

A Study of Significance and Barriers of English as a Communication Medium

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Abstract – The present research paper evaluates the role of English language as a communication medium, By means of a critical evaluation of past studies the research paper aims to identify the main barriers and challenges that are presented for the success of English to become a communication medium between people of different cultures.

Keywords: Medium, Communication, English Language

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I. ROLE OF ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION

English is considered to be the most powerful and effective way to communicate with people globally. More importantly, English is widely used as a medium to communicate with business people (Kudchedkar, 2002). In fact, organizations are showing interest to hire people with good verbal and writing skills in English to take their business to newer heights by communicating about their company effectively to its clients.

Do we need to feel glad for its growing popularity and influence in our country?

Post-Independence in India, University Grant commission has circulated a report on stating the significance of English language. Few of the points that are covered can be perceive in this way – the students who would like to get enrolled and get seat in University or want to make career should master English language to gain access to treasure troves of knowledge (Romaine, 2000).

In 1952, another Educational commission was appointed to restructure and reorganize the education system of the country. It is noted that English has found a significant place in the curriculum developed for students. No matter whatsoever course the student is planning to pursue, but English language should be included as part of their course. It is important for one to have sound knowledge on English to understand the subject extensively and carry out further studies on it, as all the books would be printed in English language.

With the increase in competition in the society, everyone is yearning to grow and develop to secure an honorable and respectable place in the society. It is quite challenging for professionals to remain in the same stream (Shankar, 2003). They would need to deal with the people of diverse cultures with the same level of expertise they hold. It is hard for professionals to learn each other's culture, how to greet and the type of gestures. Professionals can work together when there is a common language for them to communicate and exchange ideas. This common language has come into picture as English. The professionals can only be successful when they know the business practices, social customs and etiquettes thoroughly.

The main motto of any language is to let people comfortably talk in that language and communicate their views, opinions and ideas clearly. It is the responsibility of every professional to learn and master the other native language, i.e. English to transfer the knowledge of this subject to the next generation and keep it alive. To make the language sustained and eternal, one need to use it regularly and similar thing applies for English too. The objectives that English language would help you attain are many and in fact this is considered to be the greatest strength to perform business or do a job (Bamon, 2005).

Another crucial requirement to communicate effectively is to have a positive approach and the right attitude. One needs to develop confidence by learning and practicing a language. One should also take responsibility to make the communication

happen rightly between the team. It is not important for one to be biased rather should identify the significance of communicate and ensure to attain best results by communicating in a particular language effectively.

There are a few objectives of English that one needs to embrace to hone their communication skills. The significance of that can only be perceived by

- Getting a job of their interest and dream
- Taking initiative to increase the chances of getting promoted
- Socializing with people
- Ensuring the future
- Honing the other skills

Communication is the most important thing through which you can interact with people. It is important for all people in every walk of life. Undeniably, communication is an activity of humans, markets, organizations, as well as mechanical and electronic devices (Bhan, 2004). Humans are considered as the most complicated beings on the planet. While communicating with masses or one-on-one, they would bring their attitude, skills, behavior, and style, social and cultural background. These complexities can easily mastered by mastering the communication process. People who learn the art of communication process can easily operate from any position of strength. This strength would contribute majorly for their self-development, progress in their career, develop leadership skills and for the welfare of the society. It is important for one to master the skills pertained to communication to develop leadership skills that are required to attain excellence in their business.

Communication skills would start from the point when you have a clear understanding of what you would like to present or talk. It is important for a person to retrospect whether they are conveying their feelings and thoughts properly to the other person and is properly encoding and transferring the information, thoughts and ideas of other party. A person can communicate well only when he/she has complete knowledge about the topic they are communicating. This helps them to present accurate information and facts, intentions and expectations to other party explicitly.

Communication process is totally goal oriented. The key objective of communication is to convey the message you would like to tell to the other person clearly without ambiguity (Cameron, 2003). You can hone the communication skills when you understand the purpose of communication. This is not just to inform, analyze things or summarize them, but is more than that. Many people think communication is

a way to motivate and inspire people and also influence someone. This may be partially true.

