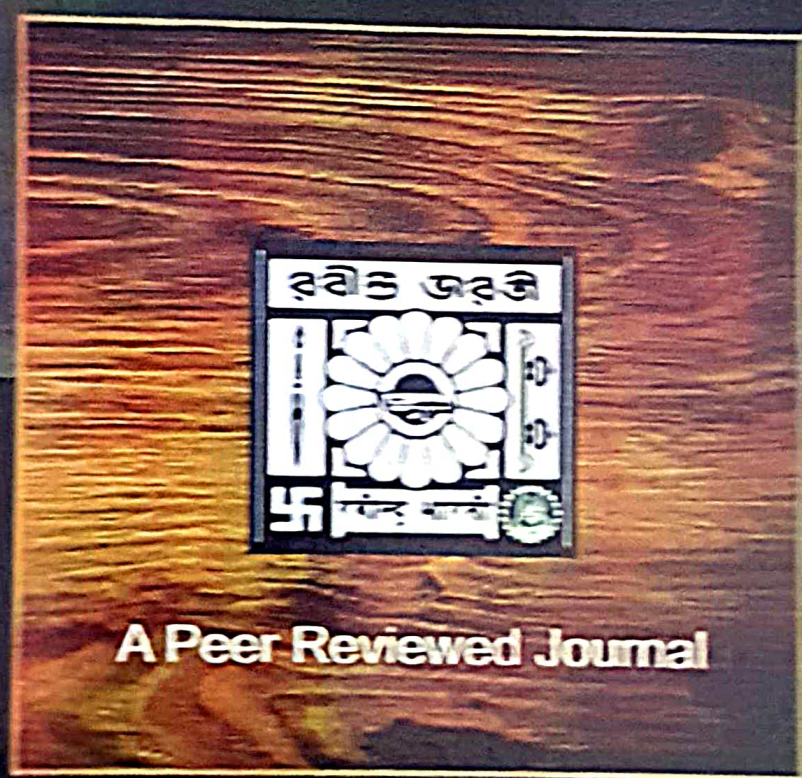


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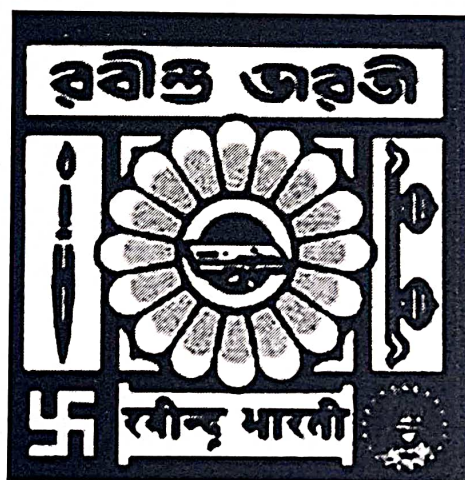
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56A, B.T. Road
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West Bengal
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ENHANCEMENT OF ENGLISH SPEAKING COMPETENCE IN COLLEGE LEARNERS

Dr AMITHA P MANI, Assistant Professor, Department of English, MES Asmabi College, Kodungallur, Thrissur, Kerala

ABSTRACT

As it is commonly known, our college students lack the speaking ability in English. Though they are capable of handling the other three skills, when it comes to the matter of speaking they lack the needed skill. This, on the other hand makes our learners less employable, by making them candidates not up to the mark. It sometimes makes them less effective and competent at some other instances also. It is true that learning a language must not be limited to mastering LSRW, but the skills have its own importance when it comes to the matter of practicality. Along with enhancing socio cultural competence, communicative competence of the learners should be developed. This paper intends to elaborate certain practical measures so as to make the learners more capable by enhancing the speaking skill in English.

Keywords- Employability, Speaking skill, Communicative competence, practicality

As we are living in an age of global competition the current Indian scenario requires soft skills, interpersonal skills and good communication skills for making the learners eligible in the job market. Though education has other sublime goals, it is inevitable that the learners need to get themselves equipped for jobs as well. English is a gateway to the storehouse of knowledge, since it is essentially the library language and the window to the world. One of the most important issues when the employers go through recruitment processes are the learners in our Arts and Science colleges are lacking proficiency in English. This in turn reduces the chances of making them employable. It is ironical that after having ten or twelve years of learning experience in English the learners remain functionally illiterate, on the other hand learning a language essentially implies having the competency to speak in the language as well. Thus efficient articulation of English speech with good accent, pronunciation, voice projection and vocabulary is essential in this competitive world. At this juncture a change in the approach being adapted in teaching learning process of this expressive skill is a necessity.

