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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF COMMUNICATIVE ENGLISH: “PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL STUDENTS IN URBAN AND RURAL INSTITUTIONS”

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: 06/11/2025 Accepted: 01/01/2026 Keywords Language, Communication, Contemporary, Academic, Professional, Social Corresponding Author Name: Dr. Deepesh Kumar Thakur Email: deepesh1november@gmail.com	With experience of teaching English to young students in different Technical & Professional Institutions in Delhi& NCR like “World College of Technology & Management, Gurgaon, Lingayas’ University, Faridabad, HR Institute of Science & Technology, Ghaziabad, Institute of Management Institution, Noida, Chandiwalla College of Medical Science, New Delhi, I found so many problems of the students have been observed. It highlights the importance of learning English as a key language of international business. It tells that English can be learnt by the students from rural areas by integrating different methods of language acquisition. Importance of English language is the current lingua franca of the international business, technology, aviation, diplomacy, banking computing medicines engineering and tourism. It experienced me in the subjects like Essentials of Communication and Technical Communication to Engineering students, Business Communication to Management Students, Communicative English to Medical students, Professional Communication to MCA and BCA students and many more. It is about more than 65% of students are not able to communicate properly in Communicative English. About one fifth of people all over the world know more or less about English. It is spoken by 1.8 billion people in the world and the number still increasing. Almost every single university in the world is conducting scientific studies in English. Total 60% of radio programs are broadcast in English, more than 70% of the content or address of mailing letters are written in English. English plays an important role in the world. More than 80%of all stored information in the world is written in English or translated into it. Foreign language skills, and in particular the English are a good tool in work, school, on vacation, when building a career or promote business.

English in India

The scenario of English teaching in India is particular. The colonial past has equipped us with a language, English, that has become the lingua franca today. But English did not filter down equally among the masses. The feudal legacy, economic challenges, and rigid social stratification have created a peculiar situation in the average contemporary English language classroom, which is heterogeneous owing to these factors. There are students, for whom English is practically the native language, and there are others who receive their education in English, even though it is not spoken at home; they are therefore hesitant to use it in daily conversation. Still, there are those students from the vernacular medium who have only studied English as a subject for a few short years. These students suffer in a climate where being fluently conversational in English is linked with social prestige. Their inability to converse in English, despite being familiar with the linguistic structure, generates severe psychological barriers. This heterogeneity puts several constraints on a teacher, who at best can have five-hours of weekly contact with his class in a semester of 14 or 16 weeks. Lecture classes are also large. Faced with such difficulties, a teacher often opts for a compromise level that leaves most of the students, particularly the brighter and the weaker students, dissatisfied.

Since language competence is linked with career options, as well as status, the presence of psychological and interpersonal barriers among the students’ needs to be acknowledged. This demands the induction of motivational technologies, group dynamics, and interdisciplinary approach in ELT. Depending on the needs of the students, it is also important that different frameworks for teaching English are brought together in a cohesive approach. Communicative strategies using first language words in the second language, cognitive strategies involving the use of analogy, repetition, inferencing etc., metacognitive ones incorporating planning of learning and self-evaluation after the completion of language activity, and social strategies providing learners with opportunities for practice with native speakers should be used after dividing the large lecture assembly into smaller tutorial/seminar groups.

Importance Of English Communication for Engineering Students

Engineering is the biggest field of study in the world. First of all, English is a tool that significantly affect engineering students in academic life. While most of the theories in engineering are taught in English, it requires having good English communication competence. In academic life, engineering students have to deal with the countless English lectures, tutorials, labs, project reports and papers. Most engineering professors in various universities are also conducting lectures in English. The most convenient source of information i.e. Internet provides most of the information in English. During