There are a myriad of methods, channels, types and approaches. Each and every option has its own pros. You need to use your skills to choose the right option in any kind of situation no matter while you are doing communication orally, written, non-verbal, audio visual or electronic or a mix of all these. When you have good communication skills, you can make right choices and also evaluate costs, pros and cons (Khan, 2000).

You need to convey your message at the right time to gain favorable response. To have good communication, you need to take timing along with intensity and frequency into consideration. The number of times you are communicating the message would depend on the how frequently you are communicating.

Feedback is the last leg of communication process. Here, the person would take away the effect of communication to its source. It is not easy to get the feedback. To get that, you need to have proper skills.

Communication is a laborious process that keeps on evolving time to time. The success rate of every process would be different from one another. A good communicator would be able to hone their skills based on the evaluation feedback received (Pillai, 2004). However, there are a few general skills that are required to apply in the communication process. It is not easy to master those skills. You would need to practice constantly to hone those specific skills.

To understand any language, you would need to learn its semantics. This means you would need to know the meaning of every word of that particular language. Meaning clearly means the relationship between signifiers and what they signify. The signifiers could be signs, words and symbols. Here, you would need to study about the words and its meanings, phrases and sentences with their linguistic expressions. Semantics is considered to be a key branch in contemporary linguistics. This is totally conceptual, but is not associated with any meaning.

The important thing one needs to know about semantics is that they would investigate the relationship between words which are quite common, unclear and abstract.

A. Oral communication skills

Few of the skills that you need to have to do proper and effective oral communication includes, but not limited to include:

- Understand the meaning of each word and use the words in the proper context
- Put thoughts in proper sequences to convey the message clearly
- Good vocabulary and skill of playing with words
- Command on phrases, illustrations and examples
- Well-versed with pronunciation of words and maintain good accent
- Modulate voice and intonation
- Use sound system and other aids
- Good listening skills
- Be aware of conversation protocols
- Be alert about the time specifications

A candidate possessing few or each of the above mentioned skill would be able speaks, interact and communicate effectively.

B. Written communication skills

To play with the words and write elegant prose and great messages, you would need to have the following skills

- Fluency over the language
- Word power and spellings
- Able to compose the written message
- Correct usage of phrases and quotations
- Acceptable syntax
- Use right channels to communication like fax, courier, emails, telex, etc.
- Pay attention to typing, printing, taking photocopy or handwriting
- Simple, crisp and clarity over what you are writing

C. Non-Verbal Communication Skills

There are lot many things that convey your message to the other person when you are communicating non-verbally like body language, postures, gestures, appearance, attire, smile, behavior, handshake and examples that are required for mindful efforts (Rajeswari, 2006).

Few of the skills that a person should posses to excel in non-verbal communication skills include

- Observation ability
- Be conscious about their body language, movements and expressions
- Interpret non-verbal communication properly
- Supplement with oral communication
- Self-observation
- Practice to maintain good body movements that are not awkward or offend someone

Non-verbal communication happens intentionally or unintentionally when you meet a person and talk to each other. It is important to learn the required skills to avoid humiliation of your bad behavior in front of your friend or peer or your boss.

II. ESSENTIALS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

The communication process is said to be complete when a message composed and sent by the sender would be received by the received and is understood. The process would remain incomplete until the recipient does not open and read the message and acknowledge it. Communication process can be ceased at any time due to various reasons. These are called as communication barriers.

Few of the communication barriers that stand as obstacles to communicate effectively include

A. Psychological barriers

No two individual would think in the same way and would have the same mindset (Agarwal and Gupta, 2008). This will have an impact on the individual in a unique pattern and depends on their behavior. There are high chances of the communication getting interrupted or broken due to psychological barrier between two parties. The individual may not be in a position to listen to what the other person is staying or misunderstand what the other person convey and respond curtly.

