

# **The Problems and Prospects in the Achievement of Syllabus**

## **Objectives with Reference to the Papers of English and**

### **Communication Skills at Diploma Engineering and Technology**

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The importance of English language is immense. With globalizing process of human activities, English became widely used language because of the political, military, scientific, technological and cultural power that the Anglo-American nations have had. In today's world of throat cutting competition, the necessity of competence in English communication is therefore become very important. It is, no doubt, an international language. It is the window of the world. It is the soul of the corporate world. There is not a single field where English is not used. In each and every field, it is being used. It is the language of modernization. It has become essential for mobility, social and economic success. In India and on international level, no other language is used as widely as English. So it has become a link language. A person, to maintain himself from every angle (education, career, life's standard etc.) competence in English communication is needed. Every one is required to be competent in English communication and today's education system's aim is the same.

Communicative competence is important because language forces students to acquire knowledge and skills in the various disciplines; and to develop individuals to intellectuals, social and civic beings. Communicative competence means a total command over language. The nature of it may be as following:

“Communicative competence is a term coined by Dell Hymes in 1966 in linguistics which refers to a language user's grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology and the like, as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately.

Canale and Swain (1980) defined communicative competence in terms of three components:

- i) Grammatical competence: words and rules.
- ii) Socio-linguistic competence: appropriateness.
- iii) Strategic competence: appropriate use of communicative strategies.

Canale (1983) refined the above model, adding discourse competence: cohesion and coherence.

A more recent survey of communicative competence by Bachman (1990) divides it into the broad headings of “Organization

Competence” which includes both grammatical and discourse (or textual) competence, and “Pragmatic Competence” which includes both sociolinguistics and illocutionary competence.”

(Online: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/communicative\\_competence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/communicative_competence))

The syllabus objectives in the paper English and CMS at diploma engineering and technology intend to develop student's communicative competence through English. MSBTE states the same in the Preface of the texts of English and CMS respectively in the following manner.

‘The purpose of introducing this text is to enable the students to enhance their comprehension, writing skills and oral skills in English.

(Maharashtra State Board of Technical Education 2006: 2)

‘Purpose of this subject is to enable the students to develop confidence through effective communication.’ (MSBTE 2006: 1)

But the general observation concerned reveals that there is a maximum gap between the objectives set down and the directions followed to fulfill the objectives. It may generally be seen that the students of diploma engineering and technology are not that much competent in communication through English even after studying the subjects like English and CMS. It has been expressed in the preface of the text of English too that the snap study conducted for the role of technicians in industry revealed that the diploma pass out students appearing for interviews or working in industries lack the skills to communicate in correct English. The present article is an attempt to find out the causes behind their poor competence in communication through English and to give the meaningful suggestions and recommendations for their improvement.

Lack of sufficient time to deal with students may be a cause. In a week, five hours and four hours of 60 minutes are allotted to the teaching of English and CMS in first and second semester respectively. We get 108 hours in a year to develop grammatical foundation and communicative competence through English. But unfortunately, we are bound to give maximum time to deal with syllabus only because students are required to attempt questions to score in examination on the basis of the syllabus prescribed. Moreover, the syllabus prescribed in the paper English and CMS does not meet the need of the objectives. Though so far students have studied the grammar like parts of speech, direct/indirect, punctuation marks, tense, active/passive, types of sentences, use of article, add question tag, remove too, change the degree, correct the errors, synonyms, antonyms, use of contextual words, paragraph writing, glossary, reading comprehension etc., we find again the repetition of the same syllabus for the first semester of three years diploma engineering and technology. In Communication Skills, there are five chapters namely, Introduction to Communication, Types of Communication, Principles of Effective Communication, Non-Verbal-Graphic Communication, Formal Written Skills. All chapters except 5<sup>th</sup> make no sense as far as the needfulness of academics is concerned and even they don't fulfill the objectives of the subject. What use are such chapters to students? How these chapters will improve their skills in communication through English? All such questions lead us

nowhere but towards ambiguity.

Sufficient time should be allotted to develop students' competence in communication through English for carrying out sufficient language activities successfully. Even, it may be stated that the subject English may be prescribed in all the 6 semesters under 6 different titles with only one objective of developing competence in communication through English. Moreover, the syllabus designing committee of English and CMS should play a crucial role in designing a curriculum to achieve a communicative competence. If the stages given below are followed, the competence in communication through English among the students of diploma engineering and technology could be improved to a satisfactory level of achievement. The stages are as following:

### **1) Basic Stage:**

At Basic Stage, the general information about language should be provided viz. language, characteristics of language, human communication and animal communication, speech and writing, importance-need-scope of English language, etc. Language acquisition-steps-problems in it should be directed. Difference between language, regional language, register etc. should be shown. The grammatical correlation between the mother tongue and the language being learned should be focused. The students should be encouraged to read entire Marathi-English and English-Marathi dictionary so that their vocabulary maybe enriched. They should be given the proper idea about the real pronunciation of the words and the books concerned should be suggested. The importance of language skills should be convinced more firmly. The grammatical aspects like parts of speech, hierarchy of grammatical units, types of sentences, tense, auxiliaries, phonology, morphology, syntax, sub-ordination, co-ordination, basic and derived structures, vocabulary building, word formation etc. should be given more weightage. The books about grammatical development should be given priority and the syllabus should be set accordingly.