A Comparative Study of Communicative English: “Professional & Technical Students in Urban and Rural Institutions” the job seeking process in interviews, GD’s, it is but of crucial importance to achieve mastery in English proficiency. After securing the job they are required to work in groups since their task seldom be solved by an individual. So, being an engineer requires to co-operate and communicate with different people from different part of the world. English is used as the working language on large extent. In order to co-ordinate with the colleagues, engineers have to speak fluent English. So, English communication competence plays an important role in the academic life and career of engineering students. However, we cannot ignore that the concept of ELF- English as a lingua franca with all its associated demands, has now been subtly and almost imperceptibly incorporated in the syllabi, methodologies, and teaching goals of India’s professional institutes. This concept emphasizes the use of English as a contact language between people who are from different linguistic, cultural, and social background and may not necessarily share English as a first language. ELF aims to prepare students to use English as a medium to communicate in their professional interpersonal communication, which may often be cross-cultural. In this context, the primary task of an English teacher is to train students for general linguistic awareness, basic grammar, and communicative strategies. The emphasis is on immediacy and clarity of communication, instead of on control over the nuances that are typical of native speakers. Though the need to sensitize students about such nuances is accepted, emphasis on teaching them, that is, to speak as a native speaks is considered not only to be outmoded, but also rather archaic. This change has emerged in response to today’s job scenario, in which people change bases quickly and can suddenly move from one culture to another on a short-term basis. It is thought that once the students possess basic communication skills, they can learn the necessary local nuances aspirated sounds, the “dark *L*“, the suppression of *R*, for example, by experience. The main concern of ELF, and by transference of ELT teachers in Indian professional institutes, is international intelligibility, which includes language as well as communication. The communication part needs interdisciplinary skills.

Problems Faced by Engineering Student from the Rural Areas

In our country, about 75% students of the engineering are from rural areas and most of them are coming through regional language medium schools. No doubt that as they have entered into the engineering colleges, they do possess intelligence i.e. necessary qualification for higher education and bright future. But, at every walk of life and career English becomes an obstacle in their way of career. So, let us examine the reasons which make English as a souring grape for rural students even today in this modern era.

Socio Economic Background of Family

Classroom contains students from different strata of the society who possess different grasping power and English communication competence. It is found that the English communication competence of the students whose parents are literate belongs to higher middle class is better than that of the students whose parents are illiterate and belong to lower middle class. The fact for this situation

A Comparative Study of Communicative English: “Professional & Technical Students in Urban and Rural Institutions” is the literate parents can provide more exposure to their child to English as they are aware of the importance of English competence. They consult the teacher about child’s progress and guide him/her at home to perform better. Infact it never happens with the second group as they lack parental supervision and guidance from to the higher education.

Lack of Skillful Teachers

The important factor is the education system and lack of skillful teachers. Most of the teachers at all the learning levels are untrained they are unaware of the current trends and advanced techniques of English Language teaching (ELT) as a Communicative Language. The condition is same with the regional medium as well as the English medium primary, secondary and higher secondary schools in rural or semi urban area. Again teaching & learning process is much exam result oriented. And the exams do test the memory power alone. Even the parents are craving for the marks than skills or knowledge. So, teachers make students to habituate by heart method, as a result, English seems to be a dreadful demon for the students. This fright remains in the mind till higher education because of lack of proper guidance. Again, these exam-oriented students give prior importance to their technical subjects than to the communication competence.

Education System

The other important factor is the traditional education system which affects English language learning and acquisition. Basically, it requires four skills i.e. Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing (LSRW). Our students are being trained in reading and writing for long ages and listening and speaking skills are neglected and ignored which are very important. Learning is the one basic skill which makes speaking possible. Learning language is possible only through active listening. As an illustration we can take an example of language acquisition by a baby. It starts speaking the words which it listens frequently. Our education neglects the importance of listening which results in lack of skill of speaking. Lack of modern and advanced technology in the process of language learning also affects the language acquisition. e.g. use of computers and internet, power point presentation, OHP etc.

Lack Of Exposure to the English Communication

The rural area students lack the exposure to the English communication in the family, society as well as in the colleges. As a result of this fail to achieve success during personal interviews due to lack of communication skills, soft skills, interpersonal skills and personality development. During academics also lack of confidence of being unable to communicate in English leads to feeling of inferiority complex, as a result students keep themselves lonely and isolated. English communication skills are recognised as the important element in the academic life and career of the engineering students. It requires making use of integrated methods to facilitate advanced communication skills, which is the demand of industry as well as society. The rural area engineering students should effectively make use of the faculty, education system and the amenities provided to them in combination

A Comparative Study of Communicative English: “Professional & Technical Students in Urban and Rural Institutions” with the self-efforts, to emerge as a competent user of English communication to become successful in life and career.

