curriculum, Infrastructural resources, Teaching-Learning Strategies and Evaluation and Follow up. It explains that the teachers teaching communication skills at the engineering colleges of both the districts agreed with the selected issues affecting in teaching communication skills. The major issue affecting in teaching communication is interest of the students in learning it. It means, there are many factors affecting in sustaining the interests of learning towards English communication skills. In against to this, Evaluation and assessment are considered as the lowest issue affecting teaching communication skills.

## Findings

1. Almost all the teachers teaching communication skills in both Vadodara and Anand districts opined the interest of the students in learning communication becomes the major issue in teaching communication skills.
2. Most of the teachers opined the curriculum must be need based, constructive, real life like and carries equal weightage like other core courses.
3. A Constructive, need based and modern classroom teaching pedagogies must be adopted in teaching communication skills at the classroom.
4. More than 50% teachers opined interactive and task based teaching must be carried out to develop communication skills among the engineering students.
5. The evaluation and assessment of students communication skills limits to the formalities and no more disciplinary measures are adopted for developing communication skills.
6. The teachers of both Vadodara and Anand districts found the students are less interested in learning communication skills.
7. The teachers of both Vadodara district found the course curriculum must be rigorous and discipline in compare to the teachers of Anand districts. It means the teachers of Anand district are more satisfactory than the teachers of Vadodara district.
8. Teachers of Anand district emphasise the more on developing knowledge of communication and less on communication skills. Where as teachers of Vadodara believe the skills is more important than the knowledge of communication skills.

9. The teachers of Vadodara district believe systematic, impartial and democratic evaluation system must be established where as teachers of Anand opined, the evaluation must be objective and formal like other core courses.
10. Teachers of Vadodara district are provided quality infrastructural resources than the teachers of Anand district.

## Suggestions

1. The course curriculum must be given special weightage on developing communication skills. There should be some compulsory activities in courses of communication skills.
2. The teachers must be provided quality teaching learning resources, quality infrastructures laboratories, softwares and other ICT support.
3. The teachers must be provided flexibility to deal with the communication skills course.
4. More exposure and motivation are to be provided to the teachers and students in developing communication skills.
5. Learning communication through authentic materials and task based teaching learning practices should be prioritized.
6. The students are to be evaluated based upon the summative and formative performances for the external examination.

## Conclusion

Thus, the study reveals that the teachers believed unless some strict actions and disciplines are imposed the students won't pay attention in learning the communication skills as the basic understanding of communication help the prospective engineers for getting good job. Therefore, the curriculum, teaching learning and evaluation must be compulsive and constructive in nature.

## References

- Best J.W. and Kahn J.V. (2004), "*Research In Education*", Prentice-Hall of India Private Limited, New Delhi-110 001
- Chauhan, B. (2015), Effectiveness of Activity based Package in Teaching Communication Skills, Ph.D. Study, S P University, VVNagar.
- Pancholi, M. (2018). Effect of ELT programme to Teach Communication Skills, Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany.
- Natraj S. (2005), "*Developing Communication Skill (A Handbook for Teachers and Learners of English)*", Published by CharutarVidyaMandal, V.V.Nagar – 388 120