

## **Prominence of English Language for Career Development**

**B. Nagia, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.**  
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### **Abstract**

We are living in a world where communication is omnipresent. English is the language which connects people from different regions, cultures and nation. By default, this is due to the fact of British rule in India, they gave common language to the world, which helped the world in sharing any kind of information fast and clear without any translation. English language empowers and reforms the field of education. People never care in taking challenging and fruitful overseas assignment and also English language breaks the barrier for the people to settle down in various countries.

Now-a-days, English language skills are regarded as important as IT skills, which directly results in the economic gain of a nation. The British Council is trying hard with US, U.K and South Asian Partners to support the improvement of “English Skills for Employability”. In India a “Three-Year Programme” established and funded by the European Commission is providing English and soft skills training for young minds who are looking for employment in various high reputed environment.

Thus the paper highlights the prominence of English language, which helps to promote the ratio of employability.

**Key words:** career development, English, employability, South Asia

### **Introduction**

English is the most popular language around the Globe and is considered as an International Language spoken all over the world. It is one of the most spoken common languages between different cultures and also the language of Technology, Industry,

Administration, Commerce and Trade. Also, Official Language in the Corporate World is English.

In today's scenario, we can't imagine us without two E's – English & Electronic Communication. The reason why English Language becomes so important is because it is followed by all developed and developing countries. Studies show that about 375 million speak English as a first language and 750 million speak English as a second language. English Language is the only gateway to enter into the world of Science, Knowledge, Economy and Culture.

Nowadays, every MNC and Startups need employees who speak fluent English with confidence. Even in Job Description they mention “Excellent skills and command of the English language”. So, to get a good job in any company, it is now becoming mandatory to have the knowledge of English and to speak well to express yourself. It becomes the measure of one's capability. For career growth, the ability to express your view in written as well as oral communication plays an important role. If you have command over English then you can work for International Companies around the world which gives you the exposure and opportunity to travel and meet with new people. At times, speaking a new language can seem to be really difficult. Probably you know you are making mistakes, you are too nervous. All you need is to build confidence to speak a new language. So don't stress yourself. We are here to share the tips to improve your English. A recent article in The Economist titled ‘The English Empire’ noted that an ever increasing number of international companies are adopting English as their first language. While this comes as no surprise for most English learners, what's worth noting is that global firms from non-English speaking countries are adopting English to replace their native language as the official language. Taking China's Lenovo for example, its CEO Yang Yuanqing set a very personal example when he made it his priority to become fluent in English at the age of 40. English is becoming ever more important in one's career development.

### **Speaking Proper English Improves Career**

A number of studies have consistently demonstrated that those who have an advanced knowledge of the English language are much more likely to advance their careers. In addition

to this, these studies have also demonstrated that a strong command of the English language will lead to higher paying jobs, more social mobility, and a great deal of social success.

No matter what career you choose, whether it is Engineering or History, having a powerful command of the English language will greatly increase your odds of success. Generally, your vocabulary will need to be equal to those who are in the same career field.

However, if you want to surpass your colleagues, and make yourself more marketable, you will need to increase your English skills, and make them superior to the other people who work in your field. While you may not realize it, people will judge you by the way you speak.

### **Role of British Council in Developing English Language Skills**

The British Council is working with a range of UK and South Asian partners to support the development of 'English skills for employability'. In India, a three year programme funded by the European commission is providing English and soft skills training for young people looking for work in tourism, manufacturing and agro-processing. The programme is reaching 10,800 students in the two of the most marginalized districts in North India.

Teach India, a partnership with the corporate social responsibility wing of the Times of India, enables us to improve the English and soft skills of thousands of young students in two cities in India.

Partnerships with Sri Lanka's Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management, and its Department of Technical Education and Training.

There is a clear need and demand for English. But a first-hand understanding of how English can benefit individuals and nations would help skills sectors design policies and strategies that would provide better value for money. We hope that this research will help the UK and South Asia understand how they can work together to share knowledge, expertise and experience.

