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# Challenges Faced by North Andhra Bachelor Level Students in Speaking English

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**Abstract:**
Speaking is a practical language skill that enables oral communication between speakers and listeners for the exchange of information and the building of enduring bonds. Speaking is also seen to be a sign of overall language competency. The ability to speak a language fluently is thought to designate a learner as skilled in that language. One of the languages that is in high demand worldwide for learners at all communication levels is English. Nonetheless, the development of speaking abilities in bachelor's degree students is always seen as difficult and complex, requiring a lot of work to sustain.

English is taught as a required subject from elementary school through university in the North Andhra area of India, yet students generally, and undergrads specifically, struggle greatly to speak language fluently. Some of them were still unable to speak appropriate English after graduating. The goal of the current study was to investigate the challenges undergraduate students experience and potential reasons for their speaking issues. This empirical qualitative study primarily focuses on linguistic, social, environmental, and personal speaking issues. The study investigated the causes of speaking deficiencies, including poor schooling, excessive use of the mother tongue, teaching, course content, and classroom culture. The study recommended establishing a conducive atmosphere, optimizing student autonomy, modifying instructional strategies, updating curricula, and repeatedly holding speaking exercises.

**Keywords:** English Speaking Skills, Undergraduate Students, Speaking Difficulties, Language Learning Challenges, Communicative Competence.

**Introduction**

Speaking English proficiently is essential for students in the North Andhra area of India, as it will be utilized in many daily activities and in their future careers. English is also utilized as a second language in the educational system in India, and speaking the language is valued as a crucial ability that is crucial for hiring. The significance of the English language, which has been dubbed the global trade language, has grown increasingly evident as a result of globalization. Since English is the lingua franca of the Internet, speaking it is crucial to becoming internationally recognized in the current information and internet era. English is today recognized as the most dominant language in the world and as its lingua franca.

*The changing sociolinguistic landscape that has resulted from increased globalisation, with English adopted as a lingua franca across a wide range of social settings in non-Anglophone countries, foregrounds the importance of rethinking which role models are suitable and appropriate to present to L2 students. (167, Christopher J. Jenks and Paul Seedhouse)*

The four English language skills reading, writing, speaking, and listening are all important language skills that need to be learned. The four talents are necessary for full communication. When learning a language, listening is typically the first ability acquired. Speaking, reading, and writing come next. In order to effectively and correctly communicate with people, language learners need to be able to perceive and produce spoken language. This is known as the "four skills of language acquisition." Because they are all so interconnected, failing to be proficient in one will directly affect the others. Speaking, or communication, happens often in both official and informal settings in daily life, thus while listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills are all vital, speaking skills typically take precedence over the others. Other significant factors in the nature of language concern the interrelation and the interdependence of language functions (thought, self-expression, communication) and of language experiences (speaking, writing, listening, and reading). (152-153, Dr. M.F. Patel and Praveen M. Jain)

Speaking proficiency is just as important as other skills that need to be developed to help target language learners communicate more effectively. Implementing 21st-century learning is necessary since the four C's—communication, cooperation, creativity, and critical thinking—were emphasized as being essential

components. The importance of communication is clear because it is one of the four Cs of 21st century skills. Students are encouraged to work together and speak with teachers or peers during the learning process. Therefore, many national governments have made it their ultimate goal in educational policy to make sure that students can communicate more effectively in order to produce proficient English speakers. They will be eligible to compete internationally as a result.

**The Foundation of Effective English-speaking Students**

In India, English has grown so widely used that it is now considered a second language. English has become an essential component of the curriculum in schools and colleges in order to help non-native speakers overcome communication barriers and become future experts and professionals in all fields. In addition to their other skills, speaking is a fundamental competence that all language learners should acquire. A skilled English speaker is someone who is fluent in the language, and speaking is a challenging ability to master. One of the most esteemed attributes in the English language is unquestionably the ability to speak. Unlike other skills, speaking English requires quick thinking and prompt responses with minimal delay.

