

Communication Skills in English

By: Dharamdeep

This reference book can be useful for
BBA, MBA, B.Com, BMS, M.Com, BCA, MCA
and many more courses for Various Universities



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Sample Preview of The Chapter

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN ENGLISH

SOME CONCEPTS FOR COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH



English – In India, and the World

INTRODUCTION

An interesting aspect of English as a language in Indian Education is that while many of us have studied English, almost all of us can read, more than some of us can write properly and only some of us can speak properly. The question is what makes speaking difficult from writing and reading?

So can one become good speaker of English? We will see that one must listen to and read English every day for some time in order to develop this skill. Another thing which we will look at is the importance of English as an international language. With this question also comes the idea of international language, and of course, we are not going to skip it and its other aspects.

There are different varieties of English spoken in the world, but for the global communication one must become proficient in one standard variety of English.

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION: SPEECH

How does a child learn to speaking, without any formal education or instruction on the art of speaking? Speaking for a child is almost as natural as waking. A child can only learn to speak the language which is spoken around it. A natural and obvious deduction can be made that its listening which comes first and help the child to pick the language for speaking. If there are more than one language being spoken around the child, obviously then a child will grow up learning to speaking

more than one language. This is what we call multilingual.

A child is able to speak the language before going to school, thus, before getting an opportunity to learn the language. It is interesting to note that we on the other hand can read and write but not speak. So unless one learns to speak the language properly one cannot be confident about his/her command on the language.

Since most of us have the passed stage of being a child and in childhood we did not learn the English so those of us who are interested in learning to speak the language can do things which a child does while learning the language.

- (a) Before speaking, a child listens to a language. When a baby is six months old, it may start understanding few words, but we must keep in mind that it has been listening the language for almost six months.
- (b) So the first thing a person keen to speak English, must do is to listen to the language as much as possible. There is a possibility that the people around you do not communicate in English but it does not count. One can listen to radio, television, and movies in English. It is quite possible that many of us might not be able to understand language in as spoken on radio, television, and movies but eventually the cloud of incomprehensibility will float away and it will be start to make sense.

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- (c) Reading is as important as listening. So it is important to include a specific length of reading English in your day.
- (d) The next idea is to practice the craft you are learning. Try and find the opportunity to use it with people who understand the language. Try not only speaking but also writing and reading as much as you can. Use it at the first opportunity in your hand. Break the barrier of shyness and in no time you will see yourself communicating in the language desired with quite an ease.
- (e) Another thing to be used for learning is dictionary, thesaurus, and grammar books.

WHY DO I WANT TO COMMUNICATE IN ENGLISH?

Before we go on to understand the idea and technique of mastering the language there are few question which must be addressed, and addressed properly. First of all is why do we want to learn to speak English? Some of the possible reasons could be:

- (a) To get a better job.
- (b) In order to communicate with different people from different parts of India.
- (c) Because every important person in today's world knows English.
- (d) In order to communicate with people around the world.
- (e) To take English as the basis of further studies.
- (f) To go abroad.
- (g) Because I like the language.

There could be other reasons for why someone would want to learn to speak English. This tells us a lot about why English is so important in the today's world. Someone has called it "a symbol of people's aspiration for participation in national and international life". Nehru called it a "window on the world". With Indian economy getting coincided with the explosion of English as a language it no wonder the demand of English speaking applicants has gone high to touch the skyline.

ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

International English is the concept of the English language as a global means of communication in numerous dialects, and also the movement towards an international standard for the language. It is also referred to as Global English, World English, Common English, Continental English, General English, Engas (English as associate language), or Globish. Sometimes, these

terms refer simply to the array of varieties of English spoken throughout the world.

Sometimes, "International English" and the related terms above refer to a desired standardization, i.e. Standard English; however, there is no consensus on the path to this goal. There have been many proposals for making International English more accessible to people from different nationalities. Basic English is an example, but it failed to make progress. More recently, there have been proposals for English as a *lingua franca* (ELF). It has also been argued that International English is held back by its traditional spelling. There has been slow progress in adopting alternate spellings.

The modern concept of International English does not exist in isolation, but is the product of centuries of development of the English language.