B. Linguistic barriers

The language used by a person and knowledge he/she would have on the language would differ from person to person. Due to this reason, there are high chances of communication getting totally broken. The linguistic barrier may arouse due to the following factors

- Misunderstanding due to unheard words or homophones
- Vague and confused syntax used in the message
- Use regional accent to pronounce something
- Different accents

C. *Environmental barriers*

There are high chances of external factors, i.e. environmental factors would cause distractions to the people who are on call and they could not pay proper attention to what the other person is talking to them. This is called as environmental barriers. This may be due to loud noise, disturbances from surroundings, etc.

III. FRAGMENTATION OR DIVISION OF INFORMATION

At times the information that is delivered by the speaker or sent would be in pieces. This means that the complete information is passed to a person by different people at the same time. In the event of this situation, content covered by the person and delivering the information effectively is causing communication barrier.

A. *Socio-cultural barriers*

People who are from elite class will mostly use non-verbal gestures and social codes to communicate. They would feel bad when the gestures made by them are not properly understood by the other person. On the flip side, people who belong to low context culture would communicate everything verbally (Choudhuri, 2013). These people are frank and practical to what they are communicate through words and gestures. It is important for a speaker to take social cultural aspect into consideration otherwise it would result in socio-cultural barriers.

B. *Information overload*

People are flooded with huge chunks of information. Every person would get to listen to a myriad of messages all the day long. It is not easy for a person to manage responses to all those messages. In this case, the recipients will take only selective responses and shut down or ignore the other unnecessary information. This is another thing that would act as a communication barrier.

C. *Different mindset*

In every communication process, no two audiences will take the same message convey by a speaker to huge audiences in the same way (Kohli, 2008). The thinking of every person differs. The barrier would

takes place when the mental status of the person is different to what is been told to them. The barrier can also happen when the goals of receiver are divided. This eventually results in scuffle between sender and receiver.

D. *Poor listening habits*

Oral communication will lead to misconceptions many a time due to poor listening skills of people. The barrier could not due to not listening proper or thinking about some other thing of their interest or not interested in listening to what the other person is saying due to pre-mindedness and lack of memory.

E. *Filtration of information*

Everyone would practice the art of filtering information that is received from receivers. Few people will block certain information or complete information received, which would result in forming a huge communication gap between two parties. The communication will either stop or partial communication takes place. The key reason for this barrier would be due to lack of interest in listening to what the other person is saying or due to carelessness.

You can avoid the communication barriers from forming between you and the other person while communication by embracing a few strategic moves. Those are discussed below:

IV. MAINTAIN TRANSPARENCY IN COMMUNICATION PROCESS

You need to create an open communication atmosphere to communicate effectively. The listeners should be given the liberty to express their thoughts, clarify their doubts and freedom to even walk out, if they do not find the session to be interesting. This would act as a refreshing element for you to reinforce the communication flow.

A. *Making ethical choices*

Due to globalization, different people from across the globe will work for the same company and they would have different interests, cultures and speak different languages.

Few of the ethical choices that you can make to maintain a healthy communication environment include:

- Proper adjustments and communication related to recipients
- Maintain good attitude

- Do not get enticed to prove that others are wrong
- Do not breach ethical lapses
- Get trained on improving communication skills

There are many other barriers that are caused due to communication of vague or partial information with the recipients (Sasikumar and Dhamija, 2003). However, you can overcome these roadblocks by honing your communication skills. There are many language specialists who are conducted advanced training sessions on assisting people who would like to improve their verbal and non-verbal communication. This helps you to master verbal communication skills as well as writing skills. In addition to this, you can also improve your social skills and interpersonal skills. When you work with the people from different parts of world, it would become easy for you to overcome communication barriers.

