



RESEARCH ARTICLE

ATTITUDE OF STUDENTS TOWARDS COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCY IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE AT ENGINEERING STREAM

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Abstract

English has been taught as a second language for many years in India. A causal relationship exists between attitude and learning outcome. Though English learning is a common problem of the students of West Bengal Board but in rural areas this problem is more serious and terrific and gradually this problem is getting the shape of an alarming issue. In this article an attempt is made by the researcher to find out the attitude of under-Engineering students toward Communicative Competency in Foreign Language. The present study has been made with two objectives and two hypotheses. The data has been collected from the samples with standardized scales, analyzed with Statistical analysis of data i.e. mean, SD, t-test using SPSS 22 version. The study has found that the mean of attitude of rural students and the mean of attitude of urban students differs from each other. It means that rural students and urban students are differing in some opinions related to problems of learning communicative competency in English language and there are no such gender wise differences in the attitude toward Communicative Competency in English Language.

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Introduction:-

Language is our primary communication source, and effective interaction and collaboration in personal and professional settings require communicative competency, skill, and knowledge to facilitate understanding, build relationships, and achieve common goals.

Attitude plays a significant role in learning outcomes. Many West Bengal Board students lacking prior English language success, leading to automatic difficulties in later learning. According to Gardner (1985), affective factors which determine or influence learners' attitude to language learning, can be divided into two categories:

Factors prior to the learner's approach to the second or foreign language study:

Before learning a second or foreign language, learners may have a positive or negative predisposition. Factors such as impressions of the language, community, and language speakers can influence their attitude. The primary motives or goals pursued by learners also influence their attitudes towards language learning.

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Factors that develop during the learning process:

The affective condition, including the learner's feelings about the language course, its difficulty level, utility, interest, and the teacher's competence, can influence the rejection or acceptance of language learning, affecting the teacher-student relationship.

Review of Related Literature:-

Guilhermina Lobato Miranda & Ana Isabel's study (2002) *The Role of ICT in Teacher Education* describes an in-service teacher training experience that used ICT to develop a project that involved teachers (nursery and primary) and also children, parents and other members of the educational community. Its aim was to build an Internet site that would give information about school life. It's an open web space where teachers, parents, and students can express and share their ideas and activities.

Zuochen Zhang's research (2009) stated that Use of ICT in Education focused that ICT is useful not only for students but it can also enhance the professional skills of staff and faculty in an educational institute. The attitude of Degree College Teachers towards ICT Awareness was measured. An interesting finding of this study is that teachers need to develop the competency to set a trustful atmosphere for communication during the teaching-learning process.

Dr. Savita D. (2010): The attitude of Teacher Trainees towards ICT Teaching. The main findings of this study are male-female both teachers are interested in the use of ITC but they have a lack of technical skills.

Ankur (2012) in the article *Techniques in English Teaching as a Second Language in the Kumaun Region of Uttarakhand: Past Trends & Future Directions* focuses on the modern English is quite described as global lingua franca, and it is the major communication tool for science events, business, aviation, entertainment and diplomacy. The Indian software engineers created the global computer and IT revolution, which has now spread over the whole world. In doing so a happy synthesis has taken place between the American English and English as spoken in India. The Indian English has got worldwide acceptability in all walks of life, particularly in business, finance and in the field of science and technology. Global importance of English cannot be underestimated. English has an access to significant magnitude of Knowledge. No matter what you are interested in, with today's technological advancements and the rise of the internet you can find access to huge amounts of knowledge on just about any subject. We truly live in an age of information; however, most of the knowledge available is written in English. Most of the websites on the Web are in English, many books are written in English, most of press and news reports are in English.

Modi (2012) in the paper *Recent Trends in English Language Teaching* by examined to present the recent and popular trends in ELT that have been used practically in recent years in the entire world reviewing the past trends. Moreover, this is also an endeavor to encourage the ELT trainer to modernize their classroom arrangements (managements). The ELT trends that were very popular in the past have vanished today and have been substituted by others. Several factors have contributed to the adoption of new trends in ELT. The research found that -Teaching with Technology, Teachers connect with web 2.0, Blockbuster course books kept alive through "New" versions, English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), Learner Centeredness and Needs, Portfolio Development for Teachers, Syllabus Design and Materials Development, Corpus Linguistics, Reflective Practice and Teacher Learning, Bottom-Up and Top-Down Skills in L2 Learning etc. are very popular.