### **2) Intermediate Stage:**

At basic stage, the grammatical foundation will get developed. In intermediate stage, the comprehension ability should be checked. It should be assessed that how much the student comprehends and responds properly. How his psycho-motor technique works fast with appropriateness that should be seen. Some lessons for comprehension should be prescribed and questions should be asked in class to check their sudden comprehension and in examination for their overall comprehension. Some unseen passages should be given; correct the errors from the sentences should be asked to realize their correct knowledge of grammar and to know the profundity of background. Use of contextual words in a paragraph should be incorporated in this stage to know the appropriate sense of understanding of the student. Students should be enforced to read English newspapers and to bring important cuttings and to read them aloud in the class. In this way, their comprehension may be assessed. They may be suggested to watch and listen some English channels. Watching and listening is better than reading because in reading double role is played viz. reading and understanding. In watching and listening, speaker keeps them engaged and of course what they listen,

they concentrate only on that. By this, comprehension may increase and their knowledge of English language may enhance.

### **3) Written Stage:**

The grammatical foundation and comprehension is not sufficient enough at this stage. It is required to know the appropriateness of the form of writing. The spellings, punctuation marks, proper words at proper place, proper structures etc. should be stressed. Formal written skills like office drafting, letter writing, job application, report writing, defining and describing the objects, analysis and interpretation of picture, paragraph writing, essay writing etc. should be taken into consideration for the development and assessment of written skills. The development of thought, having unity of thought and logical sequence, may be seen.

### **4) Spoken Stage:**

In this stage, prime importance should be given to the fluency in communication through English and the efforts should be taken accordingly. To be fluent in communication through English, vocabulary, pronunciation, structures of words, phrases, clauses, sentences, the way of expression (accent) etc should be known. The stress should be given on oral skill, conversation skill etc. For this, we should know effective communication and its different principles, communicative barriers arising and the ways of overcoming, the role of different organs of human body in the effective communication etc. Different communicative concepts like greetings, seasonal greetings, good wishes, ways of expressing congratulation, introducing, thanking, apologizing, condolence, offering, inviting, advising, suggesting, requesting, warning, threatening, permission, obligation/compulsion, prohibition etc. should be given value as they are important aspects of language. Students should be motivated to read newspapers in order to absorb different words and structures. Dialogue writing, speeches, seminars, presentations, paper readings etc. should be considered essential. Moreover communicative approach plays a crucial role in the development of competence in communication through English. If a student gets habituated to use English continuously, it definitely helps for over all development. Students may be convinced for planning the thoughts in advance more systematically while making a speech. They should be told for the necessity of proper style and accent. They may also be told for not stammering otherwise they may feel diffident and they may not reach to the final stage.

Apart from this, English should be taught from linguistic and communicative point of view. In this context, Gaulkar U. A., Ex. Head, Dept. of English, Rajarshi Shahu College, Latur in a Forward to Shri Sanjay Kshirsagar's book 'Third Language English' says,

'English ought to be taught from the linguistic point of view, basic language skills have to be mastered and beauty of expression, style and idea have to be appreciated.' (Kshirsagar 2006: 3)

Teachers should be imaginative and innovative in language teaching with abundance of motivating techniques with them. Proper environment at home by parents and at college by teacher should be created. Students should do enough practice and

drill work to overcome the problem.

More weightage should be given for the development of spoken skills. While writing, the writer may get extra time to think, to analyze, to interpret, to edit, to rectify, to find the difficult words and to apply logic which favors positively. It is certain that unless and until it is completed, nobody goes to show. But while speaking, such liberty, the speaker may not get which causes poorness in communication. It means to develop the competence in communication through English; the speed of thinking in English should be increased. This is a mere way to reduce the timing gap between spoken and written. But a question strikes the mind, how is it possible? It is possible. An example can be given in convenience of this. Suppose a person is just learning typing. In the beginning, his speed may be less. To increase his speed, what can he do? He does practice alone which increases his speed of typing. And it is aptly said, "Practice makes man perfect." We shall do the same thing. But here, we are not going to increase the typing speed but thinking speed. And once we do it, we shall be able to have a good communicative competence

T.V. is watched. Journals, magazines, news papers, books etc. are read. Most of the scholars justify that this is essential for fluency building. Though this is true, something important is forgotten. Reading and listening is not sufficient. Something more is needed which may play somewhat good role. For an experiment, an example of terrorists attack at various places in India can be taken. One may consider himself Home Minister of India and may try to answer the questions raised by the reporter. Here he is both reporter and answerer. He may form the questions and ask these to himself one by one. He may take one activity per day and may repeat it till the time, he feels confident about the language development. He may write it too. By this way, he can increase his thinking speed and once his thinking speed in English matches with his thinking speed in Marathi, he may find fluency.

The article may be concluded with the view that the problems shown may become a barrier if not removed in time. Generations after generations may find themselves weak in communication. So the importance of this article is undeniable. It may be said that the improvement shown may bring competence in communication through English among the students. It is hoped that the present article will be helpful in the teaching and learning of English in the light of the suggestions incorporated as above.

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