Teaching of English over ages

Even after 40 to 50 years of teaching of English, learners in India lack competence in this language. The teaching of English in India at all three levels i.e. primary, secondary & tertiary level is still fraught with a multitude of difficulties & obstacles. Realizing the demand & importance of English, in almost all the states of India, English is taught as a compulsory language from the very first standard, even then the outcome is unsatisfactory. Some of the portrait a picture how English is being taught in India basically in Haryana where I am teaching Professional English. When a child enters in school at primary level, he or she is taught English language as a subject not a language. Stress remains on formation of alphabets not on speaking or listening. To enhance vocabulary, they are forced to crème a long list of words. When these learners enter at secondary level, they are competent enough in writing & understanding English language but this is cramming based not on creativity at tertiary level situation becomes more pathetic. Apart from a lack of instructional resources-a general problem in a number of developing countries -many more has often been the bane of the Indian education system. Teachers have very little to say in designing the curriculum, choosing the materials & textbooks or developing assessment technique. The only assessment that matters is the year end examination & students typically study by cramming answers to likely questions. Such questions & answers can be readily found in guidebooks or schools’ books for which there has been a flourishing market, or the answers are abstracted from notes dictated by teachers in classes. Some students especially the ones from vernacular medium schools, insists that they find the study guides more useful on tests & exams than the class room instructions or studying their text books. The English was introduced in colonies like India basically for the study of the literature and culture, the market value for literally study has gone down steeply in the present-day world. English for professional purposes like facing interviews, writing resumes, writing reports, conduction campaigns, writing letters, participation in meetings, seminars, conferences and discussions is demanded; English for communication is the mantra everywhere. English literature which was once centering of the cultural enterprise of the empire has lost its hold on English as a technology-oriented communicative tool. But unfortunately, the university system of India is not sensitive to the changing needs of the society outside. Departments in English in Universities and colleges have not cashed in on the changes that are taking place in the world. When the outside world is using English for international and intercultural communication and technology purpose, universities and college in India still follow the Macaulayan syllabus and teach Grammar & texts like Nesfields’ English grammar, Beginners’ English grammar or more, The Spanish Tragedy (16th Century) Everyman in His Humour (1596) The Alchemist (1610) or some ancient texts that neither the teachers

A Comparative Study of Communicative English: “Professional & Technical Students in Urban and Rural Institutions”
nor the students understand or are interested in. What shall we say? Is it a tragedy or comedy? Overall
English teaching situation is not much different from what it was 40 years ago.

- A majority of students graduate regional – language – medium school with some books or rote knowledge, but little communicative ability in English. They then enter English medium institution of higher education and struggle with varying degrees of success to cope with the English language requirement of higher education. Most managed to develop English largely formulaic and cliché – ridden, to meet the English related demands of their education and of the career they have been forced to choose.
- A small segment, having graduated from English medium school in Indian jargon “convent schools or expansive public schools” enter in colleges with a glib fluency in English and enjoy an initial advantage as well as some social power over their peer group. Most of these students have acquired their English proficiency at the cost of alienation from their native language and culture & to dissociate themselves from their native language is even a matter of perverse pleasure & social self-importance for some of them.

Teaching in Rural Area

Rural students are very much affected by this diseased ELT system. There is great mismatch between urban & rural students. Urban students somehow manage to learn & use English quite well in the context in which the language is used in India in spite of this deconstructing English language teaching. They are third generation learner having support & co-operation from parents, environment & atmosphere. But rural students are first generation learner who takes English as foster language & throughout life not able to cope with it in spite of their best efforts. However they might be able to write as per requirement but speaking remains out of their range. They learn without knowing what they are learning. Linguistic research says this is why a feeling of backwardness itself embosses among these learners. Most students find it difficult to understand the substance of the prescribed literary selection. The typical method of teaching consists of the teachers reading of the text in the small portion, explaining its meaning & allusions & figure of speech in simplified English or in regional language & an occasional discussion of grammar points with a question or throw in. The teaching is rarely student centered & most students have neither the chance nor the motivation to actively participate. English is taught as an academic subject – as a medium or mode of active, constructive communicational intellectualization.

