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# Teaching Communication Skills among Prospective Engineers using Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

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## Abstract

This article includes an introduction and discussion about designing and planning the writing and speaking skills among engineering students for their overall personality development and growth. Further, the study will present different types of approaches which will be used in combination as they will fascinate the learners and make them achieve positive planned learning results, these types of combination approaches are referred to as the Blended approaches. These approaches will help us in designing and executing a need-based ELT Programme.

In this modern world communication skills plays a major role for individuals. Learners from different backgrounds like Science, Commerce, Arts, Technology or Medicine, etc. All learners need communication skills. Communication Skills is a process of exchanging idea, thoughts, emotions, feelings, and expressions. Without communication, it is not possible to expand your language or your business. Here the researcher has shed light on the importance of communication skills among prospective engineers. In the engineering field, it is most important for engineers to communicate with the people for their business. If they want to perform well in the business or want to become a skilled professional then they must give importance to their communication Skills. To develop communication skills, one should give importance to task-based language teaching. The tasks should be designed to keep in mind the level of the learners. With the TBLT the learners can improve their communication skills by performing different tasks in the classroom and become skills professionals.

**Keywords**: Communication Skills, Prospective Engineers, Blended Approach, Need-based ELT Programme, TBLT

"Communication is a skill that you can learn. It's like riding a bicycle or typing. If you're willing to work at it, you can rapidly improve the quality of every part of your life."

**Brian Tracy**

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# 1. Introduction

This article includes an introduction and discussion about designing and planning the writing and speaking skills among engineering students for their overall personality development and growth. Further, the study will present different types of approaches which will be used in combination as they will fascinate the learners and make them achieve positive planned learning results, these types of combination approaches are referred to as the Blended approaches. These approaches will help us in designing and executing a need-based ELT Programme. This article first discusses the methods of collection to enhance the English proficiency of engineering learners and will produce language modules that will emphasize their speaking and writing skills (Shalatska, et al., 2020).

# 2. Context

As we know that English is a known internationally widespread language due to the revolution in the business environment, therefore the use of the English language is required everywhere with the advancing technologies, and it plays an important role in the learner's education and personality development. Regardless a survey of technical courses curriculum across the institutes in India cast an awful system of English learning and teaching status. Institutions accept the importance of communication and writing skills but still the language is educated to the students at a peripheral stage only, because of time limitations, and thus the necessary importance is not provided to it.

Engineering universities propose several courses with the aim and objective to provide the best knowledge to the students while balancing their overall communication and behavioral skills through several English courses to the students of every department like management, engineering, computer applications, nursing, pharmacy, medical, physical sciences, etc. The English courses are added to their curriculum in the first and second semesters respectively. The course continues for one whole year for a total of approximately 60 hours, in which they discuss several communication skills like communication types, LSRW Skills, interviews, group discussions, personal homework, presentations, conferences, workshops, etc.

The researcher formulates this study surveying several engineering colleges, and examines, analyzes, and plans several strategies to help the students in some of the particulars of academic writing and speaking so that students can frequently use English rather than facing it as a barrier to their success (Ajeesh & Rukmini,

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2021). Thus, the researcher prepared an ELT programme comprising several stages and investigated and examined those programs on the engineers to achieve the best language skills.

## 3. Research Designing

The research narrates the understanding, analyzing and enactment of the ELT programme, which is formulated to improve the learners' academic language at secondary and tertiary levels. ELT programme comprises of several levels of designing skills steps as given below in the figure 4.1.