George (2014) in the paper *Innovation in English Language Teacher Education* explores English in India represents a wide range of use and ownership: from a foreign language through to a second language and a first language. Consequently, the contexts in which English is taught reflect this range and diversity, and have implications for the teacher's linguistic proficiency and professional competence. In this regard, the National Focus Group on the Teaching of English Position Paper (2006) envisions the route teacher education should take: 'Teacher education needs to be on going and onsite as well as preparatory. Emphasis must be laid on teacher proficiency in or familiarity with the language, as the teacher is often a role model. Proficiency and professional awareness are equally to be promoted, the latter to be imparted where necessary through the teachers' own languages' (p. 14). The National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (2009) elaborates this national vision of teacher education by foregrounding five principles that should inform the enterprise: the integrative and eclectic nature of teacher education; its liberal, humanistic and non-didactic underpinnings; its innovation in English Language Teacher Education multicultural and context-sensitive facets; the necessity for it to be transacted in a diversity of learning spaces and curriculum sites apart from the classroom; and, most importantly, reflective practice to be its chief aim.

'Pedagogical knowledge has to constantly undergo adaptation to meet the needs of diverse contexts through critical reflection by the teacher on his/her practices' (pp. 19-20).

Operational Definitions

Communicative Competency

Communication competency involves delivering clear, effective messages, understanding and interpreting others' messages, and using strong verbal and non-verbal skills. Skilled communicators are adept at active listening, empathy, conflict resolution, persuasive presentation, negotiation, and clarity, and are familiar with communication models, cultural differences, and technology.

Effective communication skills are crucial for personal relationships, professional collaborations, and organizational effectiveness, fostering trust, intimacy, and mutual respect, and facilitating effective negotiation and credibility.

Attitude

Attitudes in psychology are long-lasting, uniform perceptions of individuals, things, or circumstances, influenced by behavioural, emotional, and cognitive elements, shaping one's views and reactions to the environment.

In this paper Attitude towards communicative competency refers to an individual's perception of their ability to communicate effectively in a language and context, including linguistic proficiency and social and culturally appropriate language use. Here Attitude towards communicative competency is divided into three dimensions:

1. Students' Desire towards English Language
2. Students' Self-confidence for Communicative Competency in English
3. Attitude towards Usefulness of English Language

Foreign Language Learning

In this article foreign language means Learning English as a second language. The educational process of English language learning involves the acquisition of fluency in English, a process that can vary in form and location, catering to diverse student needs and objectives. It involves the skills of Language learning:

Reading:

Engages learners with various texts to enhance vocabulary and grammar understanding.

Writing:

Enhances grammar, vocabulary, and written expression through essay writing, creative writing, and business correspondence.

Listening:

Practices listening through audio materials, conversations, lectures, and other spoken language forms to comprehend accents and contexts.

Speaking:

Involves practicing pronunciation, participating in conversations, giving presentations, and engaging in language exchange. Oral proficiency is a key focus.

Engineering Stream

Engineering stream refers to the students studying at Engineering courses of different streams in technical colleges and universities.

Methodology of the Study:-

This is a quantitative study. Descriptive research has been performed by Survey method for conducting the research.

Variables of the Study:

Dependent Variable: Communicative Competency in Foreign language

The demographic variables included in the study are:

1. Gender: Male, Female

2. Locality: Rural, Urban

Objectives of the Study:-

The following objectives were formed on the basis of literature and previous studies:

1. To study and compare the attitude of Male and Female learners towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language at the Engineering stream.
2. To study and compare the attitude of Urban and Rural learners towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language at the Engineering stream.

Hypotheses of the Study:

On the basis of the objectives, the following Null Hypotheses were formed for this present study:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the attitude of Male and Female students towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language at the Engineering stream.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the attitude of Urban and Rural students towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language at the Engineering stream.

