

AN ANALYSIS OF THE PERCEPTIONS AND STRATEGIES USED BY UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE STUDENTS TO IMPROVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The English language has a huge impact on our companies and workplaces. Regardless of geographical, social, political or religious divisions, English has become the lingua franca of the international corporate world. The purpose of this research study was to explore the role of English language skills in a person's career development and to understand undergraduate and graduate students' perceptions about learning and improving this language. For this purpose, relevant literature was explored and a questionnaire was designed to elicit students' opinions based on scholarly perspectives. Data was collected using Google Forms, which used a stratified convenience sampling procedure. The analysis shows a positive relationship between English language skills and career development.

Keyword: - Impact, Data, Improve English Language, Students' perceptions etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of English language skills in the career development of undergraduate and postgraduate students of Ajmer, Rajasthan is increasing day by day. English language proficiency has become essential in the fields of higher education and employment. The purpose of this research paper is to analyze the perceptions and strategies that undergraduate and postgraduate students adopt to improve their English language skills.

Improvement of English language skills is extremely important in the career development of undergraduate and postgraduate students of Ajmer, Rajasthan. The perceptions and strategies adopted by the students, such as the use of academic resources, language practice groups, online tutorials, exam preparation, and continuous practice, are proving to be helpful in improving their language skills. These efforts will enable the students to compete at the global level and achieve success in their career.

This research paper analyzes the perceptions and strategies adopted by undergraduate and postgraduate students of Ajmer, which are proving to be helpful in improving their English language skills. These efforts will enable the students to compete at the global level and achieve success in their career.

2. BEGINNING OF ENGLISH EDUCATION

Christian missionaries wanted to make English the medium of education to propagate Christianity, while British officials wanted to make English the medium of education to overcome difficulties in communication and correspondence.

English education in Rajasthan first started in Ajmer-Merwara region. Jevjkeri, son of Dr. William Carey, a Baptist preacher of Srirampur, was sent here. He opened schools in Ajmer and Pushkar with the help of the Resident Officer. After this, schools were established in Kekri and Bhinay. Only religious education was imparted in these schools, so all these schools were closed in 1931.

Lord Macaulay made English the medium of education in 1835, so it was natural for the form of education to change. In March 1836, the "General Committee of Public Instruction" under the Bengal government opened the first government school in Ajmer, but it was also closed in 1843. In 1842, Banne Singh, the ruler of Alwar, established an English school in Alwar. Which was converted into a high school in 1870. The English school established in Bharatpur in 1842 also progressed.

3. IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Global Communication and Opportunities

English language is widely recognized as a global language. It is widely used in the fields of business, science, technology, and education. Understanding and proficiency in English language helps students compete on the global stage and gain better opportunities.

Higher Education and Employment

The importance of English language in higher education and employment opportunities is particularly relevant for the students of Ajmer. English language proficiency is mandatory in many prestigious universities and corporate companies. It helps students to achieve success in entrance examinations, interviews, and professional communication.

4. EDUCATIONAL SCENARIO OF AJMER

Role of Educational Institutions

Ajmer is home to many prestigious educational institutions, such as Mayo College, Sophia School, and Ajmer Central University. These institutions offer English language courses and training programs, which motivate students to improve language skills.

Current Status of Students

Although Ajmer students have interest and enthusiasm towards education, lack of proficiency in English language remains a major challenge. This situation becomes even more challenging for students coming from rural and semi-urban areas.

5. MEASURES TO IMPROVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

Improvement in teaching methods

Improvement in teaching methods is necessary to make English language education more effective. Students' participation and understanding can be improved by adopting interactive and communicative teaching methods.

Use of technological tools

Technological tools, such as language labs, online courses, and mobile apps, can be used to improve students' language skills. These tools provide students with more opportunities for self-reliance and practice.

Teacher training

It is necessary to organize teacher training programs to make them aware of the latest teaching methods and techniques. This will increase the capacity of teachers and they will be able to teach students in a better way.

Practice

It is necessary to provide students with opportunities to practice the English language regularly. Activities such as debate competitions, essay writing, and group discussions can be helpful in improving students' confidence and language skills.

6. OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

The main objective of this research study was to explore graduate students' perceptions about English language skills, i.e. listening, speaking/oral communication, reading and writing, which impact on an individual's professional life.

Research Questions

The following were the research questions that provided guidelines for the present research study:

- What are graduate students' general perceptions about English language skills?
- Do they consider it important for future professional development?
- What do they do to improve their English language skills?

Hypothesis

The following alternative hypothesis was developed in the present research study to investigate the relationship between English language and career development:

- There is a significant relationship between English language skills and career development.

7. LITERATURE REVIEW

Since English is a common language, prospective employees are expected to demonstrate good knowledge, understanding and speaking skills in this language. Nowadays job seekers all over the world are going through frustration as they cannot demonstrate the best communication power to meet the growing demands of the industries. Moreover, they are unable to claim good salary packages and other incentives because of the lack of English language skills (Blakely and Chin, 2004). High productivity is one of the biggest needs of industries; therefore, to achieve organizational goals and objectives, employees need to prepare themselves well (Tanner, 1988). Since communication skills are a prerequisite for well-paid jobs, only those who are fluent in English are preferred to contribute to the firm, while those who are not good at understanding and cannot communicate in English suffer badly. They are left with no choice but to take up low-paying jobs that are not enough to satisfy them (Karliner, 2000; Leslie and Lindley, 2001). This is that the inability to use the English language fluently deprives people of opportunities that can help them earn attractive remuneration. (Dustmann and Fabre, 2003; Leslie and Lindley, 2001). Earlier, it was believed that language proficiency is a must for those who want to be a part of some multinational firms, but recently, local companies have also opened their doors to those who can communicate well in English because technical issues cannot be solved unless a businessman knows how to use these skills. Language is needed to learn the latest research and knowledge to solve them intelligently. Critical thinking is needed to understand an issue, and for this, a person must have in-depth knowledge and information that can only be enhanced by using English.

8. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A quantitative research approach was adopted in this research study. For data collection, an online Google form with closed-ended questions was designed to elicit the perspectives of undergraduate students regarding their English language skills and their impact on their expected future professional life. The study used a quantitative descriptive research design. It is a study that attempts to collect measurable data to perform statistical analysis on a population sample. It is a frequently used market research tool that allows us to collect and define demographic category information. The population of the present research study was undergraduate and postgraduate students of public and private sector universities in Ajmer. A stratified convenience sampling technique was used to collect data from the target groups. It was divided into undergraduate and graduate students of public and private sector universities in Ajmer, Rajasthan, and the connection to the Google form was shared with the students based on their relationship/contact with the students, in such a way that the link to the Google form was shared with 175 students. One hundred and three (103) responses were received within the allotted period (one month). 63 per cent of the respondents were men, while 37 per cent were women.

9. RESULT ANALYSIS

The age of the respondents ranged from 16 to 23 years. Their educational qualification was 36.7% while 63.3% were graduates. In response to a question related to the respondents' feeling of liking towards learning the English language for one reason or another, only 3.3% showed a dislike towards learning the English language, while 96.7%

showed a liking in learning this language. This also shows that the English language is liked by the majority of people in Ajmer, Rajasthan. 73.3% of the respondents declared that they studied in English medium schools, i.e. received education through the medium of English. Again, this shows that the majority of people like to learn English. Considering the importance of this language, 89.7% of the respondents suggested that English should be taught as a compulsory subject.

English Language Proficiency

In response to a question related to their level of proficiency in the language, 63.3% felt themselves to be good, while 26.7% considered it to be fair.

Importance of English Language Skills in Career Development

83.3% used the 'Yes' option, indicating that language is very important in professional life, while only 13.3% of the respondents showed their confusion by selecting the 'Maybe' option.