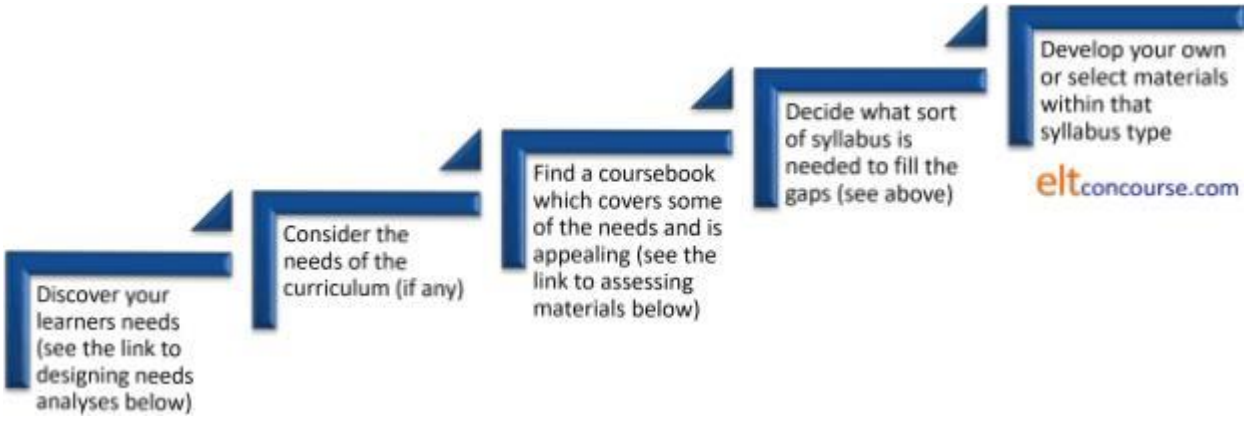


**Figure 3.1: Steps to be followed in the ELT program**

In general, while designing any plans, we need to find or discover the requirement of strategizing, here we need to know about the need of the learner, as we have focused on learners basic English speaking and writing skills, we need to add it into our schedule and find or design a study material which can cover some part of the syllabus required and need to develop our materials and task and activities to achieve the expecting results. The above-stated steps will be followed in our overall study to accomplish the best outcomes. The ELT is an integrated development programme comprising different components like vocabulary, grammar, speaking, writing, and overall, communication skills. The selection of different elements depends upon the requirements of the learners.

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## 4. Communication Skills Designing Principles:

Research of decades has shown the situations which affect learning and cognitive skills and how the learning and cognition change over the life span of children, students, and old age people (Topalli & Cagiltay, 2018). Here the researcher has described the learning principles that will broadly and strongly support the instruction design for the students and adults.

### Supporting, Attention, Transfer, And Retention

Some researchers have represented and identified several factors that develop information retention and acquired knowledge transfer to several situations (new). All these factors are essential for product developers and educators when designing texts, curricula, technologies, and materials and when creating or selecting lesson plans to utilize in the programs for adult education. For all adult learners with underdeveloped skills of literacy, it is especially important to follow these guidelines to ensure that all concepts (new) are absorbed, even if the skills of literacy, are able to somewhat overcome the information source's less-than-optimal designs.

- **Present Content in an Organized and Clear Format**

Beginners or those who work to further improve their skills and knowledge often need support participating in some parts of tasks that are most important and relevant to the goals of learning speaking and writing. Adults and learners of all ages benefit from an organized and clear presentation that supports them to remember and learn new information. It is essential to remove all the information which is irrelevant, even if it is very interesting, that can reduce cognitive load as well as prevent learning from competing demands for attention.

According to coherence theory or principles, learners had to obtain a coherent, main ideas' well-connected representation in order to learn writing and speaking. It is very important to provide them with organization and structure to support them understands the concepts as well as how they connected with each other. Therefore, the method is used to arrange and organize the ideas which depend on the relationship to be depicted. Some outlines may be utilized to show and present a structural hierarchy.

Based on embodied principles, plans for lessons and material should be arranged so that related ideas and elements are shown close to each other in time and space (Sadeghi & Richards, 2021). For instance, the verbal label for the picture should be spatially placed near the display picture, not on the screen's other side.