**Bachelor degree level students' poor speaking abilities**

The absence of communication skills among pupils in the North Andhra region has become a common problem. If North Andhra hopes to produce a generation of global communicators, the proficiency of its bachelor's degree students in English is essential. This illustrates the region's goal of reaching full communication development. It goes without saying that instructors' opinions about the best ways to teach oral communication skills in English language classes have rarely come to pass. In addition to making students use linguistic elements they haven't yet naturally mastered, teachers make them break the quiet before they are ready. Learners will perform poorly when speaking since they are not proficient in the target language. It's possible that instructors' ideas and the conditions in which they educate don't always align. They are unable to put their ideals into practice in the language classroom because of the gap between their pedagogical principles and their instructional strategies. Nonetheless, the results indicate that educators are still utilizing textbook-based education and other conventional classroom methods. The teacher is compelled to return to more teacher-centered classroom practices because of the students' low skill level. This implies that even while the teachers are inspired to incorporate communicative language instruction into their lessons, the demands of the test prevent them from doing so. They are forced to give the students teacher-centred, grammar-based instruction in order to get them ready for the test.

Many businesses say that our graduates' inability to communicate in English prevents them from finding employment. Many students who have studied English as a second language for 11 years perform poorly while speaking the language when they graduate from secondary school. Students in the North Andhra region need to raise their proficiency in English. Low-level English speakers would undoubtedly lack the soft skills required to interact with people from different countries. One of the linguistic skills that has generated a lot of controversy and is regularly discussed by lawmakers and educators is speaking. Although most of the students passed the English language test, not all of them are proficient communicators. It is rather clear that students pursuing bachelor's degrees have limited opportunities to use English outside of the classroom, particularly when speaking a language other than English. Curriculum designers and legislators must examine the current curriculum, which emphasizes workbook drilling to acquire grammatical correctness. When it comes to communication in the real world, students are being denied this type of education. To increase students' fluency, a curriculum must give them enough chances to develop their presentation and interpersonal skills. Fluency should be prioritized over accuracy in the educational system, and students should be given multiple chances to role-play and present. These kinds of activities would assist students become more fluent and get over their fear of speaking. Mastery of grammar principles and education in reading and writing abilities are prioritized. Because of this, English is seen as a topic that emphasizes language mechanics rather than making connections to real-world usage scenarios. Learning English through "fixed" methods is a learning mechanism that is distinct from conversation. It was discovered that the majority of students suffered from common physiological causes such anxiety, shyness, and classroom terror. Due to their fear of communicating in English, most pupils were reluctant to talk. Others, however, were hesitant and afraid to speak in front of the class. The main psychological factors preventing students from speaking in class were fear, timidity, and concern. Due to their fear of communicating in English, most pupils were reluctant to talk.

**The Value of Speaking English**

For English language learners, speaking in English can be challenging, particularly if they lack a strong command of the language. A person can interact and socialize with people in their immediate social circle via speaking, which is basic language ability. A speaker must abide by the cultural standards of the discourse community, which include its values, customs, beliefs, and superstitions, in order to

be considered a member. The Education System's English curriculum, which includes listening, reading, writing, and grammar, includes speaking as one of its essential elements. The system makes extensive use of English for both professional and academic purposes. Examples of verbal communication include attending conferences, trainings, or meetings; talking about daily tasks or responsibilities; making oral presentations; and discussing issues in daily life when verbal communication is used to address activities. English was selected as a stand-in language to facilitate efficient communication because the native tongues are so varied. Nowadays, being able to speak effectively in English is a need for graduates looking for work. One of the most crucial language skills in communication is speaking, which is the cornerstone of communication.

**The Difficulties Learners Face When Speaking English**

Speaking in English can be difficult for English language learners, particularly if they lack a strong command of the language. The biggest issue for students is a lack of confidence in their ability to use the English language. Students must have a particular level of excitement in order to participate in English-speaking activities. Generally speaking, there are two types of factors that influence students' desire and motivation to continuously be involved in and committed to studying and participating in English-language activities: intrinsic and extrinsic. Additionally, the students are terrified of speaking English incorrectly. When they find it hard to explain their opinions in English, they would rather not use the target language and instead use their native tongue. Additionally, the learners find it challenging to communicate in English due to their restricted vocabulary.

