

ISSN 2348 - 7674

# Research Innovator

International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

Vol II Issue VI : December - 2015

Editor-In-Chief  
Prof. K.N. Shelke

[www.research-chronicler.com](http://www.research-chronicler.com)

A detailed illustration of a writing desk. A white quill pen is the central focus, resting on a scroll of aged parchment. The scroll is tied with a red ribbon and has a red wax seal. In the background, a lit candle in a brass holder provides a warm glow. In the foreground, there is a glass inkwell with a quill inside, and a red wax seal with a wooden handle. The entire scene is set on a dark wooden surface.

# Research Innovator

ISSN 2395 – 4744 (Print); 2348 – 7674 (Online)

**A Peer-Reviewed Refereed and Indexed  
Multidisciplinary International Research Journal  
Volume II Issue VI: December – 2015**

Editor-In-Chief

**Prof. K.N. Shelke**

Head, Department of English,  
Barns College of Arts, Science & Commerce, New Panvel (M.S.) India

## **Editorial Board**

Dr. A.P. Pandey, Mumbai, India  
Dr. Patricia Castelli, Southfield, USA  
Dr. S.D Sargar, Navi Mumbai, India  
Christina Alegria, Long Beach, USA  
Prin. H.V. Jadhav, Navi Mumbai, India  
Dr. Adrienne Santina, McMinnville, USA  
Prof. C.V. Borle, Mumbai, India  
Dr. Nirbhay Mishra, Mathura, India

## **Advisory Board**

**Dr. S.T. Gadade**

Principal, C.K. Thakur College,  
New Panvel, India

**Dr. R.M. Badode**

Professor & Head,  
Department of English,  
University of Mumbai, India

**Dr. G.T. Sangale**

Principal, Veer Wajekar College,  
Phunde, India

Research Innovator is peer-reviewed refereed and indexed multidisciplinary international research journal. It is published bi-monthly in both online and print form. The Research Innovator aims to provide a much-needed forum to the researchers who believe that research can transform the world in positive manner and make it habitable to all irrespective of their social, national, cultural, religious or racial background.

With this aim Research Innovator, Multidisciplinary International Research Journal (RIMIRJ) welcomes research articles from the areas like Literatures in English, Hindi and Marathi, literary translations in English from different languages of the world, arts, education, social sciences, cultural studies, pure and applied Sciences, and trade and commerce. The space will also be provided for book reviews, interviews, commentaries, poems and short fiction.

-:Subscription:-

	Indian Individual / Institution	Foreign Individual / Institution
Single Copy	₹ 600	\$40
Annual	₹ 3000	\$200
Three Years	₹ 8000	\$550

-:Contact:-

**Prof. K.N. Shelke**

Flat No. 01,  
Nirman Sagar Coop. Housing Society,  
Thana Naka, Panvel, Navi Mumbai. (MS), India. 410206. [knshelke@yahoo.in](mailto:knshelke@yahoo.in)

Cell: +91-7588058508

## Teaching of English in the Degree Colleges of Mumbai University: Problems and Suggestions

Dr. Anjan Kumar

*Principal, G.R. Patil College, Dombivli (E) Dist. Thane, (M.S.) India*

### Abstract

The policy - framers are of the opinion that basic communications skills in English should be acquired by every student who is going to graduate from this university. But the question is – are we able to achieve the very purpose and goal of studying communication skills at these stages? Whether the graduates are able to communicate properly in English? The government therefore has devised new plans to orient the students towards English language. In a recent landmark move the government announced to make English as a compulsory subject even at a primary level in the state of Maharashtra. The aim of teaching foreign language should be to guide the students to acquire communicative competence. There are different ways of learning language. The critics call them theories of learning the language. The various theories are - Imitation theory, Reinforcement theory, Cognitive theory, Associative theory, Empirical theory and Rationalistic theory. The ability to learn the second language or English differs from person to person. The difficulties of the learners cannot be generalized. Different students have different problems of learning. The experience combined with intelligence can prove more useful in learning language. Along with this the learner must have the readiness to learn the second language.