- **Use Varied and Multiple Examples**

There are ample evidences that acquired knowledge, strategies, and skills of writing and speaking are applied flexibly and better generalized in a wide variety of situations and tasks in multiple and diverse contexts. Memories are mostly triggered through several signals so the knowledge of learners is available whenever it is needed. An acquisition may be slow, but learners transfer and retain their skills and knowledge better than those learned in just one context.

- **Present Content in Several Formats and Modalities**

Information is remembered and encoded perfectly when it is delivered in several modes (pictorial and verbal), media (lectures and computers), or sensory modalities (visual and auditory) than when it is transmitted in one medium, modality, or mode. For instance, it is very effective to connect the graphics with the spoken description, graphics with the text, sound of speech with the written or printed words, as well as other modalities combinations. Illustrations of graphics with spoken detail are very effective for some subject matter in technology and science. Multiple codes give more diverse and richer representation which permits more retrieval routes for memory.

- **Teach in Proximal Development Zone**

The concept of ZPD is the effectiveness of instructional, tutors, technology or text approaches in promoting the learning of speaking and writing may be accessed by comparing all the performances without and with the support given in intervention. Does it allow all individuals to perform better without that approach, tool, or material to instructions? There is moderate proof that the entire answer is party depends on the selection of tasks, materials, and learning goals which must be very sensitive to the student's mastery as well as should be perfectly challenging – not too much difficult or too easy, but just perfect.

Different factors influence the increase experienced in ZPD. At first, having a lot of knowledge and understanding about a domain to learn can develop learning efficiency in writing and speaking. During adulthood knowledge is individualized a lot, so instructions must access first, then build upon the knowledge

already possessed by the learner (Kumar & Divya, 2021). At last, a decline related to gradual age in processing speed, associative bonding, working memory, and attentional control can impair the ability to learn.

- **New Material Space Presentation**

It is perfect to deliver the tests and materials presented at a time than to focus the experience of learning over short time intervals. When studying and learning for exams, it will be better to study for the same number of weeks and days than cram it into one session of study the night before an exam. Distance exercise has been presented to be beneficial for all adults of varying ages.

- **Test on many Occasions, preferably only with Spacing**

There are evidences (substantial) that periodic testing aids the learning of writing and speaking, and reduces forgetting. An indirect advantage is that continuous testing, which may be embedded and quite brief in the learning materials, engages students continuously in materials as well as guides the computers or instructors in making some decisions regarding what to teach. The exact testing frequency probably depends on the materials of speaking to be guided and learned. Student benefits a lot from the testing (repeated) when all of them think of a final test when all of them do not expect a single one. Vacancy retrieval has to be presented and shown to develop adult performance over a wide range of ages.

- **Concept of Ground in the Perpetual-Motor Experiences**

In this section, there is ample evidence that linking concepts to concrete actions and perceptions is important for learners or writers. For instance, when reading all instructions about assembling the writing piece helps to hold and see the parts at the time of instruction reading. The experience of the perpetual motor is very important when the accuracy of thought and communication is required and when the entire concept is introduced for the first time. Therefore, the cognitive framework shows some importance of learning and grounding comprehension in the perpetual-motor experience (also known as embodied cognition), but one on the entire role of symbols and abstract representation in the comprehension along with the representation of embodied perpetual-motor (Fakhretdinova, et al., 2020).

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## 1. Reasoning and Content Supporting Generation

Intervention is required that encourages all learners to generate patterns actively of reasoning, content, and language, rather than oppositely processing the delivery of material through the learning environment (Kumar, et al., 2021). Therefore, learning of speaking and writing is enhanced when all the learners need to organize and manage the information and detail themselves as well as make a cognitive effort at the time of retrieval and acquisition. Normally put, here is the learner who needs to write and speak perfectly. Encouraging all the learners to engage and support in reasoning and thinking at a deeper level is especially supported for adults who need to develop the skills for speaking, working, as well as some other matters involving typical tasks and materials.

