



Issues and challenges of teaching communicative English in professional institutions: the case of northern India

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ABSTRACT

The present article focuses on the issues and challenges related to teaching and learning Communicative English in Engineering and other professional institutions (tier-2 and tier-3 cities) in the northern belt of India. It attempts to explore various problems faced by the teachers as well as the students. It also examines the ongoing efforts to develop English communication skills of the students. The L1, L2, and L3 scenario has been discussed in detail. Bilingualism and multilingualism are investigated further. It also offers feasible solutions for making English teaching and learning more effective. Though the article only considers the northern belt, it can be applied to other belts too, provided the socioeconomic conditions are similar.

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1. Introduction

English language has spread its wings globally due to expansion of capitalist economies of English-speaking countries. English has been increasingly used in international trade and business. It is the working language of leading international organizations (e.g., World Bank, Universal Postal Union, International Monetary Fund, Commonwealth of Nations, SAARC, ASEAN, OPEC). This has resulted in recent surge in English-teaching and -learning programs whose popularity has increased dramatically, making English a capitalist commodity in itself. To compete and excel financially in the present world where capital and market are the fundamental driving forces behind learning any skill, competency skill in English has become indispensable.

Consequently, for the nonnative speakers of English, developing English communication skills has become imperative as it presents a plethora of economic opportunities. Employability in every sector is directly proportional to good English language skills. In other words, the economic importance of English for global competitiveness cannot be denied. Hence, it has become vital for the students of engineering and other professional courses too.

In the last 5 years, the economy of tier-2 and tier-3 cities in India has increased manifold as the growth of metro cities has started reaching its saturation point. The cost of living in the metros (tier-1 cities) is becoming exorbitantly high, forcing many people to shift to tier-2 and tier-3 cities. As the information technology sector (IT) has also started expanding and exploring its destinations to these cities, the importance of tier-2 and tier-3 cities has grown immensely. In northern India too, this trend has been observed. Strong government support has improved the infrastructure to a great extent. This includes the establishment of professional institutes in these cities too. For example in cities like, Meerut, Faridabad, Gurgaon, Rohtak, Noida, Agra, Mathura, Ghaziabad, Lucknow, Aligarh, Bareilly, Kanpur, Allahabad, Gorakhpur, Varanasi, etc. Companies have started visiting the professional institutes in these cities for campus recruitment. Though the quality of talent is relatively low, there might be some advantage for the companies (e.g., they can get employees on lower salary).

According to a recent report by Aspiring Minds, an employment solutions company, only 7 percent of Indian engineering students are suitable for core engineering jobs. It was found out that 73.63 percent of candidates lacked English communicative skills. Another report by ASSOCHAM (The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India) reveals that the management students are facing the similar fate. By the end of 2016, India already had 6,214 engineering and technology institutions (as stated by HRD ministry). Approximately 2.8 million students are getting enrolled and 1.5 million released into the job market every year. But their unemployability is increasing in an alarming manner. The unsuitability of these engineering and management graduates is directly linked to their dismal performance in English communication skills. In the light of this grim scenario, there is a pressing need to critically reevaluate the present system of teaching communicative English and to formulate a better and more productive one.

There are six sections in this article. The second section elucidates the issues and problems of the students studying in these institutions. The next section sheds some light on the challenges faced by the language teachers. The solutions to the problems are proposed in section five. The final and sixth section recapitulates the whole article.

2. Multilingualism and the problems of students

2.1. *Third language (L3)*

For majority of the students in professional institutions in northern India, English is not even the second language (L2), but the third (L3), as their first language/ mother tongue (L1) is a regional language and Hindi is the second language (L2).

This is one of the crucial aspects effecting teaching and learning communicative English. To delve deeper into the factors associated with third

language (L3) learning/acquisition, we must look at the following factors which control L3 learning (Hufeisen and Marx 2007):

- (a) neurophysiological factors – age, learning, production, and reception capability
- (b) learner external factors – sociocultural and socioeconomic surroundings
- (c) emotional factors – anxiety, motivation, etc.
- (d) cognitive factors – linguistic and metalinguistic awareness, ability to assess oneself
- (e) foreign-language-specific factors – ability to transfer
- (f) linguistic factors – proficiency in second language

The neurophysiological factors provide both the basis for and precondition of general language learning, production, and reception capability. According to Jessner (2008), the age at which learners are exposed to the L3 can influence the language skills to a great extent. Cenoz and Valencia (1994) and Sanz (2000) have established the effects of language use and literacy practice in the L3 on the development of oral proficiency and literacy in the L3 showing that the amount of L3 used at home has an impact on performance in the L3. Sociocultural and socioeconomic surroundings, including culture-specific learning traditions, and the type and the amount of input the learner is exposed to are learner external factors. Emotional factors are such as anxiety, motivation, or acceptance of the new target language. Motivation, in actual sense, must involve the desire as well as the satisfaction on the part of the language learner (Gardner 1985). Language awareness, linguistic and metalinguistic awareness, learning awareness, knowledge of one's own learner type, and the ability to employ learning strategies and techniques are included in cognitive factors.