**Key Words** – communication skills, proficiency, language, teaching

English is a compulsory subject to be taught at the First and Second Year of Graduation Course. It is taught as Communication Skills and Business Communication. At the level of First Year and Second Year of BMM (Bachelor of Mass Media), the course is known as Effective Communication Skills. The present research paper proposes to analyze the objectives of introducing English at this stage, the major problems or obstacles that tend to frustrate the objectives. At the end possible suggestions are being forwarded that may help realize our goals. The syllabus of communication

skills and effective communication skills aim at enabling the students to:-

- a. Consolidate the language elements already acquired;
- b. Extend his /her language skills to greater proficiency;
- c. Develop reference skills for self-study;
- d. Promote ability to comprehend English texts of a moderately advanced nature such as may be studied by the college students in the pursuit of their disciplines;
- e. Develop linguistic and communicative competence so as to enable him/her to

use English for letter writing, summary writing, paragraph composition and day to day communication ;

- f. Acquaint him with the basic skills of conversation, communication and interaction and enable him to grasp the human values and perceptions conveyed through it.

With these general objectives English (communication skills and effective communication skills) has been made as a compulsory paper for study at the undergraduate level. The policy - framers are of the opinion that basic communications skills in English should be acquired by every student who is going to graduate from this university. Only English can help the students to compete with the other students on all India level and also to survive in the modern world which is recording steady and fast changes every moment. But the question is – are we able to achieve the very purpose and goal of studying communication skills at these stages? Whether the students have acquired the communication skills? Whether the graduates are able to communicate properly in English? And at the base of these questions, there is a question of teaching English at the Degree level in the right perspective. But before we embark upon the task of finding out answers to these questions, it would be imperative for us to understand the logic and rationale behind making it compulsory for the students to acquire communications skills in English at the level of graduation.

The Indian Education Commission (1964-1966) in its report mentioned how the Central Advisory Board of Education

(CABE) of 1956 examined the complex problem of teaching of English in India. The three – language formula was proposed by CABE but the impelling considerations were more political and social than educational. On the academic front it was remarked, English will continue to enjoy a high status as long as it remains the principal medium of education at the university stage and the medium of administration at the centre and in many states. Even after the regional language becomes medium in higher education in the universities, a working knowledge of English will be valuable asset for all students and a reasonable proficiency in the language will be necessary for those who proceed to the university.

Marathi is the official language of the state, and English language is viewed as a language of administrative convenience. Without English it would be quite difficult to run the government. The government therefore has devised new plans to orient the students towards English language. In a recent landmark move the government announced to make English as a compulsory subject even at a primary level in the state of Maharashtra. There have been different reactions from different sections of people with regard to the implementation and effectiveness of this policy. Despite widespread hue and cry and protests against this policy and the recommendations of the University Education Commission (1948) that English be studied in high schools and in universities in order that people might keep in touch with the living stream of ever-growing knowledge, English has finally been incorporated in the syllabus of the

primary school. Now, English has been introduced at the primary level and it continues to remain as a compulsory paper up to the second year of the graduation, students have not been able to show the desired result. Except for few colleges located in the heart of the city of Mumbai, others fail to show that the objectives of teaching English in the form of communication skills have been achieved or even it can be achieved in near future. There are number of colleges located in Wadala, Chembur, Kurla, Bhandup, Vikhroli, Ghatkopar, Mulund and on the western side Borivli, Kandivli and more than eighty five percent colleges in Thane district and ninety percent colleges in Raigad district where the students were found, during a random survey, not able to write even an application to the Principal correctly. Therefore it is very essential to take a fresh look at the current policies and decisions in this respect.