## **Tool for Employability**

India too has contributed a good number of vocabularies to the modern English language and which have become a part of standard dictionaries.

As the private sector companies are gaining ground and becoming more competitive due to changed world economy, the employees are always kept on their toes. It is like either you work hard and show your performance or perish for not taking care of your professional growth. The ability to use a language efficiently is very much required to remain employable. What is employability? It is the ability to remain employable as a result of the relevant skills one possesses. Communication skills are very much essential for one's professional growth. The ability to express fluently in both written as well as oral form of language is very much essential for the career growth.

As it is stated above, English being the most commonly used language in the corporate world; the knowledge of English is one of the most important employability skills. Knowledge of English is much sought after in the corporate world. Proper English does not mean only the ability to make grammatically correct sentences. It means other related skills for effective communication like presentation skills, convincing and negotiation skills and interpersonal skills using that language.

## **Employability Skills**

Communication means the exchange of information, ideas, feelings and thoughts. The type of communication which is used in the corporate world is business communication. It is not mere exchange of ideas. In the world of business the communication system is considered effective, only if there is some positive transaction. If the sender of information is just able to convey the message without any fruitful deal, then the communication is not effective.

A person is considered employable only when he gets the necessary qualification, experience, interest, learning attitude and expertise in the field where he wants to seek employment.

The content knowledge in the area of his choice is the primary requirement. The necessary experience, if not, the interest and the attitude to learn the job assignments are much sought after by the employers. A person has to remain employable throughout one's

career. Unless one is ready to update his knowledge in the field of work according to the ongoing changes and advancements, he lags behind from others and loses his job ultimately.

Effective communication includes the ability to communicate effectively in any language. Academicians and researchers are divided in their opinion on the question; is English required for successful business communication? Is it not possible to communicate effectively in regional languages and get the work done? Those who are in favour of English for effective communication would say that English is the official language in most of the companies in cities these days.

So, English is much required. But people who vote for regional languages for communication over English would rather say that English is not required as long as one communicates effectively to get the work done. The customers, for most of the products and services are people of a particular region where a local language is spoken. So what big deal in speaking in English to woo and impress them? After all, when it is a matter of money, people would rather concentrate on quality and service for the products than the customer care executive's ability to speak in English.

The reality is that the companies consider the candidate's ability or inability to speak fluently in English as one of the major selection criterion. The mere domain knowledge won't guarantee one a good job. The situation in most of the companies has changed from a scene where all employees are isolated and would concentrate on their individual performances.

'Team work for better successes' is the mantra followed by most companies. So there is no space for individual glory. Employees are expected to be interactive and communicative with others in the team and outside.

As we have multi-cultural and multi-linguistic work force in the companies, English is the language which connects people by default. It is the language used for official communication; whether it is meeting within or outside, presentations, training, conferences, letters, documents, reports etc. The purpose being people are expected to read, write, speak and understand English.

## **Communication in English**

Communication takes place in two ways; verbal and non-verbal. Verbal communication takes place with the usage of words. Non-verbal communication means expression of ideas through gestures, eye contact, postures and body movements. It is not confined to any language. Verbal communication constitutes oral and written form of communication. Oral communication skills include the ability to speak effectively, listen actively and respond efficiently according to the situation. It helps in oral presentation, video conferencing, telephonic conversation, meeting, interviews etc.

Written communication skills means the ability to write effectively and it also includes the ability to read and understand the language used for communication. If a person is labeled as good communicator in English, he is supposed to be master in oral as well as written form of English.

There are a good number of people in rural as well as urban parts of India who are literate in regional language medium, but they are highly successful. The point to be made is that in the changed scenario of globalization, liberalization and free movement of people, more and more multinational companies are coming to India naturally English has gained importance as one of the basic requirement to be employable in the corporate sectors. If the companies don't build workforce who are fluent in English, then they remain confined to one particular regional level. They may lose contact with the rest of the world. If there is no common language to connect the workforce, it becomes difficult for any kind of communication and team work.