Most Important Language Skills

A question related to the most important skills to learn was asked, and the responses showed that 56.7% of the participants declared speaking skills as the most important skill, while the responses about other skills are as follows:

Tips to Improve English Language Skills

Listening

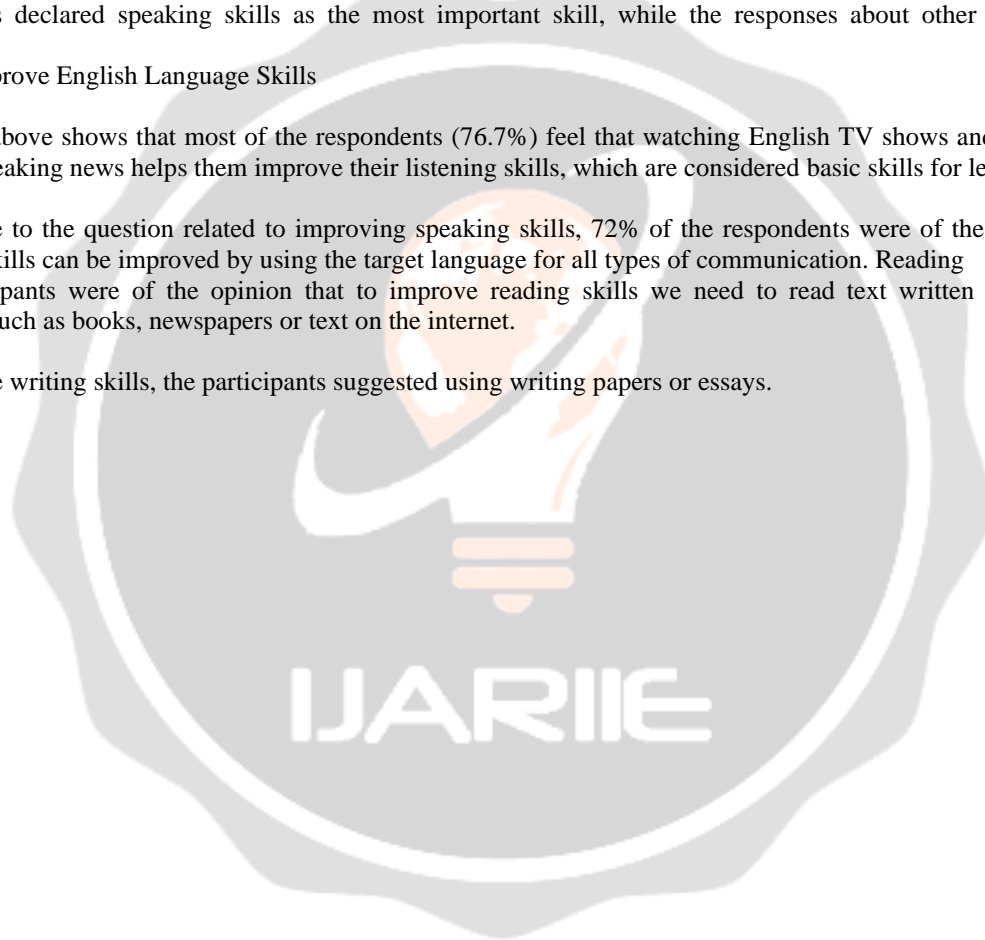
The chart above shows that most of the respondents (76.7%) feel that watching English TV shows and listening to English-speaking news helps them improve their listening skills, which are considered basic skills for learning world languages.