V. SKILLS APPROPRIATE TO OTHER METHODS

Few of the common skills that you would need to have and use in all modes of communications, be it verbal or oral or non-verbal are leaning the insights of human behavior, removing emotional blocks and using personality effectively. It is important for one to develop good rapport with the other person along with maintaining interpersonal skills (Tapkeer, 2010). To communicate with the people through electronic media like audio-visual communication and electronic communication you would need to have a special set of skills. For people who work in television channels should possess good personality skills. When you are communicating through your system, you would need to have knowledge on using Internet to send emails. It is important for a person to be a computer savvy and learn it quickly.

To have more effective and powerful communication, you would need to understand and interact with people and get into their shoes to understand their perspective. When you have a wavelength with the other person, you would know the level of communication that can happen. However, the communication should not be too high or too high, but should be at a elementary level.

VI. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Interpersonal communication skills are something that every person should have to attain success in their personal and professional lives. This means you would have face to face or person to person communication. This would be direct and active. This involves usage of verbal messages and proper body

language. Few of the characteristics of interpersonal communication skills include:

VII. CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

A. Uniqueness

Communication can be effective and interpersonal when many people are involved officially or unofficially. The more interpersonal would be the relationship, the more unique it appears when you talk to a person (Tiwari, 2007).

B. Interdependence

The relationship that two people share totally relies on their dependency level on each other. If there is no dependency, then that communication cannot last for a longer period of time.

C. Disclosure

The depth of a relationship can be measured based on the rapport two people share and level of understand of each other's personal information.

Similarity

This is a crucial factor that is required to develop a strong interpersonal relationship with a person. The like-minded people, i.e., the likes, tastes, preferences and dislikes of two people are the same then they share a good relationship.

D. Scarcity

Basically, the interactions between two parties that happen would be totally impersonal. In business relationships, people like to discuss more about business related stuff than going personal.

It is a known fact that, interpersonal relationships are really special and will last longer. Moreover in interpersonal communication, many things that two parties discuss would be impersonal. Though, many people believe that they are interpersonal, but only a few truly are interpersonal.

Interpersonal communication plays a crucial role in all people-oriented situations (Bhan, 2004). A person with good interpersonal skill can handle any kind of situation with dignity and ease without getting prone to conflicts. Moreover, they would behave well and understand how people react to different situations. They are excelled in dealing with people both inside and outside the organization.

True and good leaders would strive to develop good verbal and non-verbal skills to communicate effectively and stay successful in their career

(Agarwal and Gupta, 2008). When a person possesses both these skills, they can handle different types of people and situations with ease. They use their interpersonal skills to create a good mark for themselves in the crowd. These people will choose the words wisely, use sweet tone and right gestures to maintain good relationship with the other person. However, this comes with lots of practice. The way you smile and greet people are all noticed by everyone. When you do everything perfectly, you can create a good impression in the minds of others.

There are few other related skills apart from these. These skills include the ability of winning the trust of involved people, building rapport, asking many correct questions and eliciting complete details. All the appeals for the sincerity of approach lead to clarity in communication methods. When someone thinks of personal interviews, counseling, and negotiation, excellent verbal abilities are required. And the skills are developed with practice and patience.

In the professional world, people need at least one basic skill. Everyone needs the skill to talk and communicate with the people. They need skills like the aptitude to talk and communicate smoothly and effectively (Pillai, 2004). They are required to work together as a team. Many significant job-related skills, knowledge and experience are of course demanded and are very important. But most important of all is the proper attitude. Thus, most organizations arrange right attitude building programs.

Many individuals come to workplaces with knowledge, intelligence, and wisdom. But they lack the devotion and dedication.

The main intent of any type of good and communicative language is that it can make everyone comfortable. English obtained the prestigious status of the international language. If the Indians can excel in speaking English, it can turn out to be beneficial to them.

VIII. DEVELOPMENT OF VARIOUS COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Beneficial communication is rare and often accidental. In most cases, the recipient hardly gets any meaningful message like it is intended. The communication process influences the day to day life. It also, at the same time exerts immense authority on any kind of success of the business endeavors (Rajeswari, 2006). Any type of meaningful as well as effective communication takes place with a clear and proper understanding of many essential factors. These factors include effective communication, the importance of language used, the way the conversation is done or the manner it is received and perceived.