Mother tongue interference is another difficulty that learners have when speaking English. However, the environment did not encourage the use of English outside of the classroom. The pupils conversed in their mother tongue during recess. It is believed that more interactive classroom activities will improve their ability to converse with one another in English. It is clear that students still produce communication in their mother tongue. The learners' incapacity to communicate in English, among other things, is indicative of the influence of their mother tongue. Additionally, it was noted that pupils used mother tongue translation techniques to comprehend specific instructions in addition to creating words. In the end, speaking seems to be the most challenging ability among research participants, and they all concur that English is crucial, especially for communication. Long-term exposure to English does not ensure or grant pupils the right to be proficient language users,

according to this study. Since the pupils are from a non-English speaking population, the environment is thought to be one of the factors behind their lack of competency. Reformation is necessary to guarantee that students can improve their English language skills, especially those from the North Andhra region's rural districts. The objective of being intelligible to non-native English speakers will only be accomplished at that point.

**Method**

Finding, assessing, analyzing, and summarizing all pertinent research were all part of a systematic investigation. Using a qualitative research design, this study was carried out in the researcher's classroom at Raghu Engineering College in Visakhapatnam. Students in their sixth semester of undergraduate studies served as the study's subjects. Purposive selection techniques were used to choose participants with lower speech fluency (participants' speaking abilities were assessed based on how well they presented themselves in class). The researcher chose students who were struggling with speaking because, as a faculty member, he frequently witnessed their presentation skills and verbal fluency in the classroom. This study included semi-structured interviews with participants and a series of open-ended questions to gather data. Two primary sections were used in the development of the questions and interviews: the students' speaking challenges and potential reasons for such challenges. There were primarily two questions posed to each student. 1) What challenges do you encounter when speaking? Kindly list at least ten points. 2) What are the reasons behind challenges? List at least five reasons why people have trouble speaking. Students were interviewed using semi-structured interview methods in addition to this questionnaire. Based on the students' answers to the questionnaire and interview, the data were then divided into speaking challenges, their reasons, and recommendations for enhancing the students' English speaking abilities.

**Findings and Conversation**

The methods listed above for carrying out the methodical research... The following is a summary of the empirical data demonstrating the difficulties North Andhra students have speaking English as well as the successful methods used to help them overcome these difficulties.

**Findings**

The information gathered from the questionnaire and interview was primarily divided into two groups: the reasons behind the analysis and discussion challenges and the speaking issues that students encountered. Issues and their causes are further broken down into other subcategories, which are examined as follows:

**Speaking Issues**

During the interview and questionnaire, the researcher inquired about the difficulties they encounter when speaking English. The following table no. 1 lists the various types of issues that the students encountered. Feeling anxious, lacking vocabulary, difficulty using grammatical patterns, difficulty pronouncing words correctly, fear of making mistakes, excessive use of the mother tongue, and lack of confidence were the most noticeable issues that the majority of students encountered. Four divisions were identified from their questionnaire and interview responses: linguistic, social, environmental, and personal issues. The following is a separate analysis of each category.

Table 1: Speaking Issues

| Themes produced | Particular issues |
|---|---|
| Individual issue | Anxiety |
| | Insufficient confidence |
| | Reluctance and anxiety |
| Social issue | Fear of being insulted/criticized by peers |
| | Fear of making a mistake |
| | Fear of pronouncing words correctly |
| Linguistic issue | Having trouble selecting the right word |
| | Fluency issue |
| | MIT issue |
| | Issues with applying proper grammar rules |
| Environmental issues | Method of instruction |
| | Classroom communication |

**System of institutions**

Based on the aforementioned findings and debate, it can be concluded that speaking is the most crucial English language skill. As such, learners should have many opportunities to practice speaking both within and outside of the classroom. For pupils to practice their English, the instructor must establish a welcoming atmosphere. The development of speaking skills is greatly aided by encouraging pupils to listen more and participating in classroom interactions, according to numerous research. As a result, active student participation in the classroom may help students become more proficient speakers. All abilities should receive equal attention when creating courses, but speaking should receive particular attention to help students become fluent in English. In light of the study's conclusions, it can be concluded that the primary causes of speaking development are instructional

strategies, classroom culture, student backgrounds, and excessive usage of the mother tongue.