The reason why teaching of English in this region has not brought out the desired result is not willingness or unwillingness on the part of the students to learn the subject or that their score in this subject is always good. The answer to this question can be found in the socio-cultural, the familial, the institutional environment and economic and political set-up of the region. Moreover, other factors like teaching conditions should also be taken into consideration before arriving at a substantial conclusion. In any teaching situation, three conditions would seem to be vital. They are:

1. Objectives of teaching the subject.
2. Appropriate methods and materials to achieve these objectives. And

3. Periodic testing to ascertain whether these objectives have actually been achieved.

All these three things are interdependent. At the school level the objectives are stated more or less clearly in terms of linguistic structure and vocabulary items. At the college level particularly at the level of teaching communication skills more or less the same objectives are reiterated. But the result is not so positive. Here it should not be forgotten that we are teaching and learning English in the socio-linguistic setting of India. English has its own phonological, morphological and lexicon semantic system. These systems have been functioning in one socio-cultural and socio-linguistic setting for more than two hundred years. In the process of using English which has been a vehicle of western culture and a tool of Indian culture and Indian pattern of life, we have been slowly but definitely reshaping the language. Mr. S. K. Verma has rightly opined "it is the setting that gives a language the distinctive color and fervor" (1985:19). The aim of teaching foreign language should be to guide the students to acquire communicative competence. In this context S. C. Sood has rightly pointed out:

"Hence the aim of teaching foreign language should be to guide the learner on to the road of communicative competence and take him to a 'take off' point so that further self-learning may continue our job then is to locate this 'take off' point and to find means to take the learner to it" (1988:57).

There are different ways of learning language. The critics call them theories of learning the language. The various theories are - Imitation theory, Reinforcement theory, Cognitive theory, Associative theory, Empirical theory and Rationalistic theory. Imitation theory relates to the imitation by the learner. For example children learn the mother tongue by imitation. Reinforcement theory refers to apply of force for learning the language. For example, children are inspired to speak the language by rewards or punishments. Cognitive theory has a reference to learning language by insight. Associative theory holds that the responses of the learner are accepted and then corrected. Empirical theory, also known as S R theory (stimulus – response theory), enumerates that language is learnt by behavior. One of the proponents of Rationalistic theory is Noam Chomsky. Noam Chomsky argues that language cannot be learnt by imitation but by memorizing. He has referred to what he broadly calls ‘language acquisition device’, precisely known as L A D. Here it should be pointed out that ‘language learning’ and language acquisition are two different things. The latter refers to the acquisition of the first language or the mother tongue. Learning the language refers to the foreign language. Learning the mother- tongue is easy and natural process. Whereas learning the foreign language is a difficult and artificial process, there is natural atmosphere for learning the foreign language. The first language help the learner learn the second language at the same time it hinders the second language learning. One of the greatest problems of learning the second or

foreign language is that only class-room features facilitate the learning of this language, whereas the first language is taught by so many teachers – parents, brothers, sisters, friends etc. Moreover the first language is acquired by the learner before he attains the maturity. Speaking mother tongue is without any conscious effort. It is what may termed as ‘reflex’ action. But in case of learning English there is a different situation. Mr. Baruah has correctly pointed out:

“The ears have become so accustomed to the mother tongue sounds that he does not easily hear the difference between the sounds of the two languages and. As a result, cannot produce the distinctive sounds of the second language” (1995:175)

Therefore use of mother tongue can be quite beneficial for picking up the threads of the second language particularly, English. In this context Mr. Saraf suggests the usefulness of translation method for learning and teaching of English. He writes:

“We have seen that the mother-tongue can be profitably used in the teaching of English as a second/third language. It can be used to explain a few words like art, root, butter etc. it can be used to give instructions. It can be very well used for testing comprehension. It can also be used to bring out differences in the structure of the two language – mother tongue and English.