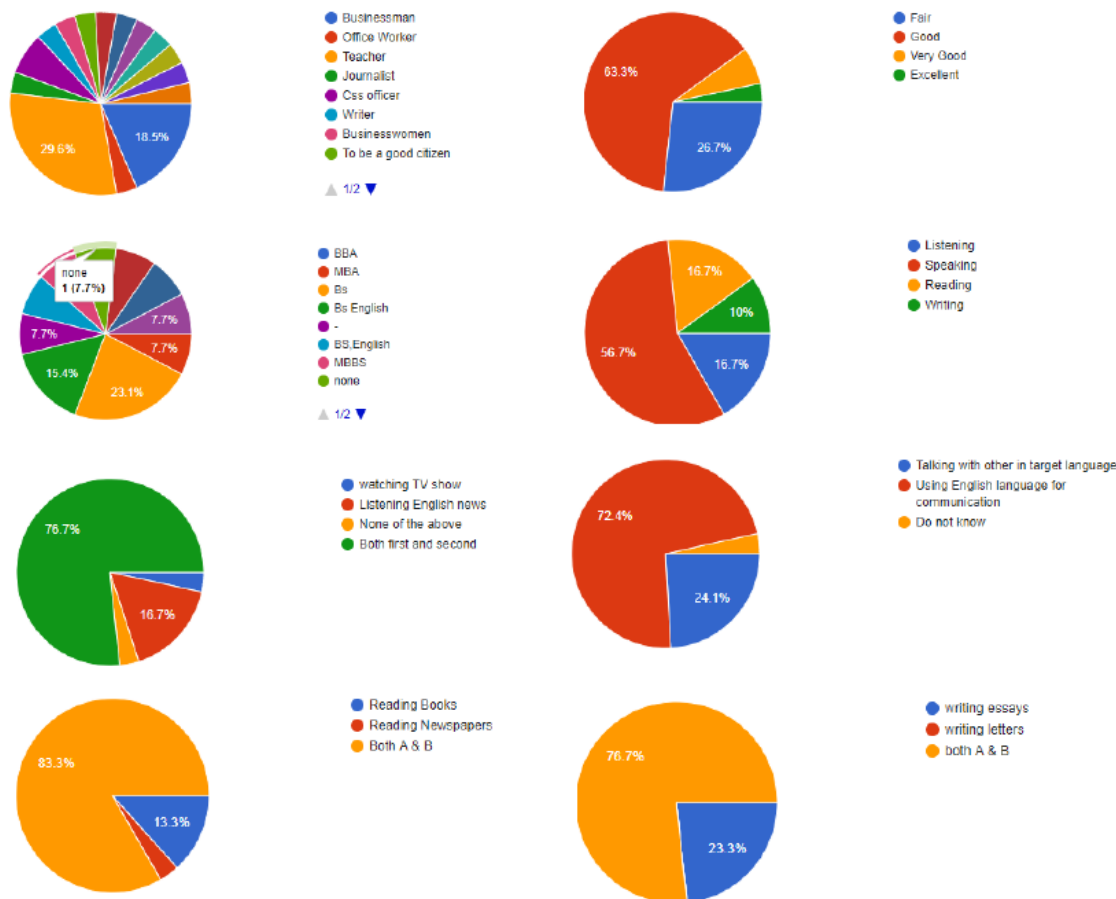
In response to the question related to improving speaking skills, 72% of the respondents were of the opinion that speaking skills can be improved by using the target language for all types of communication. Reading

The participants were of the opinion that to improve reading skills we need to read text written in the target language, such as books, newspapers or text on the internet.

Writing

To improve writing skills, the participants suggested using writing papers or essays.





To improve writing skills, participants suggested that the use of writing papers or essays is helpful. English and Personality

In response to a question related to the effect of English on personality, 76.3% of the respondents accepted that English language enhances a person's personality, while 23.3% showed their confusion by choosing the option 'maybe'.

Hypothesis Testing

The answers to a question about the relationship between English language skills and career development were analyzed using the Chi-square one-tailed test in SPSS. The results are shown in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 below:

Table 1.1.English Language Skills and Career Development

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Strongly Disagree	5	25.8	-20.8
Unsure	19	25.8	-6.8
Agree	20	25.8	-5.8
Strongly Disagree	59	25.8	33.3
Total	103		

Table 1.2.Test Statistics

	English Language	Skills and Career Growth	
Chi-Square		62.709 ^a	

Df		3	
Asymp.Sig.		0	

Table-1.2 The significant value, which is less than 0.05, therefore helps us to accept the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between English language skills and career development. This shows that educational institute administration, teachers teaching English language and students need to give proper consideration to teaching and learning this language if they want to see Ajmer, Rajasthan on top, especially in the international job market.

10. CONCLUSION

According to the responses, 97.7% of undergraduate and postgraduate students in Ajmer, Rajasthan prefer to learn English as they believe it is important for their professional and career development. 73.3% of the participants revealed that they received their early education in schools using English as the medium of instruction. This shows the importance of the English language in Ajmer as seven poor people prefer to send their children to English medium schools, as 89.7% of the participants chose that the English language is important for professional development. While 63.3% of the students believe that they are good at the English language and believe that it enhances a person's personality. In this regard, the administration and the teachers teaching English should work wholeheartedly to support students who want to improve their English language.

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