**Challenges faced by North Andhra region bachelor level students to speak English Language**

The survey found that fear; inhibition, a lack of desire and self-confidence, and a restricted vocabulary are the main obstacles to speaking abilities among bachelor's degree students. Therefore, it is essential to discover potential strategies for overcoming the challenges faced by bachelor level students and improving their speaking abilities. The study also found some strategies that have been shown to help students at the bachelor level get beyond their challenges and improve their speaking skills. In and out of the classroom, most students find it difficult to communicate in English. If they are expected to speak English before they have mastered it, it is far more upsetting. For the most part, a student who feels that nothing should be said in English until it is properly conveyed would refrain from speaking. Some students would rather remain inactive during English classes since they are afraid to speak in the language. Students who experience anxiety are more likely to anticipate negative responses from others, and things go worse if they are unable to manage their anxiety. The study found problems, and its conclusions clarified the difficulty studnts in the North Andhra region had speaking English. The research also covered the practical methods for resolving these issues. It identified a few issues pertaining to the variables affecting learners' proficiency in speaking English. Inhibition is the first problem that pupils encounter in the classroom. They can be reluctant to speak up in class in certain situations. If they make a mistake, they are afraid of being judged. The knowledge that other students are observing them makes them feel ashamed. The second issue is that students lament that they are unsure of what to say and lack the motivation to do so. The low level of participation in the speaking class is the third challenge. Each student will have very little time to talk since the other students will be attempting to hear them because only one student can speak at a time in a huge class. Some students speak more than others in the speaking class, while others hardly ever speak at all. Last but not least, some students attempt to use their native tongue in speaking classes since it comes naturally to them.

When speaking English, learners typically feel anxious. They lack confidence when speaking English, are apprehensive, fear public speaking, and worry about how they will sound. This is due to the fact that English is neither their first nor second language. They are all anxious about a variety of things, such as their

ignorance of English, their fear of misinterpreting it, their incapacity to comprehend it, their fear of using incorrect English sentences, their fear of their peers' laughter, and their fear of using incorrect grammar when speaking English. In summary, pupils' poor English proficiency may be a factor in their worry. Additionally, when they made mistakes in class, they communicated their reactions. The study's findings also demonstrated that these students' primary anxiety is related to communication issues and their fear of being perceived negatively. Their reasons of anxiety are comparable, including shyness, public anxiety, and inaccurate speech. They also employ typical coping mechanisms like avoiding eye contact and keeping quiet. From the observations, it is impossible to draw the conclusion that students' cultural origins give them distinct causes for their speaking fear as well as distinct coping mechanisms.

Although the degree of language anxiety varies from person to person, most language learners have experienced it. Most students had moderate anxiety when speaking to people in English. This kind of suffering in learning a second language is caused by their own awareness that they are having difficulty understanding both themselves and other people. Pupils who are afraid to speak opt to remain silent during English sessions. The resulting procedure is likely to be stopped, which is crucial in the process, because pupils are more worried about failing the test. Students would consider unrealistic standards of perfection rather than how their languages could be refined and enhanced. These unfavourable traits would undoubtedly affect their behaviour and responses in a second language classroom, which would impede learning.

Because they were perplexed by their lack of language proficiency and worried about making grammatical errors, students were reluctant to converse in English with their lecturers and friends both inside and outside of the classroom. Their preconceived notions that proficient speakers viewed them as slow learners, incompetent, and dumb, among other things, made them self-conscious about their communication skills. Their limited vocabulary in English made it difficult for them to speak clearly. In order to make sure that their thoughts, intents, or opinions were understood, respondents were encouraged to blend English with a variety of regional languages and dialects. Psychological problems, ineffective management, and the influence of peers' and teachers' motivation alone are the main causes of students' lack of speaking proficiency. The pupils' performance suffered because they were

bashful and anxious when it came time to speak in English. Speaking poorly can also be caused by students' lack of confidence and a lack of opportunity to speak outside of the classroom. They didn't say anything to prevent making a mistake since they didn't want to appear silly in front of the class.