The English language evolved in England, from a set of West Germanic dialects spoken by the Angles and Saxons, who arrived from the continent in the 5th century. Those dialects came to be known as English (literally "Anglish"), the language today referred to as Anglo-Saxon or Old English (the language of the poem Beowulf). English is thus, more closely related to West Frisian than to any other modern language, although less than a quarter of the vocabulary of Modern English is shared with West Frisian or other West Germanic languages because of extensive borrowings from Norse, Norman, Latin, and other languages. It was during the Viking invasions of the Anglo-Saxon period that Old English was influenced by contact with Norse, a group of North Germanic dialects spoken by the Vikings, who came to control a large region in the North of England known as the Danelaw. Vocabulary items entering English from Norse (including the pronouns she, they, and them) are thus, attributable to the on-again-off-again Viking occupation of Northern England during the centuries prior to the Norman Conquest (see, e.g. Canute the Great). Soon after the Norman Conquest of 1066, the English language ceased being a literary language (see, e.g. Ormulum) and was replaced by Anglo-Norman as the written language of England. During the Norman Period, English absorbed a significant component of French vocabulary (approximately one-third of the vocabulary of Modern English). With this new vocabulary, additional vocabulary borrowed from Latin (with Greek, another approximately one-third of Modern English vocabulary, though some borrowings from Latin and Greek date from later periods), a simplified grammar, and use of

the orthographic conventions of French instead of Old English orthography, the language became Middle English (the language of Chaucer). The “difficulty” of English as a written language thus, began in the High Middle Ages, when French orthographic conventions were used to spell a language whose original, more suitable orthography had been forgotten after centuries of nonuse. During the late medieval period, King Henry V of England (lived 1387-1422) ordered the use of the English of his day in proceedings before him and before the government bureaucracies. That led to the development of Chancery English, a standardised form used in the government bureaucracy. (The use of so-called Law French in English courts continued through the Renaissance,)

The emergence of English as a language of Wales results from the incorporation of Wales into England and also dates from approximately this time period. Soon afterward, the development of printing by Caxton and others accelerated the development of a standardised form of English. Following a change in vowel pronunciation that marks the transition of English from the medieval to the Renaissance period, the language of the Chancery and Caxton became Early modern English (the language of Shakespeare’s day) and with relatively moderate changes eventually developed into the English language of today. Scots, as spoken in the lowlands and along the east coast of Scotland, developed independently from modern English and is based on the Northern dialects of Anglo-Saxon, particularly Northumbrian, which also serve as the basis of Northern English dialects such as those of Yorkshire and Newcastle upon Tyne. Northumbria was within the Danelaw and therefore, experienced greater influence from Norse than did the Southern dialects. As the political influence of London grew, the Chancery version of the language developed into a written standard across Great Britain, further progressing in the modern period as Scotland became united with England as a result of the Acts of Union of 1707.

There have been two introductions of English to Ireland, a medieval introduction that led to the development of the now-extinct Yola dialect and a modern introduction in which Hibernian English largely replaced Irish as the most widely spoken language during the 19th century, following the Act of Union of 1800. Received Pronunciation (RP) is generally viewed as a 19th century development and is not reflected in North American English dialects, which are based on 18th century English.

The establishment of the first permanent English-speaking colony in North America in 1607 was a major step towards the globalization of the language. British English was only partially standardized when the American colonies were established. Isolated from each other by the Atlantic Ocean, the dialects in England and the colonies began evolving independently.

The settlement of Australia in 1788 brought the English language to Oceania. By the 19th century, the standardization of British English was more settled than it had been in the previous century, and this relatively well-established English was brought to Africa, Asia and New Zealand. It developed both as the language of English-speaking settlers from Britain and Ireland, and as the administrative language imposed on speakers of other languages in the various parts of the British Empire. The first form can be seen in New Zealand English, and the latter in Indian English. In Europe, English received a more central role particularly since 1919, when the Treaty of Versailles was composed not only in French, the common language of diplomacy at the time, but, under special request from American president Woodrow Wilson, also in English – a major milestone in the globalisation of English.

The English-speaking regions of Canada and the Caribbean are caught between historical connections with the UK and the Commonwealth, and geographical and economic connections with the U.S. In some things, and more formally, they tend to follow British standards, whereas in others, especially commercial, they follow the U.S. standard.