The learning capability of the language learners in the professional institutions in the northern Indian belt varies according to their socioeconomic status, which in turn affects their schooling system. Many students here are first-generation learners; they have no one at home to guide or to motivate them. There are very few students who need only more practice and just a sort of refinement, but the majority of the students need to get started from scratch. The majority of them who come from poor economic background have been exposed to English language at a very later stage of their life. Those students are unable to appropriately apply the knowledge of grammar they gained in the school. Their learning, production, and reception capability is worse than the ones who have been earlier exposed to English and are from better economic background. Their vocabulary is very much limited too. That is why the competence is at its lowest. External factors also play a crucial role as most of the times the surroundings hamper the learning process of the students here. Despite the fact that a few students do know the value of learning proper communicative English, they do not get that sort of vicinity where English can be practically

applied which is required to hone the skills further. In the presence of the students having relatively better communication skills, the anxiety level of most of the students is very high in and outside the class. This is one of the reasons of his/her hesitation in speaking in public. Though the learner is aware of the need to effectively communicate in English, complete acceptance of the new target language (i.e., L3 (English)) seems to be lacking. The learner is also unable to gauge his/her abilities as s/he does not have access to appropriate diagnostics to do so. Though they can more or less fluently speak L2, their proficiency skills in L2 are also not very good and that affects their learning L3 to a great extent. They are unable to compare features of L2 and L3, to engage in L2-L3 transfer (and vice versa), or to make L2-L3 interlingual connection. L2 cannot be used as an effective bridge in learning L3 in this context.

Necessary motivation and seriousness among the students seem to be lacking too. The students focus more on the technical subjects and are delinquent toward English. Moreover, English has less credit than other subjects. Therefore, the students do not realize the significance of the laboratory and the activity classes in English. They consider English to be one of the “optional” subjects.

2.2. Official vs. social status of English

In the northern belt, the students exhibit “Vertical” bilingualism if we consider L1 and L2 as they use Hindi as a standard language together with a regional dialect. Most of these are “passive”/“receptive” bilinguals when we consider L2 and L3 as they are not able to speak English (L3), though they understand to a great extent. Very few students here are “productive” bilinguals who can speak and write English effectively. Many scholars have considered L2 and L3 scenario in India as the case of “Horizontal” bilingualism, where both the languages are given equal official status in official, cultural life and family (see Pohl 1965). I argue against this. The binary distinction of vertical vs. horizontal is not applicable in this context because it is indeed a fact that English has more prestige than Hindi or any other language in official as well as in cultural and social life in India. Hence, at national level, though India does have Hindi and English as two official languages, but at societal level, they have contrasting status.

Hindi does have more prestige than its dialects; similarly, English in the present trilingual situation is the most prestigious language. However, this can sometimes boomerang too. There are situations when the sociocultural and socioeconomic surroundings do not favor the learning process of the students here. If someone attempts to communicate more and more in English, s/he is demotivated by the peers and it is considered as a sort of boasting because not everyone is comfortable with English in daily conversations. The language prestige and the resulting attitudes and motivation of learning additional languages are some factors which should not be ignored during the teaching process.

Another important point to be noted here is that rather than having L2 as a “bridge” language, the learner here runs into too many difficulties as L2 (Hindi) has no etymological relationship with L3 (English). So, L2 does not seem to facilitate the learning process as there is no development of “spontaneous grammar” in this multilingual system.

2.3. *Conventional and unchallenging curriculum*

UNESCO defines “Curriculum” as “a systematic and intended packaging of competencies (i.e. knowledge, skills and attitudes that are underpinned by values) that learners should acquire through organised learning experiences both in formal and non-formal settings.”¹ It should be relevant in the sense that the learners should be able to apply it to their lives and hence, their careers. It should be able to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to succeed. The curriculum of communicative English in the profession institutions fails to fulfil these criteria to some extent.