Sample of the Study:

Because of the limitation of the time and space, the researcher has considered only two districts of West Bengal North 24 Pargana and Malda. She took two urban Colleges and two rural Colleges from blocks and municipalities in North 24 Pargana and Malda. The colleges are all affiliated to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad University of Technology, West Bengal. The Engineering students, more specifically the students of 1st year from mainly three streams are taken. Here the sample distribution is given:

Table 1:- The distribution of Sample is as follows:

GENDER	LOCALITY	MECHANICAL ENGINEERING	COMPUTER SCIENCE	ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING & OTHERS	TOTAL
MALE	URBAN	50	50	50	150
	RURAL	50	50	50	150
FEMALE	URBAN	50	50	50	150
	RURAL	50	50	50	150
TOTAL		200	200	200	600

Delimitation of the Study

The study is delimited to the 1st year students of different Engineering streams. Mainly the students whose English is second language are taken in the sample.

Tools used in the Study:

Measuring attitude of students towards Communicative Competency the researcher had used the following tool:

Multidimensional English Language Attitude Scale

A multidimensional English language attitude scale was used in this study. Attitude/ Motivation Test Battery developed by R.C.Gardner used here with certain modifications. The test items which measure attitude are selected only. For validation, the tool was sent to the eminent professors from different universities on concerned field. With their suggestions and referred modification the test items of Attitude/Motivation Test Battery were selected. After that the Attitude /Motivation test battery was sent again to the same experts. On the basis of their suggestions the test Battery was finalized. The Scale contains 20 items (10 Positive & 10 Negative items). The response format was 6-point Likert Scale format (Strongly Disagree, Moderately Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Moderately Agree, Strongly Agree). Though the scale is multidimensional scale, in the present study different dimensions are not taken into considerations. The scale contains two parts in this study:

1. Learning English (contains 10 items)
2. Attitude towards Communicative Competency (contains 10 items)

Data Collection and Scoring:

Data was collected from total 600 samples with ultimate sincerity by administering the multidimensional Attitude scale upon the students in the classroom. Attitude scale was scored manually by attributing scores as following:

For positive statement scoring was-

- (i) Strongly Disagree (1) (ii) Moderately Disagree (2) (iii) Slightly Disagree (3)
(iv) Slightly Agree (4) (v) Moderately Agree (5) (vi) Strongly Agree (6)

For negative statement scoring was-

- (i) Strongly Disagree (6) (ii) Moderately Disagree (5) (iii) Slightly Disagree (4)
(iv) Slightly Agree (3) (v) Moderately Agree (2) (vi) Strongly Agree (1)

Analysis and Interpretation of Data:

For the analysis of the scored data the researcher used SPSS 22 version.

Presentation of Data

To fulfil the first Objective the researcher has formulated one Hypothesis.

Both the descriptive and inferential statistics are given. In Descriptive statistics the researcher used Mean, SD, Std. Error and Histogram to show the graphical representation of Mean score. For testing Hypothesis t-test is done.

Table 2:- Attitude towards Communicative Competency in ForeignLanguage.

Attitude	Highly Positive	Moderately Positive	Slightly Positive	Neither positive not Negative	Slightly Negative	Moderately Negative	Highly Negative
Desire towards English Language	245-211	210-176	175-141	140-106	105-71	70-36	Below 36
Self-confidence for Communicative Competency in English	60-51	50-41	40-31	-	30-21	20-11	Below 11
Attitude towards Usefulness of English Language	165-145	144-124	123-103	102-82	81-61	60-40	Below40
Overall Attitude of Students	470-405	404-339	338-273	272-207	206-141	140-75	Below 75

Table 3:- Attitude of Male, Female students towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language.

Students	Percentage	Desire towards English Language	Self-confidence for Communicative Competency in English	Attitude towards Usefulness of English Language	Overall Attitude of Students
Male	Mean	46.56	91.94	62.64	201.14
	Percentage	76.60 %	37.52 %	37.96 %	42.78 %
	Attitude	Moderately Positive	Slightly Negatively	Slightly Negatively	Slightly Negative
	S.D.	6.63	38.53	19.03	61.27
Female	Mean	45.92	99.54	66.68	212.15
	Percentage	76.53 %	40.62 %	40.41 %	45.13 %
	Attitude	Moderately Positive	Slightly Negatively	Slightly Negative	Neither Positive nor Negative

	S.D.	6.78	42.74	21.09	67.02
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Table 4:- Attitude of Urban and Rural students towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language.