The first diaspora involved relatively large-scale migrations of around 25,000 mother-tongue English speakers from England, Scotland and Ireland predominantly to North America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Over time, their own English dialects developed into modern American, South African and Australasia Englishes. In contrast to the English of Great Britain, the varieties spoken in modern North America, South Africa and Australasia have been modified in response to the changed and changing socio-linguistic contexts of the migrants, for example, being in contact with indigenous Indian, Khoisan, Aboriginal or Maori populations in the colonies.

The second diaspora was the result of the colonisation of Asia and Africa, which led to the development of ‘New Englishes’, the second-language varieties of English. In colonial Africa, the history of English is distinct between West and East Africa. English in West Africa began due to the slave trade. English

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soon gained official status in Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria and Cameroon, and some of the pidgin and creoles which developed from English contact, including Krio (Sierra Leone) and Cameroon Pidgin, have large numbers of speakers now.

As for East Africa, extensive British settlements were established in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, where English became a crucial language of the government, education and the law. From the early 1960s, the six countries achieved independence in succession; but English remained the official language and had large numbers of second language speakers in Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi (along with Chewa).

English was formally introduced to the sub-continent of South Asia (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan) during the second half of the 18th century. In India, English was given status through the implementation of Macaulay 'Minute' of 1835, which proposed the introduction of an English educational system in India. Over time, the process of 'Indianisation' led to the development of a distinctive national character of English in India.

British influence in South-East Asia and the South Pacific began in the late 18th century, involving primarily the territories of Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong. Papua New Guinea, also a British protectorate, exemplified the English-based pidgin – Tok Pisin. Nowadays, English is also learnt in other countries in neighbouring areas, most notably in Taiwan, Japan and Korea, with the latter two having begun to consider the possibility of making English their official second language.

The most influential model of the spread of English is Braj Kachru's model of World Englishes. In this model, the diffusion of English is captured in terms of three Concentric Circles of the language: The Inner Circle, the Outer Circle, and the Expanding Circle.

The Inner Circle refers to English as it originally took shape and was spread across the world in the first diaspora. In this transplantation of English, speakers from England carried the language to Australia, New Zealand and North America. The Inner Circle thus, represents the traditional historical and socio-linguistic bases of English in regions where it is now used as a primary language: the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Malta, anglophone Canada and South Africa, and some of Caribbean territories. English is the native language or mother tongue of most people in these countries. The

total number of English speakers in the Inner Circle is as high as 380 million, of whom some 120 million are outside the United States.

The Outer Circle of English was produced by the second diaspora of English, which spread the language through the colonization by Great Britain and the US in Asia and Africa. In these regions, English is not the native tongue, but serves as a useful *lingua franca* between ethnic and language groups. Higher education, the legislature and judiciary, national commerce and so on may all be carried out predominantly in English. This circle includes India, Nigeria, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Malaysia, Tanzania, Kenya, non-Anglophone South Africa and others. The total number of English speakers in the outer circle is estimated to range from 150 million to 300 million.

Finally, the Expanding Circle encompasses countries where English plays no historical or governmental role, but where it is nevertheless widely used as a medium of international communication. This includes much of the rest of the world's population not categorised above: China, Russia, Japan, most of Europe, Korea, Egypt, Indonesia, etc. The total in this expanding circle is the most difficult to estimate, especially because English may be employed for specific, limited purposes, usually business English. The estimates of these users range from 100 million to one billion.

The inner circle (UK, US etc.) is 'norm-providing'; that means that English language norms is developed in these countries. The outer circle (mainly New Commonwealth countries) is 'norm-developing'. The expanding circle (which includes much of the rest of the world) is 'norm-dependent', because it relies on the standards set by native speakers in the inner circle.

THE FUTURE OF ENGLISH:

ENGLISH MULTILINGUALISM

English, Latin and Sanskrit: Not surprising at all is the fact that English is not the first language to be considered as the international in the history of language study. The two other languages which can be compared with it in terms of political, cultural and intellectual influence are Latin and Sanskrit.

One question of importance which has been a centre of scholarly speculation is – Is English the Latin of future? This question might not be very explanatory in itself so as to open the wide doors for the answer. But a little peeking in the history of Latin, would do us some good here. In the history of Latin we can see glimpses of the future of English, which to say are the glimpses