



TECHNICAL COLLEGE'S STUDENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS ENGLISH

Payal*, Dr Chaitanya

Department of Humanities & Social Science, Bhagwant University, Ajmer

Abstract

As we know there is a strong need of English language in respect of writing and speaking for technical colleges students. The aim of this paper to publish is to find out whether there is any change in the attitude of students towards English Language proficiency when they come for college education after completing the school education. Change in the attitude of students from school to college was evaluated in terms of marks, interest towards English language, self- motivation to learn the language, participation in the class, understanding the importance of English in securing a job etc. Total 120 first year Engineering students from Uttar Pradesh have been selected for the study. To evaluate their attitude towards English language proficiency, a questionnaire was set up and a group interview was conducted. The findings of the research indicated that there was a significant shift in their attitude towards English language proficiency.

Keywords: English Language proficiency, technical college's student, attitude

1. Introduction

English language proficiency is considered as an important aspect at every stage of educational process. In general, both school and college the two different levels are there, where English is taught to students in different learning situations, seem to serve two different ends. The language taught at these two levels is based on different needs and factors. For instance in schools, the language teaching focuses on factors like marks, completion of syllabus and practice or coaching for students to write examinations. In colleges, the language teaching lays emphasis on soft skills, communication skills and employability skills to meet the requirements of employers from companies and industries as well in technical college, it add some technical skills.

Oxford's definition of language learning strategies seems to be the clearest. She clarified that language learning strategies are specific actions taken by the learner to enhance learning; to perform specific tasks; to solve specific problems; to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations; and to compensate for a deficit in learning. The attitude of students is determined by the impact created by various factors while learning the language. At school level, the attitude of the students towards language learning is different since their mind is preoccupied with examination pattern and marks they score in the examination. At college level, it is essential to impart language programmes by realizing the appropriate attitudes perceived by the students as there is a strong correlation between attitude and language learning process.

2. Literature Review

Gardner (1985) says: “An individual’s attitude is an evaluative reaction to some referent or attitude object on the basis of the individual’s beliefs or opinions about the referent”. He also adds that it is motivation that lies with attitudes towards other ethnicities and language learning contexts means Learners need to have positive attitude to acquire high level of proficiency in the target language. According to Chapman and McKnight (2002), “Attitude is your general disposition – your mental “starting point” for viewing life and the people and events in it.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants and the Setting

Present study was carried out in Shri Ram College of Engineering, Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh. The students those took part in this studies were from the first year Engineering course, where Hindi, a major regional language is the medium of instruction in school. All the subjects in this course are exclusively taught through English medium. In addition, Technical English is also offered in view of their needs in job placement. As the medium of instruction for these students at school level was Hindi, they were quite not comfortable with their studies at college level because here medium was English. However the students faced certain difficulties in learning the target language English. The syllabus, methods of teaching and evaluation system for Technical English in colleges are different also the participants in this study had no clear idea about Technical English when they joined this course and most of them felt it was a new experience.

3.2 The Instruments

3.2.1 A Questionnaire

The research study was based on both quantitative and qualitative data. The researcher collected the quantitative data through a questionnaire given in appendix for assessing the attitude of students towards English language proficiency both at school level and at college level. The questionnaire included 10 items, structured as statements with the options ‘Agree’ and ‘Disagree’. The questionnaire was reviewed by two experts in language teaching before it was distributed to the participants of the study

3.2.2 Group Interview

Here qualitative data was obtained through group interview. It provides a very flexible technique for small-scale research and also allows thematic analysis of the qualitative data. The aim was to get a clear idea about the attitude of students with regard to English language proficiency. 24 students were randomly selected and interviewed by the researcher. He asked questions related to the students’ likes and dislikes about language learning, their experience about the technical English course, opinions they perceived about the language before and after they had joined the college and the difficulties they faced in learning the language. Through better rapport between the students and researcher, the objective of the interview was achieved. The interviews with the participants were recorded by the researcher and were later transcribed for analysis.

4. Results and Discussion Based on Questionnaires

The responses of the students has been collected through questionnaires and then conducted the discussion based on the results.