Students	Percentage	Desire towards English Language	Self-confidence for Communicative Competency in English	Attitude towards Usefulness of English Language	Overall Attitude of Students
Urban	Mean	46.66	105.94	69.13	221.73
	Percentage	77.76 %	43.24 %	41.89 %	47.17 %
	Attitude	Moderately Positive	Neither Positive nor Negative	Slightly Negatively	Neither Positive nor Negative
	S.D.	6.80	38.53	21.45	69.28
Rural	Mean	45.82	85.54	60.19	191.55
	Percentage	76.36 %	34.91 %	36.47 %	40.75 %
	Attitude	Moderately Positive	Slightly Negative	Moderately Negative	Slightly Negative
	S.D.	6.60	34.28	17.75	55.23

Table 5:- Total Attitude of Students (Male, Female, Rural, Urban) towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language.

Students	Percentage	Desire towards English Language	Self-confidence for Communicative Competency in English	Attitude towards Usefulness of English Language	Overall Attitude of Students
Total Students	Mean	46.24	95.74	64.66	206.64
	Percentage	77.06 %	39.07 %	39.18 %	43.96 %
	Attitude	Moderately Positive	Slightly Negative	Slightly Negatively	Neither Positive nor Negative
	S.D.	6.71	40.83	20.17	64.39

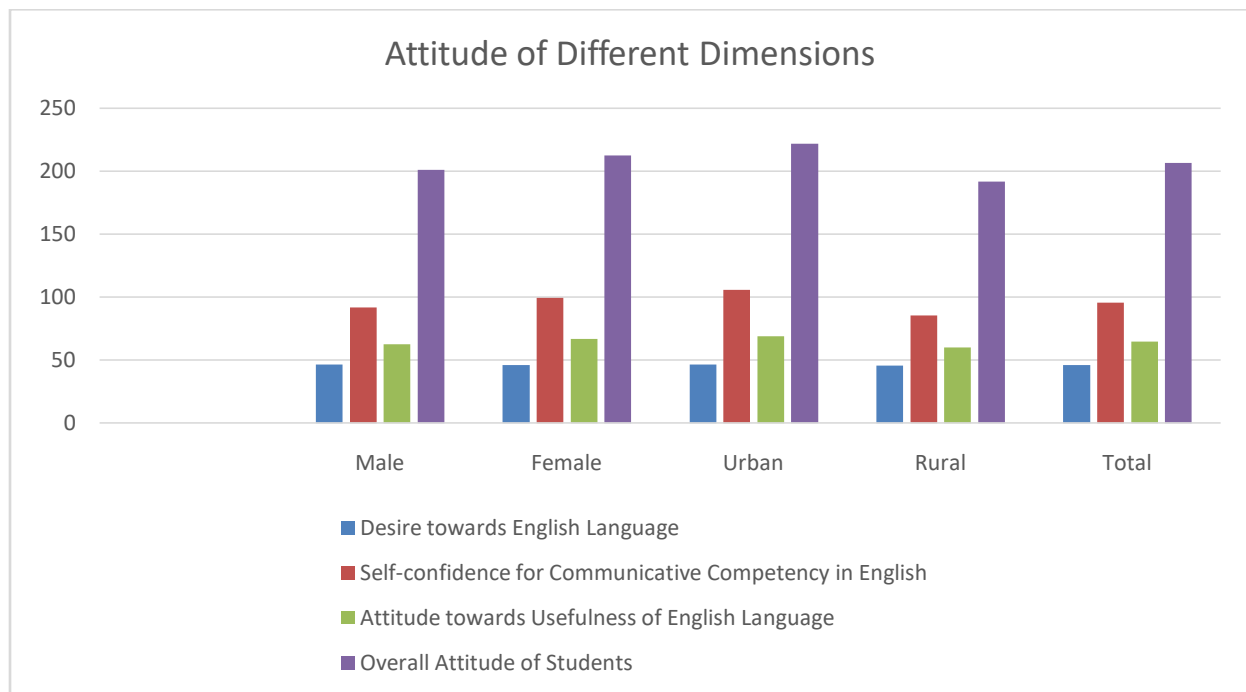


Fig.1:- Different Dimension of Attitude of Male, Female, Rural and Urban Students.