- Rural students are deprived of technology as enjoyed by urban or university students. Lack of technology, books & other things become an obstacle in their learning process. In urban colleges there are language labs, computers, LCD projector, CD players' tape recorders, microphones & many more instruments that create an atmosphere of learning but in rural areas they lack even classrooms for proper teaching & the proper supply of electricity. If somehow some colleges manage to get, they do not have regular staff for maintenance. More over teachers are not so competent to handle these instruments as they don't have any such training.
- At the name of audio visual, they have only chalk & blackboard, centuries old method of teaching. No doubt a teacher can teach more effectively & creatively with chalk & duster as research says but with such a big class of hundred to one fifty students, she/he feels him/her self-handicap.
- The Government has started EDUSET with Soft Skill program to provide an atmosphere of learning English & communication skills but all these efforts are fruitless until & unless something innovative should be done in class room teaching.
- Rural students do not get the opportunity to interact with other renowned personality or peer groups. The other reason is that other subjects are taught in Hindi or in vernacular languages. So like other subjects, students take English as a subject not a language. They don't put their effort to learn it as a language. The problem is not with tertiary level but from the primary & secondary level. The fact is that the roots are rotten. That's way so many policies are made but all are failure. A teacher has to use mother tongue to make them understand. A language teacher is well aware that their students bring to the language classroom a variety of attitude, experiences & strategies as well as variety of beliefs & he/she has to handle them. But he/she feels him/her self-helpless without teaching aids. He ultimately has to adopt translation method to handle this unwilling crowd.
- Mother tongue influence can also be seen in the students with rural area background because they were not given proper pronunciation drill from the primary level. So, whatever they speak, vernacular effect can be observed very easily. For e.g. School-/sku:l/ Book /bu:k/ Student /setu:dent/ etc. At tertiary level it's impossible to correct these learners

In ELT we wish to train our students

- To hear & understand English
- To speak in the language & be understood
- To read in the language & understand what they read

- To write in the language & to understand.

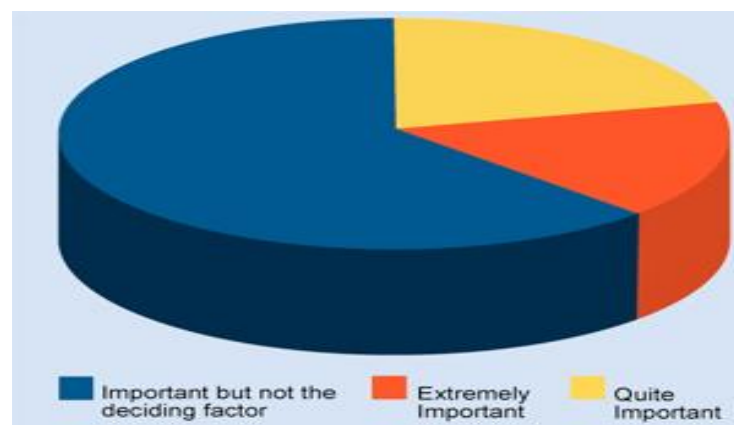
The four aims of teaching English correspond to four language skills or language ability. These are Listening, Reading, Speaking & writing