4.1 Response table

S.No.	Topic	Responses of the students	
		Yes	No
1.	Audio-visual Impact	83.33	16.66
2.	Freedom to explore the language	66.66	33.33
3.	Activities	51.66	48.33
4.	English magazines and newspapers reading	58.33	41.66
5.	For getting the marks	90	10
6.	Interest to learn	20	80
7.	Importance of skills	50	50
8.	Teaching- learning environment	51.66	48.33
9.	Students as active participants	62.5	37.5
10.	Role of English language in securing a job	83.33	16.66

4.1.1 Audio-visual Impact

Around 84% of the students feel that their language learning got enhanced due the audio-visual equipment used in the classroom at college level means that the use of audio-visual equipment in language classes has a positive impact on their learning.

4.1.2 Freedom to explore the language

It is obvious that language learning in colleges ensure more freedom, which helps them understand the language in full-fledged manner. It is understood that student-centric teaching allows more freedom in learning the language.

4.1.3 Activities

Equal of the students have changed their attitude towards learning the English proficiency because of these activities in colleges.

4.1.4 English magazines and newspapers reading

Reading magazines and newspapers, listening to English news and watching programs in English shows that college environment is more beneficial.

4.1.5 For getting the marks

90% students were agreed regarding learning English to get good mark in his/her exams. the majority of the students changed their attitude towards marks after they had joined for college education.

4.1.6 Interest to learn

Only 20% students want to learn something new.

4.1.7 Importance of skills

Yes, it was just equal 50% were as yes and remaining 50% were no.

4.1.8 Teaching – Learning Environment

The analysis of the responses to the fourth statement indicates a positive attitude from the students at college level since teaching-learning environment helps them acquire language skills from an even better perspective.

4.1.9 Students as Active Participants

The students mention that they were active participants in the class. This reveals that there is a lot of scope for interaction between teachers and students in language classes only at college level.

4.1.10 Role of English language in securing a job

It is an important factor. The responses to the next statement reveal that a large number of students at college level realized the importance and role of English language in securing a job. Around 84% of the students agreed with this statement positively.

4.2 Results of group Interview

The group interview has been conducted and a data developed shown that most of the students say that they learnt English merely for the purpose of scoring high marks. There was much confidence but lack of vocabulary. For instance, skills like speaking, reading and listening received less attention. Besides, there was a general opinion that writing would help us in examinations." Related to teaching learning environment students were in the favour of the use of regional language for communication as there was no need to use English.

Some views given are we were encouraged to read English dailies and listen to English news regularly. This was useful to us in improving our language skills.

5. Conclusion

The present research study showed the results positive attitudes of the students towards English language proficiency in technical college's students. Attitude towards English is clear due to various factors such as the Audio-visual Impact, Freedom to explore the language, Activities, English magazines and newspapers reading, For getting the marks, Interest to learn, Importance of skills, Teaching- learning environment, Students as active participants, Role of English language in securing a job etc. At college level, language teaching needs to suit the expectations and the attitude of students for effective teaching learning process. Group discussion has show regarding significant confidence of students. Overall the findings prove that there is a positive change in the attitude of students towards language proficiency.

6. Acknowledgment

Author acknowledges Shri Ram College of Engineering, Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh for providing the opportunity to do this research on technical students students.

7. References

1. Gardner, R., & Lambert, W. (1972). *Attitudes and Motivations in Second Language Learning*. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House.
2. Gardner, R. (1985). *Social Psychology and Second Language Learning: The Role of Attitudes and Motivation*. London, GB: Edward Arnold.
3. Doughty, Catherine J., & Long Michael H. (Eds). (2003). *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*. USA:
4. C. Vijaya Bhaskar & S. Soundiraraj (2013) A Study on Change in the Attitude of Students towards English Language: *Learning English Language Teaching*; 6 (5), page 11-116
5. Gülsen Husseina, Mukaddes Sakall, Demiroka, Hüseyin Uzunboylua (2009). Undergraduate student's attitudes towards English language: *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 1, 431-433
6. Mehmet Nuri Gömlüksiza (2010). An evaluation of students' attitudes toward English language learning in terms of several variables: *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 9, 913-918
7. C. Vijaya Bhaskar & S. Soundiraraj (2012). A Study on Change in the Attitude of Students towards English Language Learning: *English Language Teaching*, 6(5), 111-116
8. Kanokrat Kunasaraphana (2015). English Learning Strategy and Proficiency Level of the First Year Students: *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 197, 1853 – 1858