**Successful Techniques for Resolving Speaking Issues Among North Andhra Bachelor's Degree Students**

A few useful techniques for resolving speaking difficulties among bachelor degree students were found in this study. Educators must develop a means to overcome psychological hurdles such as worry and dread in students learning to speak English. In the classroom, teachers need to have a good emotional connection with their students. To encourage pupils to use the targeted language, teachers must establish a welcoming and cooperative atmosphere in the classroom. Additionally, real resources and exercises will help students gain the self-assurance and drive to speak the language with assurance. Additionally, ESL students eventually overcome their hesitancy and uncertainty and gain confidence when given the opportunity to utilize the language in a non-threatening learning setting. Students will pick up the new language instinctively on their own if they are given enough time to reflect on and practice their speech without feeling pushed by their teacher or peers. If they practice often, this process will speed up. It is believed that it might motivate students to take responsibility for their own education. Group members' capacity for cooperative learning and problem-solving will increase as a result. Basic presentation skills: including how to begin and end a presentation, how to organize an individual presentation, and how to communicate both verbally and nonverbally, should be taught to learners.

Speaking is a crucial component of both teaching and learning English. Speaking instruction has sadly been neglected, and the teaching methodology consists of a number of tedious drills and methods, including dialogue memorization. Therefore, in the modern day, the objectives of the speaking lesson should be to develop students' capacity for self-expression and to improve their communication skills. Many linguists and educators believe that interactive exercises are the most effective way to help students learn to speak. Speaking classes can be implemented and their objectives met through the use of CLT (Communicative Language Teaching). Students must be exposed to real-world events in place of the traditional classroom environment. This approach will teach students how to interact with peers and instructors in English. This happens when students collaborate with the teacher in

groups or pairs to complete a task. There are numerous options for more research in this area of study.

It is recommended that students acquire basic presentational abilities, such as how to organize a single presentation, how to begin and end a presentation, and how to communicate both orally and nonverbally. In addition, their pronunciation-improvement efforts might help allay their worries that they won't be able to speak new words correctly. Additionally, encouraging pupils to talk and lowering their anxiety levels can be achieved through the use of enjoyable speech activities like board games, poems, and songs. It is recommended that students acquire basic presentational abilities, such as how to organize a single presentation, how to begin and end a presentation, and how to communicate both orally and nonverbally. In addition, their pronunciation-improvement efforts might help allay their worries that they won't be able to speak new words correctly. Additionally, encouraging pupils to talk and lowering their anxiety levels can be achieved through the use of enjoyable speech activities like board games, poems, and songs.

**Conclusion**

The innate shyness, insecurity, and shame fear of the North Andhra pupils impede their attempts to communicate in English. The fear of ridicule prevents students from overcoming psychological obstacles and developing their communication skills. They consequently retreat and refrain from using English. Therefore, it is necessary to provide every student with the chance to practice speaking English. It is the responsibility of an English teacher to create an engaging and student-centred learning environment. Encouraging kids to write and communicate in English is a problem shared by everybody. For instance, interactive components in English classes that encourage students to speak the language are known as game changers. Together with teachers and parents, school administrators may create a friendly learning environment for students that will motivate them to learn and use the language and help them get over their anxiety of speaking it. To find the approach that best fits students' learning and teaching processes, teachers should try out a variety of English-speaking teaching strategies. Serious and prompt action is needed due to the sharp and dramatic drop in spoken English proficiency among the younger generation in the North Andhra area of India. In order to overcome these obstacles and improve the speaking and learning abilities of bachelor level graduate students, this article offers guidance to administrators, English supervisors, and English teachers.

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