



## Major Challenges in CBI for Engineering Faculty

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### Abstract

India is a country where majority of the mass is working with agricultural activities. It's a clear an indication that a major part of the country lives in rural area. Now the time has changed all the people have started migrating towards the metropolitan cities. For this they started entering the higher education. As a result the no of challenges have been increasing for teachers and learners since many years. To meet such challenges the ELT experts. Especially the teachers and students of engineering college are facing lot of challenges. The present paper will highlight the major challenges faced by the teachers of engineering college. It also throws light on the problems faced by the students with the content and the curriculum of the first year engineering student's course in the Gujarat Technological University. The researcher has tried to handle the four skills, vocabulary and language to reflect the challenges in the teaching of content based instruction.

**Key words:** Technology, Authentic materials, Media

### Introduction

**“The ability to communicate well is the number one tool in business”**

Teaching and learning is a process to bring changes in behavior of learners. To make this process more effective and interesting the teacher should keep in mind some objectives of teaching. A teacher without this knowledge cannot hope to achieve anything. A teacher without pre decided objectives will be like a passenger who does not know where he wants to go. He should determine the goal first in the beginning before he actually starts his journey. The Engineering students whose age group is of between 17-20 years are facing many problems in the engineering. Their mental and physical

development also affects the learning. At this age they are about to be turned in to adult so their attitude, interest and behavior also affect the teaching learning process. Who are so called adults in



this paper ever where?

If the faculty takes care of the child's status then he is successful if he does not then he faces many problems, as a result he is unsuccessful in his field. In his areas he faces many challenges. Especially in a language which is not his own language. English is a subject which is taught in India as a first, second and third language, it also taught as a foreign language. English language is taught at various levels. It is taught in Commerce, arts science engineering medical and many branches at different level. So a teacher has multi dimensional role to play. Ultimately, it is faculties of engineering who has to take lot pain to make the learners learn how communicate because the ability to communicate well is the number tool in business. It is an engineering faculty who teaches all the skills like technical skills, communication skills, soft skill, and interpersonal skills. The skill development is pre requisite for the engineering students who have to enter the corporate world.

The English language is one of the most popular languages to learn, perhaps, the most spoken language around the world is English, and many people choose to learn the language simply to place them in a better position to secure work, or communicate more effectively with more people from around the globe. English might be a popular language to learn, but this does not necessarily mean it is a simple language to master, there are many challenges people face when learning English and if you are aware of these beforehand you stand a much greater chance of mastering the language. Teaching of English in India has many sided problems; the teacher of English who has to face these problems should be familiar with the nature and scope of these problems. He should know how best to organize his teaching at various levels in order to minimize their adverse effects. Some of the problems have become especially challenging in the context of a complex Indian situation in which the learner must study his mother tongue and learn English as well. Especially when teaching of content.

### **Content-based instruction (CBI)**

Content-based instruction (CBI) is teaching organized around the content or information that students will acquire, and not around the linguistic or other type of syllabus. Content refers to the substance or subject matter that we learn or communicate through language content rather than the language use to convey it.

Content-based instruction is based on following two principles, they are -

People learn a second language more successfully when they use the language as a means of acquiring



information, rather than as an end in it. This principle reflects one of the motivations for CBI noted earlier that it leads to more effective language learning.

It better reflect learner's needs for learning a second language. Many ESL, EFL programs focus on preparing students for academic studies or for mainstreaming. It follows the theory which says that 'Language involves meaning and information is communicated and constructed through text and discourse' eg. Sentences>>clauses, phrases>>speech events>> text types

## **Language is Purposeful**

Language is used for a specific purpose such as, vocational, social or recreational. In order to make the content comprehensible, teachers need to make adjustments and simplifications for the students.

## **Theory of Learning**

CBI makes an assumption that learners learn best when they are given language in a meaningful, contextualized form with the primary focus on acquiring information.

People learn a second language more successfully when the information they are acquiring is perceived as interesting, useful and leading to a desire goal.

Language learning is more motivating when students are focusing on something other than language, such as ideas, issues and opinions Some content areas are more useful than others. Teaching builds on the previous experiences of the learners. CBI builds on student's knowledge and previous experiences. Students bring a wealth of knowledge to the classroom.

## **Objectives**

In CBI, the language is second to learning the content. The objectives relate to the content, not to the language.

## **Syllabus**

The syllabus comes from the content. However it is common for a topical syllabus to be used in theme-based CBI.



