



The People's English

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Introduction:

It is good to study the development of the English language over the past fifteen hundred years or more. There are one or two elementary facts concerning language in general that we should grasp.

More than sixty percent in today's world population is multilingual. Both from a contemporary and historical perspective, bilingualism is the norm rather than an exception. Foreign language learning has always been an important concern throughout history. Today, English is the most widely studied language, the world over, since there has been tremendous explosion in English language learning.

English, the colonizer's language, has been firmly entrenched in India for nearly more than two centuries now. The enactment of English education act in 1835 and Macaulay's minutes on education closely following it, in the same year, saw a proliferation of English medium schools all over the country. Indian renaissance became a historical reality owing to English education. The Indian freedom struggle spearheaded by English speaking politicians gave impetus to the establishment of colleges and other institutions where English became the medium of instruction. In the decolonised India, politicians, bureaucrats, scientists, businessmen and the upwardly mobile technocrats saw the merit in learning English to augment their interest in a world where distances are shrunk by global connectivity. Instrumental motivation became stronger as English emerged as the window to the world. English has come to be regarded as the link language or the lingua franca, library language and interplanetary language. The global village is connected through English only.

What is communication?

Communication is the process by which information is exchanged between individuals. It requires a shared understanding of symbol systems, such as language and mathematics.

Why Communications Skills Are So Important:

The purpose of communication is to get your message across to others clearly and unambiguously.

Doing this involves effort from both the sender of the message and the receiver. And it's a process that can be fraught with error, with messages often misinterpreted by the recipient. When this isn't detected, it can cause tremendous confusion, wasted effort and missed opportunity.

In fact, communication is only successful when both the sender and the receiver understand the same information as a result of the communication

By successfully getting your message across, you convey your thoughts and ideas effectively. When not successful, the thoughts and ideas that you send do not necessarily reflect your own, causing a communications breakdown and creating roadblocks that stand in the way of your goals – both personally and professionally.

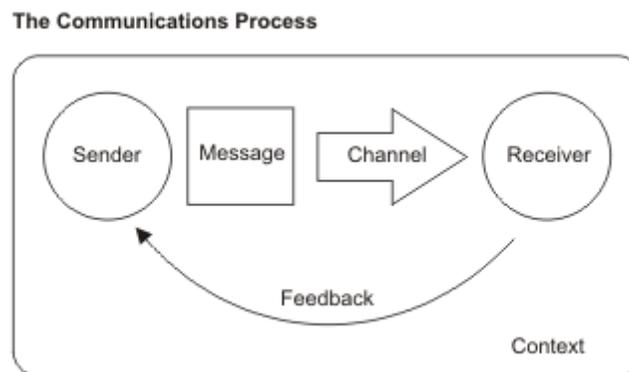
In a recent survey of recruiters from companies with more than 50,000 employees, communication skills were cited as the single more important decisive factor in choosing managers. The survey, conducted by the University of Pittsburgh's Katz Business School, points out that communication skills, including written and oral presentations, as well as an ability to work with others, are the main factor contributing to job success.

In spite of the increasing importance placed on communication skills, many individuals continue to struggle, unable to communicate their thoughts and ideas effectively – whether in verbal or written format. This inability makes it nearly impossible for them to compete effectively in the workplace, and stands in the way of career progression.

Getting your message across is paramount to progressing. To do this, you must understand what your message is, what audience you are sending it to, and how it will be perceived. You must also weigh-in the circumstances surrounding your communications, such as situational and cultural context.

Communications Skills - The Importance of Removing Barriers:

Problems with communication can pop-up at every stage of the communication process (which consists of **sender**, **message**, **channel**, **receiver**, **feedback** and **context** - see the diagram below) and have the potential to create misunderstanding and confusion.



To be an effective communicator and to get your point across without misunderstanding and confusion, your goal should be to lessen the frequency of these problems at each stage of this process with clear, concise, accurate, well-planned communications.

The term “Culture” and its meaning:

Culture (from the Latin *cultura* stemming from *colere*, meaning "to cultivate"), generally refers to patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activity significance. Different definitions of "culture" reflect different theoretical bases for understanding, or criteria for evaluating, human activity.

