

# To improve speaking skills assignment

[Education](#)



As an English teacher one question always raked my brains that is when a person from one state, for example Andhra Pradesh stays in Kerala for 2 years he could easily communicate in Malayalam, of course he may not know how to read and write unless he learns the script, then why the students of Telugu medium background even though they have English as a subject from 3rd grade and wrote many exams and finish their schooling with more marks find it difficult to communicate in English?

For the past few years I have been instructing English in various engineering colleges in and around Hyderabad. Here most of the students have their education in government schools where the medium of instruction is Telugu and has Telugu medium background upto their 10th class. Here most of the students find it difficult to communicate in English. The objective of this article is to proclaim what might be the reasons for the poor level of communication skills among the students and what methodologies one can follow to improve their ignored language skills like listening and speaking.

Some of my observations of the columnist for the poor level of communication skills among the students follows below..... 1) Lack of proper guidance: students are focussing on improving their communication skills after their graduation only when they were getting rejected by employers. So it is better from the school level to improve their spoken skills. 2) In most of the schools in Andhra Pradesh from the lower classes out of the 4 basic skills of English language only 2 skills reading and writing are given importance and listening and speaking are neglected. 3) Lack of exposure to formal environments is another cause of the above problem. In some schools, guidance is available but the students do not get proper

opportunities for exposing themselves to public speech in English or even in Telugu. It is applicable to a great extent in some colleges 4) Another cause is the family background of the students, specially the educational background of the members of the family. The parents of most of the students themselves have their formal education in their mother tongue and some of them are illiterate.

While this is not a drawback, what is significant is the fact that most family members did not have adequate interaction with their children in various capacities. Guidance from within the family was not available to the majority of the students. 5) There is a lack of educational facilities such as library, or easy availability of reading materials in the book shops, etc. in the areas in which these students live. 6. Most of these students have opted to study through the Telugu medium, mainly because they could not afford to go to English medium private schools.

While there is great appreciation for education and the benefits good education brings in terms of jobs, economic and social status, parents of these students often feel helpless. 7. These students have been speaking in their respective dialects or mother tongue Telugu since childhood, with no exposure to speaking in English. Suddenly they are asked to use English for their academic communication, and so they feel absolutely handicapped. 8. Lack of confidence is another reason. I have come across an interesting fact that some of the students who can speak English well are unable to speak it due to lack of confidence.

Lack of confidence engenders hesitation and people avoidance. 9. Another cause is the ongoing struggle of these students to translate their thoughts from Telugu into English. Most do not succeed in this attempt. 10. There is a tremendous influence of mother tongue on learning English in these students and the effect of non usage of English other than the classroom is one of the major factors influencing the English language development. While making students acquire any second language generally first we expose them to listening, speaking, then reading and writing.

However, in real life situations of language communication, these skills are interdependent in many ways, even though they can be taught independently to some extent we can improve the listening skills by 1) Listening to radio and watching TV and films, public performances, lectures, religious services, etc. , 2) listening and retaining the message, in activities such as conversations overheard, public address announcements, recorded messages, etc. 3) Responding to the commands given reflects interactive listening 4) Self-talk is also an important process by which internal thinking and reasoning is carried out. ) enabling the students to listen to native speakers' speech from the beginning. To improve the students listening comprehension what one can do in the classroom is to involve the students in the question-oriented response model of learning or in the task oriented model of learning. In the question oriented response model, students are asked to listen to a sentence, a dialogue, a conversation, a passage or a lecture and asked to answer questions which are presented in the form of true or false statements, multiple choice questions, fill in the blanks, or short answers.

In the task-oriented response model, students may be asked to listen to a passage and accomplish the task described in the passage through interaction with others or by themselves. One of the problems that students encounter in the classroom related to listening comprehension is the stress and intonation of sentences. Some listening comprehension exercises which improve students' listening skills are as follows:

- 1) We may have listening comprehension exercises which relate to listening in the process of reading a material.
- 2) Dictation can be used for developing listening comprehension. Listening for the message is focused upon when students listen to entire passages. Read from a well-graded book or play a message on tape and ask students to say or write the essential parts of the message they just heard. Let the students concentrate on the general theme or the central message, instead of on specific words or phrases.
- 4) In Problem Solving listening comprehension exercises, students listen to the description or presentation of a problem and solve it, by doing what is required of them.

) Listening to an uncontrolled passage (a passage in which neither vocabulary nor sentence structure nor content is controlled or graded) and taking notes is an important listening comprehension skill that students must have if they wish to use English for purposes of higher education. We can use audio and video material to practise and improve their listening comprehension. The next very important skill for survival in the employment sector is speaking skill. The main objective for an English instructor is always clear, to make the learner communicate fluently in the English language.

In what way we can improve the spoken skills:

- 1) Imitation and repetition are important elementary steps in developing speaking skill in English. In the

initial phase of learning and teaching English, repetition and imitation serve to make students familiar with the sounds and structures, get the attention and interest of the students, and focus their effort in the learning process.

2) Substitution of a word, phrase, or sentence by another is an elementary method which helps students to produce new utterances and to develop speaking skill. 3) Making the students practise Expressions of greeting, gratitude, small talk, introductions and making acquaintance, leave-taking, appreciation, expressions of regret and asking to be excused, etc. , are very important communicative acts students need to master. 4) Simple question-answer dialogues around a given context and object/ objects is another elementary method to develop speaking skill in students. 5) Eliciting is an important process which teachers must employ to get the class involved in what is going on in the class. For speaking practice eliciting is highly essential. ) Guessing can be used also to develop speaking skill. Based on these examples, students would guess the correct answers for the following. Someone who catches fish (fisherman) Someone who owns ships (ship owner) Someone who robs banks (bank robber) You can find lots of such sets of words for eliciting 7) Mime may be used to encourage students to guess and speak about what is being mimed. 8) Show and tell activity: In this activity, students are encouraged to bring a favorite toy or object of any kind to class. Let the students bring only those objects which they can handle using the level of competence they have.

They show their classmates what they have brought. They also tell them about it: how they got it, where it came from, what is it used for or what it can do, etc. Other students handle the object, try it out, ask questions about

it, etc. 9) Role play is perhaps the liveliest form to get the class involved in speaking. Role play brings situations from real life into the classroom. Students imagine and assume roles. They create a pretend situation, and they pretend to be some different persons. 10) Several community interaction activities are advised in order to develop the speaking skill in real world situations.

Assignments might be given to students which will require oral communication between the student and the community. These assignments must be task-oriented. 11) Interviewing native speakers in the classroom is an important exercise that will encourage speech. 12) To ask and enable students to pass on the information they have collected to other students in the class. This will help students focus on the essentials and compose their thoughts and sentences accordingly. 13) Language Games such as “ rumor” help students to compose their own sentences and speak. 14) Translation is another helpful device to encourage students to speak in English. 5) Asking students to introduce another student, friend, or visitor to the class, and speaking on a given topic in front of the class. 16) Oral reports, telling anecdotes, or jokes are some of the activities you should incorporate in every class. The ability to talk about an incident, tell an anecdote, joke, etc. , is a valuable social skill 17) Learning rhymes, poems, songs, proverbs, sayings, etc. , brings the student a little closer to the culture. one should expose them to popular literature, ask them to imitate and repeat after you, and use these as interludes for fun and learning.