Marwadi
education foundation

**DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

CONCEPTION · CREATION · EXECUTION OF

COMMUNICATION PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH

A COURSE FOR THE ENGINEERING STUDENTS

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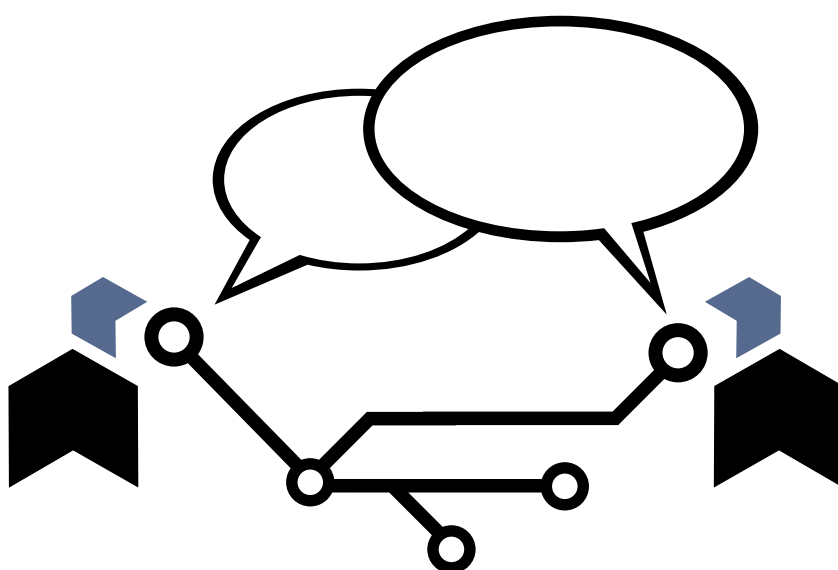Rajkot-Morbi Highway,
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A teacher's creativity is everlasting. A real teacher is always inspired, sometimes compelled to be creative and innovative by the forces, internal as well as external. A teacher is not merely a teacher but an artist, a scientist and a philosopher too. 21st century demands a lot from a teacher. There have been radical changes in Teaching – Learning process. A teacher is required to play various roles and has to be well versed with not only subject knowledge and language, but pedagogy, technology, psychology and what not. Having realized this truth, Department of Communication Skills at MEF is moving in the direction of growth in every aspect.

Conception of anything is beautifully humane and profoundly original offshoot of individual and collective potentials. More fascinating is to shape and develop it. Constant watch is required for its sustainable and progressive development. The present issue of Departmental Newsletter is a reflection of one such initiative: Communication Proficiency in English Course (CPE – Level 1) for the engineering students. It was designed and implemented by the Department of Communication Skills. In order to take a close look at the venture made, we have themed the current issue as "Conception, Creation and Execution of Communication Proficiency in English Course for the Engineering Students".

English Language plays a vital role in any domain of knowledge and in Technical Education it bears greater importance. English academia is tackling many challenges and issues of imparting proficiency in English at various levels: a) Second Language status of English b) Policy priorities in Higher Education, c) Teacher competence and training and d) Incongruence between syllabus of English and employability concerns. To cater to the need of students and the time, to address the problems of imparting proficiency in English language, a course of Communication Proficiency in English (Level 1) was conceptualized, designed and executed for the engineering students of 3rd, 5th and 7th semesters at Marwadi Education

Foundation. The experiences, insights and the best practices by the faculties who taught this course are documented here. Students' perspectives and experiences about this course are of great value and that is why they are also added. This issue includes a case study of the course implemented which gauges the outcome. Besides, it provides a glimpse of the progress of the initiatives such as facebook page, Blog, Samvad- A faculty forum and many more.

Have a happy reading.

« 21st CENTURY
demands a lot
from a TEACHER »

POOJA MEHTA
Department of Communication Skills, MEFGI

At a juncture when technical education is undergoing an unprecedented transformation and institutes such as Marwadi Education Foundation are spearheading the change, it is pertinent to observe, participate in and reflect upon the change that is taking place around us. In the light of concerns pertaining to employability and job-readiness of engineering students, it is profoundly relevant and meaningful to consider and reconsider the role of languages in technical education. It is heartening to note that Department of Communication Skills has been acutely conscious about its role at MEF and how it can grow in this role and contribute to the institutional advancement.