- **Encourage the Learners to Make Material**

Leaning of writing and speaking is enhanced when all the learners self-answer rather than recognize or read them. This fact basically explains why the essay or free recall tests that need the examinee to make all the answers with some prompts often generate good retention than the multiple-choice tests and recognition tests where all the learners are only capable of identifying the correct answers. Also, this explains why all the tutors learn much more than the tutees in tutoring (peer) when the learner begins on an equal field of play. Learner-generated material may lack some details as well as contain misconceptions, therefore, monitoring is needed to prevent misinformation and ensure adequate learning from being learned.

- **Encourage Explanation Generation, Contradictions Resolution, and Substantive Questions**

There is ample evidence that the construction of arguments and explanation facilitates learning. The explanation includes an event's casual analysis, functional reasoning for actions, and claims' logical justification. Explanations give coherence to a material as well as explain why the entire information about writing and speaking is important and relevant. Students can be prompted to self-explain material by answering all questions or thinking aloud that elicits the entire explanation for linking the material or content to what all of them know already. The student's self-explanation can be developed by clear instructions on the explanation's own as well as by establishing collaboration with the professor or student to support the construction process of useful explanation (Mohamed, et al., 2020). Along with this, studying perfect explanations through speaking helps with a deeper understanding, of speaking, writing, and learning.

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- **Encourage Learners to Form Ideas from Different Perspectives and Different Points of View**

There is evidence (moderate) that some opportunities for considering different perspectives and viewpoints regarding a phenomenon consist of understanding and knowing the entire concept as well as contributing to cognitive flexibility (at a high level) in accessing as well as utilizing the entire concept in multiple contexts. Therefore, if the concept is easy to understand in a rigid and specific way, then it will become encoded, used, and accessed in a restricted way. Along with this, cognitive flexibility develops when the intervention helps in different knowledge layers that intertwine the plans, procedures, skills, rules, facts, as well as conceptual principles. When learners are required to transfer skills and knowledge of writing and speaking to a task that has very unique complexities and issues that can't be anticipated, multiple viewpoints and cognitive complexity are considered helpful at this time.

## 2. Self-regulated learning, inquiry, critical thinking, and complex strategies

Learners mostly lack the skills, awareness, and knowledge necessary to focus on material related to a goal or task, to understand a lesson, to adequately study the material, or to effectively perform cognitive tasks (complex). Writing and speaking strategies are not much developed in many adults, particularly for expository text, so all of them would benefit (at a high level) from the training in comprehension strategy.

- **Instruction of Structure to Develop Complex Strategies Effectively Use**

There is evidence (moderate) that all the complex strategies may be achieved by instructions from a well-engineered tutor that is intensive, scaffolded, explicit, and structured. There is also some evidence about complex strategies that adults over a wide range of ages can benefit from the instructions in the strategies of memory monitoring to develop the performance of memory. Training of memory, particularly if it is embedded in otherwise the literacy activities of the valuable classroom, may be highly effective in enhancing the repertoire of adolescents' memory skills. Although adults also benefit, it is actually possible that the reduction related to age in fluid capacity may reduce the new strategies acquisition in the afterlife.

- **Combine Instruction of Complex Strategy with Material Learning**

There is evidence (moderate) that the instructions of strategy should be integrated deeply along with the subject-matter material, and not as a list of scripted procedures or abstract rules that ignore material or

content. Several researchers of this study claim that the strategies and comprehension skills are always facilitated when all of them are mostly embedded in the material areas (for example, speaking and writing different subjects). On another side, some say that more evidence must be collected for greater certainty (Hanifa, 2018). Comprehension can be developed following instructions on expository text structure, such as sequence, description, cause-effect, problem-solution, compare-contrast, as well as another rhetorical frame. Training in such structures often referred to in the subject matter, may develop the understanding for adults over a wide range of ages.