Most general, the term *culture* denotes whole product of an individual, group or society of intelligent beings. It includes technology, art, science, as well as moral systems and characteristic behaviours and habits of the selected intelligent entities. In particular, it has specific more detailed meanings in different domains of human activities.

A word that means several different things...

When you're talking about "organizational culture", remember to check that you are all conversing about the same thing. People may use the word culture to mean any of these:

1. National / ethnic culture:

The group assumed to be site of child's primary socialization -- "THE Latvian culture," "THE African-American culture." In the U.S. this is usually the assumed meaning of culture, and people revert to this narrow view of culture out of habit, even when you may have been quite explicit about defining culture more broadly than this.

2. Secondary or subgroup culture:

Cultural groups we've been socialized into: Organizational culture, professional culture, manager culture, Muslim culture, peer culture, prison culture, and nerd culture and so on.

3. Culture in the anthropological sense

-- The meanings and behaviors groups of people develop and share over time.

4. Capital C Culture:

The high arts of theater, painting, music, etc., or a superior upbringing.

Also the term **culture** refers to a state of intellectual development or manners. The social and political forces that influence the growth of a human being is defined as **culture**.

In the present context, the term "Culture" means not only the poojas, rituals done by Indians as also the environmental forces that govern its meaning. We need to give or attribute an additional meaning to culture which is comprehensive of the much discussed "Globalisation". Globalisation has been taking place in two areas mainly, at present: (1) Economy and (2) Education. The following definition may help us to understand the term better:

"Firstly, the meaning of this 'globalisation' that they are often said to be pushing us towards. The term is often used in a general way to refer collectively to a set of economic trends. One aspect of 'globalisation' is the greater maneuverability of capital around the world. Another related element is the removal of restrictions to global trade. 'Globalisation' is also about the diminishing importance of national frontiers as far as the operations of companies are concerned. In short, globalisation means that the economic activity of companies is to be increasingly understood as taking place on an international, rather than a national stage".

The Indian panorama of trade till 1990s was a closed one or with Limited opening, i.e, the so called Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) was not allowed. The Multinational companies can offer 'Technical Collaboration' only. Though there was significant economical growth in the country, still employment with a decent salary for youths was a dream only. In the beginning of the year 1991, the then Prime Minister Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao's regime opened the doors of India for Foreign Direct Investment. From then onwards numerous multinational companies started establishing their branches at various cities in India. The number of jobless youths has been decreasing equally whenever the MNCS established their companies. Globalization has brought a great impact on industries. Till the inception of MNCS, no Indian companies required communication skill or any other related skills (likes soft-skills, personality etc.). But to work in an MNC, a candidate requires to improve himself / herself overall. More particularly, communicative skill in general; interpersonal communication and mass communicative skill are very much necessary.

It is universally acclaimed that Indian Software Engineers are given a red-carpet welcome throughout the world. This is because of

- 1) Their knowledge in English
- 2) The professional skill or expertise they have
- 3) The same has happened at famous R&D centers in Bangalore, where the recent development in softwares was by Indians, who are fluent in English.

The increasing number of BPOs or Call Centers has also multiplied the employment opportunities. A Call Center assistant must be fluent in English, or one who has a working knowledge in English can join Out Sourcing Companies. Thus, the first phase of globalization ends with industries and employment.

The second phase of globalization reflects in education field. Once foreign education was limited to high-class people and middle class people cannot afford Foreign Education. But after this globalization, Indian universities have started signing MoU with foreign universities. By virtue of this MoU foreign university teachers come to work in India. Foreign education is now at the arm's length for Indian students.

Taking into account, the importance of English, Tamil Nadu government has incidentally ordered "English" as compulsory subject from Primary school Education.

Another important point we must take note of is that the freedom fighters of India were well known for their grip over the foreign tongue. Even the native speakers were afraid of certain Indian leaders who used to converse in English such a way that the Britishers were convinced.

It is our opinion that Foreign Language learning is a Global necessity and mastery of the English language is a must. It is evident that Indians have the capacity to master the language and once again put India on top of the Global map. But this does mean that Indian tradition and cultural aspects be neglected or forgotten. To conclude mastering the language is to conquer the world, not at the expense of Indian tradition.

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