The contents of the technical subjects that the students encounter in their first semester are more or less new, hence, challenging to them. This is not the fact with English curriculum. They get a feel that they are being taught the same topics that were in their school curriculum. This diminishes their motivation and enthusiasm for English. The terms “noun,” “pronouns,” “verbs,” and “adjectives” seem so familiar to them that they lose any further interest. As their proficiency level is very low in English, they are unable to assess their capability themselves. Hence, they do not fully understand the importance of learning Communicative English. The students who have slightly better English communication skills feel overconfident in this environment and take English as a subject for granted; others with lesser competence think they do not need to invest much time and energy to English as a subject because of the familiarity. The result: the performance of the majority of the students is below average.

Before zeroing in to resolve these difficulties, we must look at the challenges faced by the language teachers at these institutions.

3. Challenges for the language teachers

3.1. *Heterogeneous class*

Heterogeneous classes have been frequently seen as challenging to the teachers, be in any area. These are also termed as mixed ability classes. But some scholars like Ur (2005) think the term “mixed ability” is misleading as it implies that “the important difference between members of a mixed class is in their language learning ability, but this is not necessarily so.” (Ur, 2005, 273). She mentions the following differences in the heterogeneous classes: language-

learning ability, language knowledge, cultural background, learning style, mother language, and intelligence.

As discussed in the earlier section, the students in these institutions have different levels of proficiency. They display differences in learning abilities, motivation, previous exposure to learning, socioeconomic background, etc. This poses a challenge for the English language teacher as s/he is not able to reach out to each and every student during the class. The effectiveness of the syllabus is also compromised. The quick learners understand easily and perform the tasks better and in a shorter span of time, while the slow learners are not able to understand properly and lag behind. Teachers find it difficult to provide these students with appropriate materials. It also hampers the participation of all the learners.

Some universities, like GLA University, Mathura has started conducting diagnostic tests (English, Physics, and Computer) for the entrants in order to assess their abilities. On the basis of this, the students are categorized into various sections. It is indeed a positive step; nevertheless, it does not solve the problem of heterogeneity as it is not necessary that a student who is good at physics or computer must also be good at English. So, the problems of the teachers of English more or less remain the same. Moreover, the students get demotivated by looking at other underperformers in the same class and peer learning and tutoring is not possible in this situation.

3.2. *Inaccurate initial assessment*

In a technical institution, a student has to study many technical subjects apart from English. Any kind of diagnostic test at the beginning of the semester cannot assess his/her ability accurately because s/he has to be tested not only for English but for other subjects too (e.g., Maths, Computer, Physics). An individual can have different aptitude for different subjects; hence, it is virtually impossible to put the students together in sections according to their ability in a single subject. As the students are not of same level of proficiency, the diagnostic test administered to them in the beginning does not prove to be reliable and the exact base line cannot be determined. This poses difficulty for the teachers of English while assessing each student before the beginning of the first semester. This, in turn, makes it more challenging to teach in the heterogeneous class as the teacher does not know the students' initial content knowledge.

3.3. *Demotivated or undermotivated students*

Being in an institute where the students have to focus more on the technical subjects, English is often neglected by the majority of the students. They bear this notion in mind that it can be done through "over-night" study. They depend on "rote learning." This is true for both high level performers as well as low level performers. Hence, they are not much interested in their English

assignments and doing extra study. They also do not give additional time for reading English everyday after classes. They want to just “pass” the exam to get their technical degree. The students often complain of the burden of assignments in the technical subjects and always have an excuse to neglect English assignments. The teachers find it very strenuous to teach these unmotivated or under motivated students. They speak less in English and use L1/L2 more inside and outside the class.

The next section focuses on the measures taken as well as their (in) effectiveness.

4. (In)effective measures

As the paramount objective of any professional institute is to get the students placed in a company, the whole system revolves around it. On one hand, it is an admirable idea but it does not address the problems faced by the students and the teachers in a holistic manner. The teachers are constantly under pressure to get the intended results from the students. The test scores of the students are used to evaluate the performance of the teacher. Though it can ensure productivity out of some procrastinators, it demotivates the majority of the teachers. The substantial flaw in this idea is that it seeks a goal without solving the fundamental problems. Despite the curriculum being formally revised time to time, it is neither need based nor challenging. That is why the teaching methodology is also not uniform and productive. On a theoretical basis, English speaking is endorsed very strongly in these institutions but it has also not been very fruitful as elementary things are being neglected. There is also no uniformity in rendering assignments to the students. Home assignments can be checked and deliberated upon in the class next day. However, the introduction of online assignments in many institutions has put a stop to this practice now as it is not feasible for the students to remember the questions done online and hence, the discussion on the online assignments cannot be done. That is why the students mostly remain unaware of their mistakes and it hampers their further learning.