There are many important points that can make communication process influential as well as impressive:

With the Conceptual Clarity, every communication starts and begins. It means that every communication starts with an idea and a concept. Then accordingly, this pre-structured concept is converted and interpreted in a message which then is conveyed and transmitted to the recipient. Whatever might be the communication method considered and use, the communication has to be very clear. The sender has to be able to convey, what he or she intended. A message should be conveyed in such a way, that it expresses every emotion and thought that is developed. Well-conceived as well as properly organized emotions and thoughts can start a good communication. This can also indicate the reason why all the conceptual and theoretical abilities get so much importance, in today's times.

The communication is always purposeful especially when the communicator exhibits equal enthusiasm as that of the receiver. The moods and situation of the communicator as well as the listener is important and is considered (Tapkeer, 2010). This is because it can directly affect the communication process. The mood refers to a person's mind and emotional state. It shows the willingness and eagerness of the of the receiving and sending a message. Apart from the moods, physical fitness is also considered.

Most of the messages sent have an important time value. As theses expose the actions which are followed when a communication reached another. This is relevant and significant to the individuals, especially those who are associated with the business. Also, a notice, which is received after a meeting has ended, shows the transmitter in the very poor light. Thus time sense is a very important factor.

In any organizational context, prevailing climate, as well as the current communication policies, directly affect and construct the mindset of the employees. Any communication policy which encourages the confidentiality, the concealment of information, the repression of information and much other such control can directly hamper the free communication flow.

IX. THE ESSENTIALS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Any type of effective communication needs coordinated efforts. Any good communication is the result of very hard work (Kohli, 2008). It requires proper planning, a proper understanding of the human behavior, and the right choices of the physical facilities as well as the considered

organizational context. Effective communication can be beneficial and is extremely essential.

The main aim of any type of communication is to convey a message. But more important than that is the fact that every communicator must ensure that the receiver gets the messages. The urge of communication has to be led by the transparency of its purpose. It is significant to detect what should be achieved and accomplished due to communication. It should be known whether the imparted information will express concern or displeasure.

Certain important essentials needed for the progress of proper communication skills are:

Very good understanding and detailed information of the channels, mode, types, methods barriers and instruments of the communication is needed. There are many steps that are involved in this communication process. These are encoding, transmission, decoding comprehension, and feedback.

Transparency about the audience is significant. Because this ensures that all the messages can ultimately bring the desired and expected result.

The next important step is the growth and development of good skills. Various skills such as reading, listening, writing, speaking, and presentation body language are to be developed.

Planning of the communication helps to achieve command and control over the many communication skills. Every communication has to be well calculated and prepared. Everything in the message has to reach and conveyed properly to people. The type of language, words used, the action, the feedback it should be accurately carefully planned and executed. Good planning is essential if you want to receive right feedbacks and success (Shankar, 2003).

There must be positivity in the approach to effective communication. The positive approach, as well as the right attitude, is desired.

Consistency and Sincerity are also an important part of communication process. This process needs honesty, dedication and utmost sincerity from the parties, the recipient as well as the sender. If any receiver loses his or her faith in this communication process, the communication system will suffer tremendously (Romaine, 2000).

In case of the personal dealings, especially in the organizational settings as well as the business places, the communication occurs every time.

The ability or the necessity to communicate concept and ideas are very important. The communication abilities slowly become more and more critical, once

the person starts dealing with the individuals of the international and global market. They also place work which is more diverse culturally and involves many different employees. The technology also replaces the total human resources. One very beneficial way of developing communication skills and abilities is through any kind of fundamental approach. These slowly become sophisticated as well as complex, while the communicator develops and masters the skills of communication.

Any kind of effective communication is ranked high. It is considered the highest and most respected skills among others in case of personality development (Cameron, 2003). The communication level varies on the amount as well as quality and degree of the work that any individual can do. To achieve any success in the field of communication, one is required to be extremely effective at external and also internal communication. This particularly involves a dual relationship between the receiver and the sender. A common compassion and support have to be developed between them, in order to make the dual way of communication effective and successful.

