



## TEACHING LISTENING COMPREHENSION FOR TERTIARY LEVEL STUDENTS IN ENGINEERING COLLEGES

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Education is a way of academic excellence and paves the path for the growth of the country. IT frees our mind from prejudices and kindles it to think logically. Quality of education is one of the necessary factors for the improvement of knowledge. A quality curriculum should address the various needs of the learners. It should be designed to fulfil the social, economical, ethical and professional demands.

The academicians have an opinion that the present curriculum does not cater to the expectations of the learners. Teaching and learning of English is given least importance in the curriculum offered at universities.

An effective curriculum should aim towards the active construction of knowledge. Quality improvement in curriculum is the need of the hour. The teachers use textbooks as the complete curriculum and assess the knowledge of the students based on them. But the learner's outcome from the contents of the textbook they learn does not prove useful for their future career plans. The present curriculum passed on to the next generation does not develop the attitude and values the educators wish to instill in the learners. The various programmes of studies offered accommodate the abilities of the students. Moreover the curriculum is rigid and its formulation stifles the innovative ideas of the teacher. Therefore the curriculum should be designed in such a way that it emphasizes the integral relationship between language for learning and effective teaching.

Today's global market demands good communication. A curriculum which does not emphasize conceptual thinking, deeper learning and deeper understanding of what they learn would be rejected by the teachers and learners. A curriculum which provides lifelong opportunities will be accepted by everyone in the educational and social field.

English has a colonial legacy and now it is a post colonial necessity. English has spread widely all over the world, first because of the influence of the British Empire. Time and again it is the language used in the academic field. Proficiency in English is seen as a desirable goal for youngsters. In communication listening, speaking, reading and writing are the basic skills. Listening plays a dominant role in language learning.

This paper aims at the need for listening in today's world. Researches have made it clear that listening is far from being a passive skill. From their childhood onwards the engineering college students assumed that listening is not a skill to be learnt. They connect the information with what they hear. Listening dominates our cognitive ability. But the students take it for granted. Aural and oral skills are needed to communicate at the international level.

The teachers in engineering colleagues are least bothered about teaching listening skills. Tailoring learning to the needs, interests and aspirations of each individual is important listening should be taught because it gives wordly knowledge. Engineering students think that they are good in communication as they know to speak and write in that language. It is a wrong notion developed by them. A challenge for the teacher in the classroom is to bring out a learner centred dimension focused on learning.

One of the most devastating experiences of teaching is attempting to involve tertiary level students in listening. The students come from various educational backgrounds. They would have studied in public schools or rural schools. Many students think that English is a subject to be crammed for the purpose of passing examinations. They have a mind set that if they study the prescribed textbooks they will excel in English. Tailoring learning to the needs, interests and aspirations of the students can be a good idea rather than compelling them to study what they are not interested. This helps to build their self confidence. If the students have a choice of their own to study the language they develop their passion towards learning. The idea of learning according to the learners ignite in their mind and heart a linking for English. Sometimes this also makes them individual perfectionists.

The tertiary level students have studied English as a compulsory subject for twelve years. Some of them are first generation learners. Some students are from vernacular medium. There is strong need to analyze the problem of professional learners and to suggest them remedies to enable them to become successful in English.

This study focuses on listening skills and its benefits for the students. The global job market is placed in the podium of English as lingua Franca. An engineer has to give presentations, conduct meetings, give instructions, participate in discussions, etc.the more a person improves his listening skill he would be able to grab attention from his colleagues and higher authorities.

Receptivity is a human trait. Traditional notions about listening have become obsolete today. Many engineering students hear, not listen. Sometimes they give importance to listening but not for understanding what is spoken. The content of the teacher should go along with the intellectual range of the student. Listening aims at understanding

The engineering students have to meet the demands of the industries. The industries expect expressive as well as receptive skills. When an engineer first sets foot in professional environment he definitely needs this receptive skill i.e., listening. So there is an expectation from the academicians that the students should get an exposure of language based curriculum that has a global touch. The engineering students become perspective employees. Listening activity cannot be forced by a teacher. Even if the teacher forces them without any personal involvement of the students the process will not be successful. Inadequate and ineffective communication reflects badly on the individual and the profession.

The message of the speaker across the listener is sometimes blocked. Linguistic barriers emanate from the wrong usage of linguistic system. The grammatical errors also interfere with communication the small size of the vocabulary of the learners impede listening comprehension. Physical distractions could be external noise or an inappropriate location. Listening takes place in one's mind but psychological barriers in listening. Listening is the result of cooperation of misunderstanding of language.

There are many methods applied in teaching of listening. They are the direct method approach which associates words and sentences with their meanings. The structural method approach which gives importance to written forms and not for listening comprehension. Cognitive approach emphasizes oral skills. Humanistic approach stresses humanism as the most significant element in the teaching and the learning process.

The alternative approach is a combined approach of all the teaching approaches. It is holistic approach which will make the complicated language listening skills easy and enjoyable.

The tertiary level students of engineering colleges should be made aware of the listening comprehension and its uses. Moreover teachers should encourage innovative ideas. Comprehension problems arise when students lack contextual knowledge. Engineering graduates require an ever-increasing range of skills to maintain relevance.

The teacher investigates learner's difficulties, perceptions and opinions regarding second language listening comprehension. In many engineering colleges the teacher exhibits his supremacy and students are passive learners. In today's scenario the teacher and the learners have to equally contribute their proficiency and solve the problem to be driven towards success in listening. In classroom listening the teacher guides to come out of the listening problems by making students get interested in the topic and respond appropriately.

Listening is the result of systematic teaching and to learning. The teacher has to follow a holistic approach which will equip the engineering college students. The tertiary students realize the utility and the effectiveness of the listening skills. To conclude this paper has demonstrated that innovations in teaching listening skills to tertiary students in engineering colleges are makes listening an interesting indeed.

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