Though there is no straightforward panacea for all the problems, I have tried to find some answers and offer a few solutions in the following section.

5. Solutions

5.1. *Challenging and need based curriculum*

The curriculum must be learner-centric and learner-friendly. It should cater to the needs of the technical students. It must be challenging as well as need based for developing analytical skills of the students. The “intended” curriculum is the actual vision and the “learned” curriculum is the outcome. Only if the “intended” curriculum is need-based and challenging, we will be able to

achieve the wider goals of competencies and personal development. The curriculum should be up-to-date. It should be relevant to the students' current as well as future lives and aspirations. It should be able to make their future economically prosperous. It should be open and flexible, so that it can integrate current/more relevant issues. On the other hand, it should not burden/ overload the learners.

It must help in motivating them as well as in sharpening various mental processes. The learning materials/text should be culturally relevant and should respect the traditions of different communities. It has also been observed that because of their low competence level in English, performance in other subjects suffers too as they are not able to write/express in English. So, English curriculum must be beneficial in and aid comprehension of the concepts in other subjects also. In other words, it should be coherent and consistent with other areas/ subjects. The students must be aware of the importance of each and every topic. They must be cognizant of the fact that whatever they are learning is not only important but essential to them. The topics should be engaging, innovative and stimulating enough for the learners. It should rouse interest in further exploration of the subject on their own rather than just revolving around the prescribed curriculum. Overall, it should be holistic and different than the traditional, conventional curriculum. To achieve all the aforementioned, we need effective curriculum development and planning. Proper guidelines should be prepared for designing curriculum, its implementation, revision, and evaluation.

5.2. *Precise and explicit instructions*

English teachers must consider students' background knowledge, socio-economic status, prior education, culture, and make their instructions clear-cut as well as culturally relevant. Teachers should assess the English language developmental levels of their students and select the appropriate instructional strategies for each level accordingly. The input should be comprehensible to each student for him/her to perform better. The teachers must teach in such an interactive way that the students feel connected with their lives and cultural background. The teachers should provide the title, theme, and cultural background (if required) before starting any task in the class. Various different types of materials in meaningful contexts should be used for those tasks. The tasks should be explained in a clear, lucid, and detailed manner that can be easily comprehended by the student. If needed, the medium of instruction can be L1/L2 in order to make the student understand it better.

5.3. *L1/L2 as an effective resource*

Though English and Indian languages are very different linguistically and there can be no development of "spontaneous" grammar, the teachers can try to use

L1/L2 strategically while teaching English. Despite the fact that the use of translation in language teaching has been much criticized because of its interference effect (Heltai 1989), it has been observed to have some applications too (Mallikamas 1997; Stoddart 2000). By using translation, teachers can introduce new lexical items and help the slow learners cope with frustration which they feel in the initial phase. It can facilitate English learning process while explaining difficult concepts. It can also help in implementing “association” which leads to proper recalling of concepts. The mistakes arising due to L1/L2 interference can be used to teach the students error analysis which can help in improving their English skills. For example, “I passed out of university” is a literal translation of its Hindi counterpart. But in English “pass out, means ‘to faint’ or ‘to fall unconscious.’ ‘Don’t eat my brain’ is another example of direct translation of its Hindi counterpart. Only when the difference between English (alveolar) ‘t’, ‘d’ and Hindi (retroflex) ‘ṭ’, ‘ḍ’ is explained to the students in a comprehensible manner, they learn to pronounce soft ‘t’ and ‘d’ very easily. Examples like these can be used to correct the mistakes as well as to make the students understand how interference affects English learning. This can, in turn, enhance their metalinguistic awareness. L1/L2 can be viewed as a valuable resource to be utilized in a suitable manner. The goal is to improve the students’ communication skills and the medium of instruction must not impede the process of learning.”

5.4. Multi-contextual and procedural vocabulary

Vocabulary is the building block for the development of communication skills. Hence, both procedural vocabulary as well as academic vocabulary should be taught. The superficial knowledge of vocabulary items can build the communication skills only up to an extent but in-depth knowledge must be imparted for increasing language proficiency level of the students. This vocabulary should comprise of words used in variety of situations. Extensive reading should be encouraged so that the students could encounter those words regularly.