The main goal of the communication skills and talents is to ensure the growth and development of any favorable relationship that occurs amongst the involved people. The relationship has to be related in three main ways. These are personal, personally, professionally and positively.

In these situations, it is important for the communicators to analyze emotional reactions and interests.

For a very ambitious person, that wants success, he and she may get limited due to the lack of communication skills. Even if he or she is very successful academically or in other ways, the lack of communication skills will make his or her career suffer.

There are many skills that can indirectly concern the communication abilities of any type of individuals. These are:

- increased productivity
- improved self –presentation
- information management
- awareness about the globalization
- acceptance for the cultural diversity
- development of many kinds of ethical as well as the moral values
- technological update and knowledge

Effective communication talents can enhance many abilities. They can make a positive impact on many of the superiors as well as the co-workers. It can make interaction valuable and easier. It will help to understand other ideas, plans, and work goals.

X. CONCLUSION

Effective Communication is of utmost importance. Especially in the corporations of today's world, communication is very significant. The good communicators have the opportunity to prove their skills and abilities.

If anyone does not have any communication skills, in that cases, he or she is not allowed to explore the letters, the reports, the interviews, the business conversations, the presentations and also the negotiations.

Many businesses can rise and develop due to the effective communication abilities. The managers, as well as the supervisors, devote their time and expertise to demonstrate various highly effective communication skills. Right communication can save lots of time and also money. It also earns an extra profit for the companies and businesses.

Many job requirements mention the requirement of high communication skills. They want people who can communicate as a team and as a group. In communication, teamwork is very important. But, oral as well as the written type of communication skills require expertise and practice.

In today's time, communication skills are fundamental. One must know how to get, convey and manage information.

It is very much believed that in this information age, communication skills are needed more than at any time. In industrial age also, the communication was required.

The difference can between these ages are:

In the industrial age, the human knowledge increased and doubled up every ten years. But in today's world, the knowledge increased and doubles up each and every year. Moreover, in an industrial age, every nation has maintained their own separate economy. But in an information age, global economy persists.

In an industrial age, the employees are involved in many types of general communication processes. The employees constantly communicate, so that they can handle the subjugation of new information.

The professionals require showing new skills in communication. The communicating methods change. Communication is done according to the

information, management, goals, different communication policies, organizational procedures as well as the needs and requirements of the consumers. The modern day workplace differs from before and it is characterized by the cultural diversity. The cultural diversity grants many important opportunities in the field of communication. These were not available earlier, during the time when any type of communication stayed in small groups. With all the cross-cultural diverse communication systems, communication with everyone is essential and beneficial. The communication is required more and more. The success is required in diverse work and market place. And to be successful one has to know the right communication skills and strategies. The communication is a must in many multinational companies, today. With time, more organizations are getting attracted to globalization. In the current global economy, each and every organization demands highly effective communication skills.

The International Communication needs many effective communication skills which involve the cross-cultural type of communication. Anyhow, the global type of communication needs you to develop special awareness about the norms as well the values, especially of the foreign countries. One has to about the procedures of business dealings and business-related communication. The technology is developing each day and it is directly shaping the communication systems. The diverse media and communication skills are mandatory. Everyone is expected to stay updated about the pace of these dynamic changes and communicate accordingly, in the business world. Though there are changes happening all around, the ethical communication is considered important and given much more significance. The setting of goals and objectives are also a very important part of this communication process. It can only be developed with time and experience. Goal and objective setting is extremely indispensable with respect to the communication. The goals that lead to the development and improvement of the performance are required to direct the attention of many individuals in order to channelize their energy as well as efforts and values. The first and foremost level of any type of mutual understanding occurs only when a receiver comprehends a message which is conveyed. The feedback shows levels of perception. The next and second level of any communication utterly depends on how the feedback is interpreted as well as analyzed.

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