This does not, of course, mean that it should be excessively used in the teaching of English. The target

language for use is English and it needs to be practiced adequately. The judicious use of the mother tongue helps the learning of English. Excessive use of mother tongue makes teaching of English farce, care should be taken, therefore, to see that mother tongue is not used where it is not necessary or we should not open the floodgates of mother tongue. The place of translation is different from the mother tongue in the classroom. The bilingual method advocates the use of the mother tongue by a teacher, but insists on students using English. The translation method allows both teachers and students to use mother tongue” (1987:86).

The ability to learn the second language or English differs from person to person. The difficulties of the learners cannot be generalized. Different students have different problems of learning. It has been observed that some of the students are very good in the spoken English because their stock of vocabulary is very good. Many of the students hailing from rural areas could score very good marks whereas those from rural areas lag far behind them. It can be said that native skill of the learner plays an important role in his/her learning behavior. Apart from this the intelligence of the learner plays a very important role in learning the second language. Imitation of language may not require much intelligence but speaking second language requires more intelligence. It can be said that the range of experience and the use of language skills are mutually dependent. In other words, the

more and valid the experience, the better the language skills. Intelligence means reflective thinking and reasoning. Thus experience combined with intelligence can prove more useful in learning language. Along with this the learner must have the readiness to learn the second language. The second language learning is also influenced by some other factors like:

- a) Effects of heredity and environment;
- b) Social conditions and influence of home;
- c) Specific attitudes.

So far as heredity is concerned it is not changeable as it is natural but environment can of course be made suitable for the learners. Social conditions differ from place to place and hence the concept of uniform learning methods for the needs to be revised. The students studying in good colleges in the cities of Mumbai do get better social conditions than those studying in the areas of Kalyan, Badlapur, Wada, Bhivandi etc. The policy makers should certainly prescribe some appropriate measures for learning and teaching of English or communications skills for the students of studying in colleges located in far-flung areas of Thane and Raigad districts. For better learning of the language the following points may be useful:

- a) Developing good vocabulary.
- b) Practice in writing, reading and speaking should be emphasized.
- c) Students should be motivated to learn the second language.
- d) Sufficient use of audio-visual methods should be encouraged. The colleges may be asked to go in for setting – up of language labs.



e) Inter – exchange programmes should be incorporated in the syllabi of the communication skills.

Finally, in order to make the learning and teaching of English or communication skills, significance of motivation need to be reiterated here and we may agree with Gardener that motivation

“refers to the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language. That is, motivation to learn a second language is seen as referring to the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity. The motivated individual expends efforts towards the goal, but the individual expending effort is not necessarily motivated. Many attributes of the individual such as compulsiveness, desire to please a

teacher or parent, need to achieve might produce effort, as would social pressures, such as a demanding teacher, impending examinations, or the promise of a new bicycle”(1985:10)

Here of course, we may replace the temptation of bicycle with some more desired object of the learner. The teacher should work towards reducing the anxiety of the learners. Anxiety is believed to be detrimental to learning. The major factor that leads to anxiety is fear of failure. The teacher should be given a free hand to some extent to deal with such situations. The teacher should go prepared with their lessons and for this preparation of teaching plan is advisable. Above all, the teacher should follow the learner – centred method of teaching. Students should be foregrounded in the classroom. The tedious, boring, pedantic and sleep-inducing lecturing methods should be sidetracked and there should be one to one session in the method of teaching English.

#### Works Cited:

1. S.K.Verma 1985. ‘A Functional View of Mother Tongue’, Presidential address delivered at Nagpur University.
2. S C Sood 1988, English Language and Literature Teaching in India, Delhi, Ajanta Publications.
3. R.S. Saraf 1987, Teaching English in India, Shri Vidya Prakashan, Pune.
4. R. Gardener 1985, Social Psychology and Second Language Learning, London, Arnold.

# Dhanashree Publications

Flat No. 01, Nirman Sagar CHS,  
Thana Naka, Panvel, Raigad - 410206



[www.research-chronicler.com](http://www.research-chronicler.com)