In the past one year, a number of initiatives have been conceptualized and implemented to ensure that the faculty members enhance their capabilities. Whether it is the Department's Facebook page or the blog, it has strengthened the Department and made us more empowered as teachers. The Faculty Forum continues to inspire discourse over the key issues of the domain and provide us the platform to further expand our horizons. The Course on French initiated to expose students to foreign languages other than English is a rich addition to the avenues of student engagement and empowerment. In the current semester, these initiatives have steadily grown and contributed to our collective development.

Since English is closely linked with the employability of engineering students, it was Hon'ble Chairman Sir's vision that a course on Communication Proficiency in English (CPE) should be initiated. It was envisioned to launch it for the 3rd, 5th and 7th semester students. With this unique vision and the support of MEF management, the Department has successfully and effectively implemented CPE. In our small but meaningful way, it is satisfying to see that the Department has contributed in enhancing the students' ability to express themselves in English. The articles by faculty members are sufficiently reflective of the satisfaction of conceptualizing and implementing CPE.

It is also pertinent to note that faculty members from the Department engage GATE classes and also contribute in terms of Course Design for the same. This enhances our engagement with student community and opens up new avenue of contribution for us. In the current semester, the Institute has initiated Special Interest Groups (SIGs) for various subjects. Our faculty members have also undertaken the responsibility to guide SIGs with respect to communication skills.

It is a matter of pride that Department of Communication Skills successfully coordinated the organization of Youth Festival-2014 and all the faculty members put in their sincere efforts and rendered it a remarkable and memorable event, to be etched in our collective memory for years to come. The Department also effectively coordinated Navartri Celebrations in tune with the MEF tradition and culture.

On the pages of the Newsletter, the reader will come across initiatives that define and shape the Department, and the faculty members' incessant engagement and meaningful contributions in the areas of teaching, research and institutional responsibilities. I am sure, it will also make delightful reading...

DR. SUNIL SAGAR
Head, Department of Communication Skills, MEFGI

PROLOGUE

With a view to enhancing the communicative skills in English of the engineering students, the Department of Communication Skills conceptualized and commenced Communication Proficiency in English (CPE) course. The course was designed on the bases of Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEF), published by Council of Europe in 2001. The CEF is neither a syllabus nor a methodology for language teaching; rather, it's a framework that defines six levels of language proficiency namely: C1 – C2 [Proficient], B1 – B2 [Independent] and A1 – A2 [Basic]. The course was scheduled in three phases/levels: Level – 1 (inclusive of A1 and A2); Level – 2 (inclusive of B1 and B2) and Level – 3 (inclusive of C1 and C2). All the topics were based on the language functions and keeping in mind an average user. Each topic was taught with a functional and communicative approach by heavily exercising activities such as Role Plays, Group Discussions and speaking tasks simulating real life situations.

CONFIGURATION

As a pilot project, the Level – 1 was introduced to 3rd, 5th and 7th semester students of engineering. There were 30 sessions in the Level – 1. Each session included the introduction of the topic to be undertaken, its learning outcomes, its relevance and significance, necessary structure and examples followed by classroom activities and tasks. Most of the sessions were facilitated with the relevant and exemplary short videos. Here, the ratio of theory (elaborating 'what', 'why' and 'how' of the session) and practical (activities/task by the students) was 20 – 80 i.e. 20% theory and 80% practical. By adopting this ratio, the classes got inclined from teacher centric to student centric and from teaching centric to learning centric. Out of four language skills viz. listening, speaking, reading and writing, the speaking skill was emphasized in all the respective sessions.

EXECUTION

Each session had a specific lesson plan with dedicated activities and tasks. However, the element of surprise was deliberated and consciously practiced. For instance, there was a sequence of execution of each section of the session. Nevertheless, facilitators were free to choose their respective sequence for a particular session and class. One may start with a video, a pre-task, or with a structural explanation, for instance. The students were also given a choice to opt from a set of activities and/or tasks. Not only that, the students can also suggest the activity of their choice as per the session. The facilitator would undertake the activities and tasks after judicious selection of the same. Hence, every session was open ended and customized as per the need at each execution.