## Essential skills

- Stryker and Leaver suggest the following essential skills for any CBI instructor
- Varying the format of classroom instruction
- Using group work and team-building techniques
- Organization jigsaw arrangements

Defining the background, knowledge and language skills required for students success.

## Basic Principles

CBI is built on the principles of Communicative Language Teaching. Classroom needs to be filled with real and meaningful communication where information is exchanged. CBI is an effective method of combining language and content learning. Theme based CBI works well in EFL context.

Looking to the current situation of content based instruction teaching has become more challenging. The students of engineering who come to study engineering subjects like mechanical engineering, civil engineering, electrical engineering etc they have to study one subject of English known as communication skills. Teaching of communication skills to the students of engineering is also very tough. There are many major and minor problems which make an engineering faculty's task a very tedious task. They are so many challenges such as Psychological challenges, mental challenges, and physical challenges. Geographical challenges etc. The details of the challenges are mentioned below.

## Geographical Challenges

Challenges pertaining to Geography of the learner's residence are known as Geographical challenges. India is agricultural country majority of the public lives in rural areas. One of the greatest problems for the students is that they come from the remote area of the village. As it is already mentioned that geographical location of learner also affects the leaning which does not help direct contact with native speakers of English. The remoteness of the villages poses a peculiar problem because it does not generally attract good teachers of English from outside the region. As a result the students who are learning English language are also of that quality. They do not have much exposure of English language. They are very poor in English language. This leads to less concentration towards the English language. Their sentence structure their vocabulary their comprehension is very poor. This is a big challenge for a teacher to cope with this. The teachers of English have to teach them what is communication, what is listening skills, reading and speaking



skills etc. when their base is so weak they can't understand directly these topics. Some sort of gradation should be there in the entire course so called communication skills. All the topics are prescribed in one single semester. So it is a big challenge for the faculty to make them understand the content of this subject along with the grammar.

## **Mental Challenges**

The challenges concerned to the learner's mind are called mental challenge. It is very difficult to reach to the mental level of the students' understanding. Students pretend to understand the content when the teacher explains but at the time of evaluation they are blank. There is a gap between the teacher and learners' mental level. The min set of the learners

## **Physical Challenges**

The challenges related to the physical body are called physical challenges. Sometimes students with physical deformity do understand the text. They are not able to read and understand the words and their meanings. This is a major challenge a faculty faces. The faculty cannot teach him

## **Linguistic Challenges**

The challenges related to the language are called linguistic problems. Sometimes the students don't pronounce correctly or misspell the words or unable to read the content properly. Such are the challenges which make an individual teacher the task of teaching very challenging.

Apart from these challenges here are some of the more challenges which make the engineering faculty's condition very miserable. After understanding the content the students are not able to comprehend. Here the faculty has to explain the content in mother tongue then the students have to write in target language. The students directly cannot express their views in Target language. First they express in mother tongue and then in English. There are issues related to skills. As content based instruction is given to the students for betterment of their communication skills, they are lacking in listening speaking reading and writing skills. The teachers face such problems.

## **Challenge of Reluctant learners**

As a teacher of young engineering adults, it's likely that corporate gigs may make up a significant percentage of teacher's workload. This means there is a strong possibility that there will be several reluctant



learners you are charged with instructing. Under motivated students jumping through professional hoops at the behest of the boss can be some of the most challenging students a teacher faces.

## Challenge of Pronunciation

Younger children, especially those below around 7 to 8 years of age, often pick up languages with relative ease. Many attain proficiency indistinguishable from a native speaker. So many learners make mistakes in pronunciations of technical words. Technical terminology always hinders in learning content of the engineering subjects.

However, this is not always possible for the adult learner. The dominance of the intonations, stresses and rhythms of our native language can be a tough barrier to break in acquiring full fluency in another language. Older learners may struggle with the idiosyncratic sounds of the target language. Making pronunciation a specific focus can go a long way toward conquering these difficulties. If the faculty is familiar with the phonology of the learner's mother tongue, it may be helpful to employ it to assist. But care should be taken that it should not become a crutch that will hinder learning. Use of multimedia in teaching content can be a resource for students. Encouragement can help cultivate a positive attitude towards accuracy in pronunciation. Use of multimedia resources, including recordings of the student's own speech, can be a useful and engaging means of undertaking work in this area.