Testing Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the attitude of Male and Female students towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language at the Engineering stream.

To test this Hypothesis the following Inferential statistics has been drawn from the scored data.

Table 6:- Inferential Statistics of total attitude of Male and Female learners towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language at the Engineering stream.

Dimensions	Overall Attitude towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language	SD	N	t-value
Male	201.14	61.27	300	2.11*
Female	212.15	67.02	300	

*Not Significant at 0.01 Level

Interpretation: Table 6 shows that in case of comparing the Mean scores of attitudes of Male and Female students towards Communicative Competency in English Language 't' is not Significant at 0.01 level. So **H₀₁** is accepted and thus it can be said that there is no significant difference between the attitude of Male and Female students towards Communicative Competency in English Language.

To fulfil the second Objective the researcher has formulated **H₀₂** Hypothesis

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the attitude of Urban and Rural students towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language at the Engineering stream.

To test this Hypothesis the following Inferential statistics has been drawn from the scored data.

Table 7:- Inferential Statistics of total attitude of Rural and Urban learners towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language at the Engineering stream.

Dimensions	Overall Attitude towards Communicative Competency in English Language	SD	N	t-value
Rural	191.55	55.23	300	5.9
Urban	221.73	69.28	300	

*Significant at 0.05 level as the t-value is higher than 2.58

Interpretation: Table 7 shows that in case of comparing the Mean scores of attitudes of Rural and Urban students towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language 't' is Significant at 0.05 level. So **H₀₂** is rejected and thus it can be said that there is significant difference between the attitude of Rural and Urban students towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language. According to their habitat the Engineering students differs in their opinions towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language.

Main Findings:

1. There is significant difference between the attitude of Rural and Urban students towards Communicative Competency in Foreign Language. Appropriate measures have to be taken to develop proper positive attitude among the learners living in rural areas.
2. Engineering students' overall attitude is not at all positive. Study shows that students have slight negative attitude towards Self-confidence for Communicative Competency in English and Usefulness of English language.
3. English teachers should focus on building their confidence for communicative competency using various motivational tools.
4. Again, it is the major duty of the teacher as well as parent to make them understand about the importance and usefulness of English language so that they can grow a positive attitude towards learning English.

Significance of the Study:

There are several factors that make the English language essential to communicate in our current time. First of all, it is the most common foreign language. This means that two people who come from different countries usually use English as a common language to communicate. English is also essential to the field of education. In many

countries, children are taught and encouraged to learn English as a second language. Even in countries where it is not an official language, we will find many syllabi in science and engineering are written in English. Because it is the dominant language in the sciences, most of the research and studies you find in any given scientific field will be written in English as well. At the university level, students in many countries study almost all their subjects in English in order to make the material more accessible to international students. Learners' attitude towards Second language is nothing but their beliefs, opinions and feelings about the second language and the culture. Integrative motivation and instrumental motivation reflect actually the learners' basic attitude of the language culture. Attitude in language learning is the way out that a learner feels for learning a given language. It basically influences their basic abilities. Successful prior learning experience does not only enhance successful later learning but also promotes more positive attitude.

This study will help teachers to understand student's attitude and reduce the problems related to communicative competency in English Language so that they can easily build their career with dignity and honor. Then no longer have they to become humiliated.

Conclusion:-

In conclusion, communication competency, skill, and knowledge are integral components of effective communication in both personal and professional contexts. By honing these attributes, individuals can enhance their ability to express themselves clearly, understand others empathetically, and navigate complex interpersonal dynamics with finesse. Ultimately, the cultivation of communication competency, skill, and knowledge contributes to stronger relationships, more cohesive teams, and improved organizational performance.

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