A teacher needs to be a facilitator, mentor, counsellor and monitor the process. Further the speech habits formed during the tertiary level of education may become permanent. Lack of effective speaking skill will not be tolerated in work places. Many learners have a kind of nervousness, stress and anxiety while they have to speak in English in real life. This in turn becomes an impediment in language learning. It is mandatory for learners to have proficiency in English for making them successful individually and socially.

In the state and national arena English speaking skill is necessary while seeking jobs. The issue under consideration won critical acclaim state wide and nationally and only case studies can bring perfect results. In this era of survival of the fittest, English became the medium of international communication and bridged all boundaries of the world by becoming the Lingua Franca.

Employability is not merely associated with getting into the job, but retaining and progressing in the job as well. English speaking proficiency is inevitable in this context as well. The current study makes a detailed analysis of the real problems of the learners under consideration. It also aims at making an effective method for making our learners fluent and

accurate users of the language, which is the corner stone of present employment opportunities. Here the identification is that of the best practical solution for the issue, thereby making our learners employable.

As English is a language which most of the disciplines cannot neglect, the attempt is to delineate how a change in approach, method and attitude makes individually and socially successful learners, the application of the critical theories drawn from different areas become inevitable.

There is no doubt that unemployability and unsustainability in employment are the hot issues of the century. Extensive researches have been done on the subject; however more studies are the need of the hour. A detailed analysis of the issue will enhance the betterment of the solution of the issue being dealt with. A specific study with regard to the real problems and practical solution of the specific case alone will enable to draw efficient outcome. The class room situation should find out time to develop this productive skill of the learners. "How much time and effort is devoted to speech work must depend on what the pupils need and are prepared to accept, and on what staff time and expertise is available or can be created." (Bright and McGregor 195) It is high time we eradicate the situation of creating thousands of unemployed people because of unemployability, not unemployment.

The objectives of the study is to examine the real underlying problems which hinder the mastery of speaking skill among learners, it also intends to demonstrate how an eclectic method of teaching will help to overcome the difficulties in acquiring speaking skill and thereby make the learners employable. It also critically analyses how learner centred activities which include more practice and active involvement of the learners will help to bridge the widening gap between classroom and real life situations.

Audio exercises can be given to the learners, make them listen to the track carefully and ask questions based on the audio clip. Later they can narrate stories based on the track. The interaction can be done between pairs, then in group and then to the class. The three level communications would motivate the learners to progress.

The learners' speaking skill can be improved by giving specific individual training and group practice. The individual practice must begin by teaching the most common errors and by giving simple practice sessions. This can include some kind of contrastive exercises that can be further developed into pair work.

Question and answer drill based on video clip is an effective strategy that can be adopted in the higher education scenario. Role playing is another way to practice conversations. Whenever the learners face difficulty to express, the teacher need not interrupt then and must keep the strings in mind for future drills. Meanwhile the stress timing can be monitored by the teacher, since near accurate pronunciation would foster the confidence level of the learners. "Repetition of that to which attention should be directed is more effective and enables normal stress and intonation patterns to be retained." (Bright and McGregor 192) Further, slowing down of the practice will also be of use.

Dubbing can turn out to be an effective strategy where students can be asked to fill in the missing dialogues after watching a video with sound off. The students would find it interesting and they would completely involve in the activity if it is handled effectively. After the production of language, the actual conversations can be played, the learners can be asked

to compare their imaginations with the actual dialogues. While making self assessment, they develop both the listening and speaking skills.

Strategies like debating society can be made use of where the learners develop confidence to face audience, develop fluency and rhetoric. Even though such societies will give more stress on festivals and observations, they would definitely become beneficial in improving the speaking skill of the learners. The reason is that the learning takes place in life situations.

Even though it is not easy to design and conduct test for speaking skill at social level, some kind of strategies should be developed so as to help the learners understand the level of progress. One example is to analyse the abilities to comprehend instant situations. Experimental ways are challenging to the learners that they would be motivated to do language production. Integrated activities can quickly deliver speech skill.

Conducting debates and group discussion on topics of common interest can do good for the learners. Story telling is an effective strategy that can do wonders. The students can be given clues about stories and the teacher can start narration. The student with the most unique style can be declared winner and can be rewarded instantly. The students would identify the need to improve their vocabulary in order to improve their narration.

The teacher should be creative, patient and must be able to create positive attitude towards learning English. Adopting an eclectic method considering the level of the learners being handled is the solution to make the learners master the creative skill, thereby making them employable. The most suitable way can be selected by the teacher by keeping the particular group in mind.

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Authored By

Dr AMITHA P MANI, Assistant Professor,
Department of English, MES Asmabi College, Kodungallur, Thrissur, Kerala.

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