The purpose of all language teaching is communication in the language being taught whether receptive oral (Listening), productive oral (speech) receptive written (reading) & productive written (writing). These four skills are the foundation on which language learning is built. If this foundation is strong, then the structure erected on this will be safe & useful. These language skills are to be developed in sequential order. These are interdependent in the sense that failure to acquire one will lead to a general failure in learning the language. But the curriculum at tertiary level in India does not develop these skills. More over the method by which this syllabus is being taught, don't develop these skills in students in sequential order. In our classroom teaching stress remains on writing as our evaluation system is writing based. Whatever students write in their annual exam is the assessment of their whole year learning. Our classroom teaching only enhance our students listening ability as the maximum time is spent in teacher's lectures and students participation remain almost zero. Maximum teachers adopt translation method so students do not have the drill of listening, speaking, writing and reading as teachers use vernacular language considering the level of learner. Some people may feel that a psychologist or management specialist may be better suited to teach a communication course. However, an English teacher's capabilities in this context are beyond doubt. A teacher of English is well equipped to teach a course on communication skills, since language is a typical prerequisite of human communication. One cannot fail to notice that the advantages & the power inherent in English literacy are enjoyed primarily by the urban middle & upper class & remain inaccessible to those who are educationally disadvantaged because of their economic situation. No doubt urban students also have same syllabus, methods of teaching and evaluation system but they manage somehow by parental support, extra classes and with their peer group but rural students are not able to cope with them and that's why they remain backward. This curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation system have negative effect on students and that's why they don't attract towards this language as they are not able to grasp with it.

No doubt there're lots of drawbacks in our present education system. It is not in tune with current scenario Even then we cannot be stand still. System of teaching cannot change overnight. Teacher's positive attitude & their use of innovative method of teaching can provide a reliable bridge to the process of learning English in rural area. Taking in consideration the learning background of the learner, if a teacher designs his/her method & she may get in implemented more successfully. Modern requirement seems to get satisfied by following the learner centered approach which view language

A Comparative Study of Communicative English: “Professional & Technical Students in Urban and Rural Institutions” learning acquisition as a process of acquiring skills rather than a body of knowledge. A learner centered approach facilitates learning through techniques involving in activities. A learner has to be given some mind engaging task. This allow greater peer interaction, which is more effective in acquiring features of information use in language; which are often not available in a formal teacher centered class. This generates the ability to manipulate language in social context which is an important feature of communicative competence. English teachers cannot confine themselves with centuries old translation methods or text books they themselves have to be very creative to save the degrading standard of ELT in India. This we can do by adopting situational method of teaching. In the way learner get involve & they do not feel bore. For example,

Recently, EFY conducted an opinion survey of engineering students, fresh professionals and industry analysts through various social media platforms to understand the importance of soft skills, apart from tech knowhow, for a successful career. 62.63 per cent respondents believed that soft skills were important but not the deciding factor. 25.29 per cent believed that soft skills were extremely important. Remaining 12.08 per cent believed that these were important as complementary skills.



To improve student’s vocabulary, we can ask them same sounding words as Mat, Rat, Cat, Pat, Bat, and Hat etc.

Reward, Award, Sword etc.

Hut, Cut, But, Nut, etc

Within groups we can ask them to tell the words related to classroom, hospital, Post office, Bank, Kitchen, etc.

Fill the blanks as

N o _ o _ n

Marks:

Group A Group B

3 4

4 3

5 1

2 2

C	U	P		
L	A	U	G	H
E		T	P	

There are many more ways.

Same sounding words but different meaning as: *Allusion, illusion, accepted, accepted, Our Hour, very, very etc.*

In spite of telling word to word meaning to the literary part prescribed in the text book teacher can involve learners in certain activities related to it. As dividing the class in four groups’ one group may be asked to collect information about writer, other to about the period when it was written, third to write summary & the last one to compile the matter of all three groups & prepare a presentation. While teaching stories a can write difficult words on the blackboard & describe them when they come in the context. Later on teacher can ask learners to narrate same story in past time or in future later on teacher may highlight nouns, pronoun adjective, adverbs etc. in the same story. Time to time a teacher may give small tests to the students based on all four drills as speaking, listening, reading, writing, as project works, reciting competition, spelling competition. For e.g. Rat, Telephone, enough, House, Examination, Nation, Number etc. English language can be divided in different sections as poetry, prose, communication English, grammar phonetics etc. each teacher may be asked for about his/her interest before giving him the section to teach. A teacher can do justice if he is interested in the matter & more over if have mastery in it because teaching English is skill based not knowledge based. Here purpose is to hone four skills of the language not providing the learner knowledge about the language.