## Designing tasks according to learner's level:

In this research, the researcher has designed tasks and activities for students at different levels from simpler ones to complex ones. The modules have been grouped into three different levels, the beginners, intermediate, and advanced levels. The task at each level is predesigned to develop the understanding and skills to attain the best communication skills and knowledge. The table given below illustrates the various activities according to each level: -

## Teaching methodology

To design a module context for the students, a mixture of approaches or blending approaches and methods are used for formulating the course context. The curriculum adopts several approaches such as constructivist, integrative, collaborative, inquiry-based, and reflective learning, consisting of pre-test activities that teach and improve students speaking and writing skills, motivate them to become more confident and acknowledge them with the best skills for their best possible communicating skills. Several concept demonstrations are done for learners to understand the course after which different personal, pair, or group activities are done which is continued by discussion and review based on the learner's understanding and improvement. The learners are presented with samples to examine their skills and individual work and home task is given to them (Alkamel & Chouthaiwale, 2018). After their initial level teaching activities and examinations are completed, the students are taught at a higher level involving technical understanding and examination in both speaking and writing purposes. The teaching methodology mainly consists of the activities, the dynamics of the classroom, learning resources, sequencing, temporalization, and diversity.

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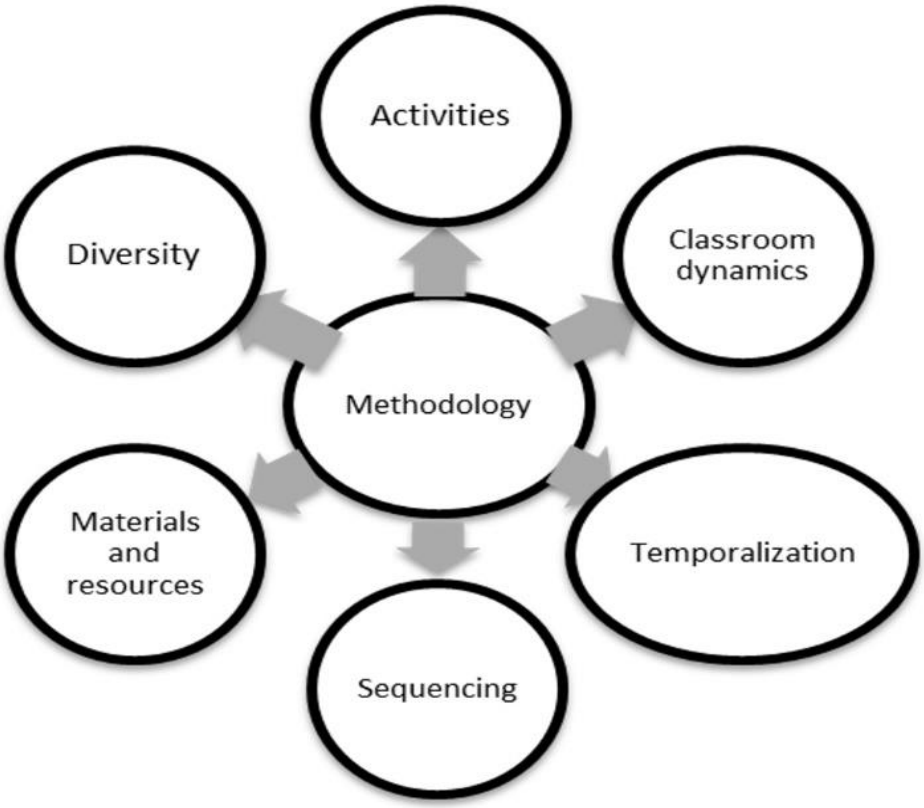


## Conclusion

The English language has a vast audience and aspiring learners. When it comes to Engineering learners, Communication plays a major role in their professional development. The Task-based language teaching methodology is a good means of developing the language abilities of the learners. This study proved that communication skills could be used effectively in enhancing the communication skills of prospective engineers. If the tasks could be designed according to the need of the learners it will give more impact on the learners to learn the language and make their communication in better way. The TBLT proved to be instrumental in developing a positive attitude among the prospective engineers.

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