Procedural vocabulary is a must for using communication strategies effectively. It is defined as the “core” vocabulary with “procedural value” to learners providing them with a strategic resource to help overcome breakdowns in communication (Marco 1999; Robinson 1989). It is context-dependent and is different from the typical lexical knowledge of the learner. It is useful for the learners of all levels as it depends on their needs. Procedural words are more general, for example, the verb “make” is more general and has a wider range of uses than the verb “build” as we can use “make a story,” “make a bed,” “make a million,” etc. To develop a good procedural vocabulary, I recommend that words from technical subjects should be incorporated in English lessons. For example, in the noun lesson, the teacher must include the words such as

“motion,” “frequency,” “vibration,” etc. and teach them the types and usage of nouns and articles using them in proper contexts.

Hence, incorporating academic vocabulary within procedural vocabulary will help the learners build a strong procedural vocabulary and to comprehend their technical lessons (texts and lectures) in a better way. It will sharpen their writing skills too. This vocabulary should not be limited to the words in isolation, but should include the words that usually co-occur with it (collocation). Synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, hyponyms, etc. should also be taught on this basis. Technical texts should be regularly used to teach grammatical concepts and their usage. It will enable students to understand the concepts and contents taught in technical classes. The teacher should also keep in mind that some words are more central to the learning process and hence, should focus more on them. Using academic vocabulary will help students to convey arguments and facilitate the presentation of ideas in a sophisticated manner.

5.5. Conducive environment for speaking English

English speaking must never be enforced as it creates a natural antipathy for the language. Instead, the environment inside and outside the classroom must be such that the students feel motivated enough to speak English on their own. Most of the students do not develop oral proficiency in English because the environment is not conducive. Teachers should make the classroom “fear-free” and “unthreatening.” The students should never be ridiculed by their peers/instructors for mistakes as this dampens the motivation of the students. One option can be to initiate an English club where the students can enjoy doing activities and hence, feel more free to use English. As the classes are heterogeneous, peer teaching can be a constructive method to promote greater interaction and inclusion of the low-level performers in the mainstream. Group tasks must be based keeping in mind different abilities of the students in the group and must motivate them gradually. The goal is to make the students perform up to their maximum potential.

5.6. Integrated communication skills

All the four skills of communication (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing (LSRW)) should be integrated while teaching English. Linking LSRW together must be done in such a way that one skill is reinforced bringing different skills into use. Integrated communication skills make the learning more natural and interactive and the range is wider. The curriculum must ensure that all the four skills are given proper weightage according to the need of the students. The teachers should plan their lessons to include these skills holistically and should not just focus on improving one while neglecting others. For example, if the students are watching and listening to a video, they

must be asked to write whatever they have listened to and in the next class each of them must be asked to narrate. If they have been listening to any lecture, they can be asked to write it down and then speak.

5.7. *Communication strategies and learning strategies*

According to Weinstein and Mayer (1986, 315), learning strategies are “behaviours and thoughts that a learner engages in during learning” that are “intended to influence the learner’s encoding process.” Ellis (1994, 396) has defined communication strategies as those strategies which learners use “to overcome the inadequacies of their interlanguage resources.”

“Learning strategies contribute to the development of interlanguage systems, whereas communication strategies are used by a speaker when faced with some difficulty due to his communicative ends outrunning communicative means.” (Færch and Kasper 1983b, 2). Hence, learning strategies must precede communication strategies as the motivation behind learning strategies is to learn and for communication strategies the motivation is to communicate. Learning strategies are categorized as metacognitive, cognitive, and social-affective (Chamot and Küpper 1989). These strategies play a very important role in the development of “Strategic Competence”² which is one of the three strategic competencies of Canale and Swain’s Communicative Competence framework (Canale and Swain 1980).

Various communication strategies can be implemented (e.g., Approximation, Circumlocution, Paraphrasing, Word Coinage, Appeal for Avoidance, Foreignizing). The effectiveness of the communication strategies is based on the speaker’s ability to accurately, effectively, and spontaneously use these strategies to reach his/her communicative goal. S/he should be able to ascertain *which* strategies to choose for *when* and *what* purpose (Ellis 1994, 559). For this, the teachers need to make the students more aware of the present strategies so that s/he can use it as per requirement. It is important to note here that the level of proficiency of the class will regulate the nature of teaching the strategies.