A Comparative Study of Communicative English: “Professional & Technical Students in Urban and Rural Institutions”
Again, an English language teacher has to be innovative & be receptive to adopt new technology or method to make the teaching process effective. It is clear that computer cannot be the supplant of the language teacher but the role of language teacher has been changed & they have to transform themselves to meet the challenges at global level. They cannot confine themselves with centuries old translation methods or text books they themselves have to be very creative to save the degrading standard of ELT in India.

Soft skills in today’s India:

According to a recent report by employability assessment company Aspiring Minds, 56 per cent engineering graduates in India lack soft skills and cognitive skills. “As companies become more global, soft skills are highly desirable and required in more positions now than ten or even five years ago. You may have an excellent knowledge base in engineering or technology, perhaps even a PhD, and maybe bilingual but if you have not developed good skills in communicating, interacting and people resource management, you have already limited your opportunities and chance of success.” “Soft skills are applied emotional intelligence and as such, they are very important. As engineers, we are taught to think and apply the logic of math and science. However, we are being ruled by emotions,” Soft skills are very essential for personal and professional development of individuals. “In today’s economy, it is even more important considering a significant portion of Indian GDP comes from services sector. To support this growth in services sector, organizations require talents who possess greater soft skills along with hard skills,” “Technical skills may take you to the doorstep but it is your soft skills that will open up the door for you,” “Increasing possibility of interactions with global peers, customers, virtual teams and cross-cultural discussions mandate employers to look out for fine-tuned, polished workforce.” “Soft skills facilitate efficiency and effectiveness at work,” While flawless technical expertise is the primary necessity, soft skills are imperative to ensure high-quality contribution and delivery. Soft skills are as important as technical skills due to two main factors: “One is that employees are being sent on projects to international locations, where they need to articulate their thoughts and actions to become productive. Second, with enhanced globalisation, virtual communication has taken a front seat in today’s organisations.” An engineer is rewarded for his ability to make decisions, manage risks and creativity. Therefore, soft skills are vital for an individual to get employed and grow in an organisation.

Conclusion

In order to bring revaluation in English language teaching, reoriented program & updated knowledge is the requirement of time. More & more technology should be used while teaching language

A Comparative Study of Communicative English: “Professional & Technical Students in Urban and Rural Institutions” to create the interest of students. Teaching of English has to be views as mastering of language skills as a portion to be covered.

In the digital revolution, students are expected to possess communication skills so as to prove their abilities in their career. Hence research was undertaken to develop criteria to measure effectiveness of speaking, writing and listening skills among the engineering students. It has been identified that among the nine batches of engineering students only few batches are found to be excellent communicators. The other batches seem to have the basic communication skills; however, they need to take initiative to improve themselves. Some suggestions are furnished to these students in each area of communication to enhance their performance. The overall communication audit of Computer Science and Mechanical students were found to be excellent, whereas sandwich (EEE), EEE and ECE are good and can still try to excel. However, Production, Information Technology and Sandwich (Mechanical) students are average performers. So they should ensure to develop their speaking, writing and listening skills. The Metallurgy students seem to be very poor communicators. These students must realize that communication skills are powerful strategic weapon used to inculcate good skills in them. Communication is the integral part of any individual. It is also the foundation for sharing information. We spend more time in communicating than doing anything else: talking, listening and interacting with others. Irrespective of caste, creed, gender and age, communication is essential to our personal, professional and civic lives. The need for effective communication tends to be increasing due to globalization, science, technology and trade. Because of enormous competency in the digital society, it is essential for the next generation to be well equipped with the basic skills of communication. Engineering students require communication skills to enhance their technological knowledge and thereby excel in their career. Technology and communication should go hand in hand. So, a study was carried out to find out whether the engineering students are able to communicate effectively to their satisfaction. To teach communication skills, the traditional ELT methods are not enough. They have to be supplemented with a different knowledge base and have to borrow heavily from behavioural sciences and management. Since the emphasis is on the use of English not only for the communication of one’s own thoughts, but also on depending on needs using persuasive techniques or making the communication almost scientifically objective, and so forth.

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