## **Corporate Expectations**

As the ability to speak and write in English is considered very important by the recruiters at the time of recruitment, let us discuss the expectations of corporate world in this regard. Companies want people who can basically read and understand written words in the form of instructions, reports, letters, memos, notices and other any form of official documents.

The ability to express formal communication in oral as well as in written form is equally considered important by the prospective employers. As one moves higher in the

vertical direction in the organizational hierarchy, it becomes naturally necessary for an employee to be good presenter, negotiator, and convener of meetings. The mastery over English will help a person to conduct his duties efficiently. One of the important deficiencies found by the employers and recruiters in candidates for different jobs is the lack of oral as well as written communication skills.

Many candidates don't know how to answer to the point at the time of the interview and can't phrase a simple formal letter or report. It becomes a handicap for the candidates who have good domain knowledge. Interviewers will be in dilemma when they encounter such candidates who have technical expertise, but poor communicational skills in English. Left with no other choice they may take the candidate, but will make sure that they are groomed and trained properly. Employers would be happy to interview and recruit who have both communication skills in English and job skills. It lessens their burden of giving too much orientation training at the time of induction or on the job training.

### **English Language Training**

Due to the emerging demand for communication skills in English and the remarkably poor level of English taught in the regional medium schools in India, the students constantly try to get outside help in the form of spoken English classes, training programs, and finishing schools. The number of such institutions is mushrooming due to the increasing market demand. But unfortunately many training centers don't have proper language teachers. So students don't get what they expect to get. But, whatever is the result of teaching; such institutes have become good money making entities.

These organizations survive on the sentiments and insecurity feeling of the regional language medium students. In order to cater to the demands of regional language medium students in their efforts to get good jobs in the corporate world, governments should bring changes in the English language syllabus at least in graduation level. The emphasis should be on functional English usage exercises. The syllabus should focus on practical oriented exercises and real life situations than mere study of literature. So the need of the hour is strengthening the English speaking ability of the present generation to have an edge over other developing countries.

Our BPO sector still has an edge over other countries due to the fact that Indians speak fairly better English compared to other non-native speakers of English. It applies to our IT as well as other related sectors too. The fact is that we have a large English speaking population, it makes easier for MNCs and foreign universities to do their business here. The knowledge of English is an important employability skill with in India and outside to be employed as well as to move higher in one's professional life.

### **Career Prospects**

- **English Language Trainer**

The Growth and development of an employee in any organization is directly proportionate with his communication skills. Research tells that whatever one learns in the classroom only ten to fifteen percent of his technical knowledge is used in actual organizational contest and rest in his communication skills. As a recruiter, companies often face the problem of assessing a candidate's command over English language. Most of the organization is aware of this and they train their employees in communication skills in order to increase the productivity of the organization and better representation of the organization at national and international levels.

- **Teacher**

Teaching is a good option for an English language trainer as Technical Communication is a compulsory subject in all Engineering and Management Institutes. There the students are trained and prepared in communication skills to perform better in interview and group discussion for their placement. Since the growth of an institute is totally dependent on the job placement of its students, the role of an English language trainer becomes very crucial.

### **Conclusion**

Thus in the last few years, thanks to jobs becoming global, the importance of English has reached manifold. It has over the years become an important medium of communication, both at the international and intra-national levels. The importance of spoken English is even more, because there are many cases where one knows his subject well, but fails to communicate it properly. The practice of spoken English, therefore, is quite essential for developing better career in learning English in a country where it is not a native language, opens a number of opportunities for the individuals. In today's corporate world, the need for effective communication has been recognized and accepted more than the technical



knowledge. The language of the corporate world is English. An individual can make strides in the management ladder if he/she can speak English fluently.

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B. Nagia, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
Department of English  
SAC Women's College  
Cumbum  
Tamilnadu  
India  
[nagiazulfic@gmail.com](mailto:nagiazulfic@gmail.com)