The teachers must consider the different learning styles of their students while teaching the communication strategies. According to Howard Gardner (1993), there are seven different ways (multiple intelligences) to demonstrate intellectual ability. These are: visual-spatial, verbal/linguistic, logical mathematical, kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Gardner (1993) states that these differences “challenge an educational system that assumes that everyone can learn the same materials in the same way and that a uniform, universal measure suffices to test student learning. Indeed, as currently constituted, our educational system is heavily biased toward linguistic modes of instruction and assessment and, to a somewhat lesser degree, toward logical-quantitative modes as well.” Every student has his/her own learning style. For example, some respond to visual input more than verbal.

For others, verbal instructions work better. The teacher must try to provide input in various ways so that students with different learning styles are able to comprehend better. Hence, combining visual media, printed material, sound media, etc. is very essential while teaching heterogeneous classes. Every class activity should be designed to encourage creativity of the students. Keeping more advanced tasks for high-level performers is also necessary as they finish earlier than others and might become uninterested later.

One of the most effective learning strategies in heterogeneous class is “peer tutoring” (Bland and Harris 1989). According to Damon and Phelps (1989), “peer tutoring is an approach in which one child instructs another child in material on which the first is an expert and the second is a novice.” It has been found to boost academic skills, develops social behavior and maintains classroom discipline.

After successfully implementing the aforementioned strategy, fostering learner autonomy (Wenden 1985; Wenden 1991) is another important aspect of teaching learning strategies. An autonomous learner is the “one who has acquired the strategies and knowledge to take some (if not yet all) responsibility for her language learning and is willing and self-confident enough to do so” (Wenden 1991, 163). Though the teacher performs the role of the facilitator during the learning process and provides them with the appropriate tools to become autonomous gradually, Dickinson (1995) asserts that cognitive motivational studies point out toward the importance of the learners’ own efforts and strategies for their learning successes as well as for failures. In order to become independent and strategically competent language learners, the learners have to put efforts more and more rather than being totally dependent on their teachers.

5.8. Differentiated/individualized assignments and grading standards

As the classes are heterogeneous, the assessment based on common assignments is unreliable. Hence, there is a need for differentiated assignments and grading standards. Teachers must give the low-level performers more time to finish their assignments. High-level performers may be given more challenging assignments than the others. The lessons can be tiered in terms of content as well as process. It helps in formative assessment of the students. Formative assessment (Michael Scriven 1967) is much more important than summative assessment in heterogeneous classes. Formative assessment consists of a range of assessment procedures supervised by teachers during the learning process in order to amend teaching and learning activities to improve students’ performance. This benefits the students to amend their work as the teacher is able to frequently give them the feedback due to the continual assessment during the learning process. According to Harlen and James (1997), this takes into account the progress of each individual, the effort put in, and other aspects of learning which may be unspecified in the curriculum.

Activities can be individualized based on the ability of the learner. More options can be given to them in order to get past the challenging tasks. Groups can be formed on the basis of mixed abilities as the students can learn from each other. As discussed in the previous sections, peer tutoring can be an effective tool to be used and heterogeneous classes can be seen in a more positive perspective.

6. Final remarks

In order to increase the employability of professional graduates in northern India, the current system of teaching communicative English is in dire need of remodeling. The present work addresses both the teachers' as well as the students' issues. A holistic approach has been taken to tackle those issues. Radical amendments in terms of curriculum, teaching pedagogy, grading assignments, integrating communication skills, using communication, and teaching strategies are proposed. It is clear that one cannot be exclusively either teacher-centric or student-centric while exploring various solutions. The primary responsibility of the teacher must be to train the learners for communication rather than training them to become perfect in the given language. The curriculum should be challenging as well as need based. The texts which promote learner autonomy should be used more. L1/L2 must be effectively used to explain the concepts. Vocabulary should be multi-contextual as well as procedural as it will aid the learners in becoming "productive" bilinguals. Constructing fear-free environment for English speaking and precise gauging of the learners' intellectual abilities are some others prerequisites for constructive teaching and learning.

Notes

1. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/strengthening-education-systems/quality-framework/core-resources/curriculum/>.
2. It refers to a speaker's ability to adapt their use of verbal and nonverbal language to compensate for communication problems caused by the speaker's lack of understanding of proper grammar use and/or insufficient knowledge of social behavioral and communication norms. <https://slaencyclopedia10.wikispaces.com/Strategic±Competence±%28Michael±Canale±%26±Merrill±Swain%29>.

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