## Learner's extensive time demands

And we know it from family commitments to pressing work deadlines. From social engagements to paying bills, for many of us, free time is one of our most prized possessions, and we value all our time highly. While teaching content to the adult students the teacher is sometimes not prepared properly. The teacher is not able to move her lesson at a good pace. Teacher sometimes just reads the lesson and simply tells the gist of the lesson. While teaching to the engineering students it is necessary to make them understand the units and the content practically. But Students always consider it as if it is of not that much useful so don't invest their time if it is not taught practically. They show carefree sort of attitude. **The teacher should recognize this in his interactions with his adult students.** Make sure that as a teacher he should be punctual and well-prepared. The teacher should keep his lessons moving at a good pace. Because if an adult learner feels their time is not being used effectively, resentment can ensue. And unhappy students are the most difficult to teach. This also should be considering at the time of assignment and home work. Is it possible to set tasks that can be easily woven into the fabric of a student's day? For example, rather than writing a paragraph, can



they be tasked to order their dinner in English? The key is to keep tasks meaningful *and* feasible.

## **Variations in English**

The variations in the different forms of English can often be difficult to understand. For example, the difference between using formal and informal language or the differences between spoken and written language. This leads to students writing words phonetically, i.e. how they would say it rather than how its actually spelt, and using informal language, maybe even slang that they have picked up, in formal situations which may perhaps be viewed negatively.

## **Challenge of Struggles with participation**

Language and content is all about communication, and that requires participation on the part of the learner. For some adults, whether due to personality traits or cultural reasons, they hesitate; this is the most difficult aspect of content based instruction and language learning. The teacher can't force them participate in reading the text even the teacher can't make him to comprehend the text if the learner is introvert. The teacher needs to know the students' cultural backgrounds. Along with this he/she get to know the students' personal idiosyncrasies. Make use of this knowledge to inform how you plan for groupings and activities. Differentiate where necessary with scaffold work, prompts, role assignment and selected activities. The teacher needs to build a rapport with the shy students, so they feel more comfortable in the learning environment. Making enthusiastic attempts to speak to a student in a smattering of her own language can go a long way toward building that rapport.

## **Development of Skills**

Most teachers assume that students come to the class room well prepared to participate in teaching-learning process. It is true that every student has a desire to learn. But they may not know how to study. There are really no standard ways and approaches to becoming a master student. All that one has to do is to find out one's strengths and weaknesses and work towards eliminating the weaknesses in learning. The teacher should also provide opportunities for students to learn various skills needed for becoming a better learner and achiever. It has been clearly proved in many instances that the learning skills of students can be greatly enhanced. The Students who want to be master they have to be master in various skills like listening, speaking, reading writing. Along with this they have to develop presentation skills and study skills. For engineering faculty it's very difficult to develop such skills when the classes are overcrowded. In some colleges there is no facility for teaching the subject like communication skills. Today the content is taught





with help of audio video materials but such facility of language lab is not available. In learning the skills the technology plays vital role. Lack of technology is one of the challenges to teach the content of English. Specially speaking skills needs the technology.

Apart from this there is one more challenge that is lack of spelling knowledge. The learners commit errors in writing correct spellings. In order to teach them correct spellings the teacher has to teach him first correct pronunciation. The teacher has to pay extra attention to teach the word syllable wise. The teacher should give the correct information regarding the word (one syllable, two syllables or three syllables) sometimes when the teacher teaches the content the students with high intelligence consider the subject very casually and take lightly. As a result they show that they have understood the content but actually they are not clear about the content. This is a challenge for the faculty. Next is reading, it is the main method of learning many things. Whatever is the learning style, reading is the sure way to aid comprehension, knowledge and information. Improving the ability to read for comprehension and retention will help students to learn faster. A teacher can't spare much time in teaching reading at the degree level. The teacher has to finish the syllabus in a limited time span. So it is a challenge to teach reading skill to individual. Reading skills can be developed best by the individual where the faculty can just monitor. But first year engineering students whose medium of instruction is their mother tongue cannot cope with the technical words in reading so fluently. At last to say that the skills development is also a major challenge for the engineering faculty. For effective communication skills must have been developed. Communicative approach should be applied to eradicate such problems of skills development.

## Conclusion

At the end it can be said that Engineering offers a highly rewarding and lucrative career- one in which you can use your initiative, imaginative faculties to find creative solutions to the challenges facing our society. The success however will depend upon creating high ethical and moral values in the engineering graduates besides imparting up-to date knowledge and skills. But now a days, the faculty of engineering faces multidimensional challenges. Soon those challenges will have to be removed then and then this highly rewarding career can be acquired. Content is always taught in the form of story, paragraph, letter or a poem. But it is a faculty's duty to make him sit in the class to understand the content. By overcoming all the challenges the faculty can be a successful personality of engineering field if he/she uses the media and authentic material. It will help.





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