EVALUATION

A Course End Evaluation was conducted wherein each student was supposed to carry out three tasks: 1) Introducing Oneself, 2) Speaking on a Topic of a Choice and 3) Participating in a Group Discussion. The evaluation was done on five criteria viz. 1) Articulation of Ideas, 2) Usage, 3) Pronunciation, 4) Body Language and 5) Confidence. Each criterion carried 10 marks. The students found the evaluation novel and stimulating unlike their regular evaluation in other courses. In the CPE evaluation, they were expected to perform the tasks that they had been doing and were getting better session by session.

EPILOGUE

As the atmosphere of the CPE classes had been student centric and activity based, the maximum learning outcomes were achieved. The feedback of the students was positive and satisfactory (for detailed feedback, refer the Case Study by Mr. Vishal Bhadani). The students found some of the activities directly helpful in their respective group discussion and interview on and off the campus. These positive responses encouraged the Department to launch Level – 2 in the forthcoming semester for imparting finer and higher communication proficiencies among the students.

MIHIR DAVE
Department of Communication Skills
MEFGI

THE CONCEPT

In this modern era, the importance of English language is undeniable. It is called a lingua franca. Everyone today needs to acquire proficiency in English language to enable oneself to express one's views and ideas and understand others' views and ideas successfully and effectively.

If one considers higher education in India, according to NASSCOM-McKinsey Report, India produces over 3.1 million graduates, including more than 0.5 million technical graduates, but most of these technical graduates are unabsorbed. This is because majority of them are unemployable. One of the chief reasons for their unemployability is their inability to use English language effectively. They are not able to express their ideas and views properly in English language.

It is observed that teaching of English in engineering colleges has always held a dubious status. While everyone involved in the field knows the importance of English, the efforts made for the same are not sufficient and satisfactory. Quite a lot of new avenues need to be explored and Communication Proficiency in English (CPE) course is one such avenue that Marwadi Education Foundation has ventured.

The concept of Communication Proficiency in English course is based on CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). The course is divided into three levels. It is designed keeping in mind the needs of today's competitive world.

CREATION & EXECUTION OF COMMUNICATION PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH COURSE – LEVEL 1

Level 1 of this course has been offered to the students of 3rd, 5th and 7th semester. The course of Communication Proficiency in English is activity based. Several activities are designed to involve the students in the learning process. Following are some of the major activities/tasks that are designed and executed in the classrooms:

⟩ **Pair Work**
The students are divided into pairs and they are given some tasks to carry out. It is found that students can work more effectively when they are allowed to share ideas and views with each other.

⟩ **Group Discussion**
The communicative approach to teaching language apparently asserts that group discussion is also one of the most effective learning tools. In group discussion the students are given various topics for enhancing language skills. For example, they can be given a topic 'Social networking (Facebook, Whatsapp etc.) sites are a waste of time.' Each student of the group is expected to participate in the discussion.

⟩ **Role play**
Here also the students are divided into small groups or pairs and they are asked to play different roles such as a teacher, a doctor, a politician, a professor etc. This makes teaching learning process more interesting and exciting. The students enjoy performing.

⟩ **Quiz**
Sometimes, for the effective implementation of this course, a quiz is also organized in the classroom. The questions related to various topics such as literature, science, history, politics, religions etc. are included in the quiz. The students actively and enthusiastically participate in this activity.

⟩ **Public Speaking/Elocution/Debate**
Activities such as elocution, debate, public speaking etc. are also organized to enhance their speaking skill and to build confidence by removing their fear of using the language.
Apart from these activities many other activities such as storytelling, interview etc. are also carried out in the classroom to develop the students' proficiency in English. The use of ICT

is one of the very important features of this course. Not only the teachers but also the students use Power Point Presentations, audios, videos etc. to make teaching/learning process more interesting and effective.

It is said that we learn more when we enjoy the process of learning. The same principle works in this course also. Majority of the students really enjoy doing various activities and performing in the classroom. They are always eager and enthusiastic to participate actively in all the activities. For them learning English is now fun-tastic!

PROBLEMS/CHALLENGES

Undoubtedly the above mentioned activities are very useful for effective implementation of the course, but there is the other side of the coin also. There are some problems or challenges that the teachers face in the classroom.

› Since the result of this course/subject does not affect their final result, some students don't learn it seriously.

› The irregularity of the students in the classroom is also one of the major problems. Heterogeneous classrooms.

› Mother tongue influence also affects the learning.

› Since English is not their mother tongue, the students do not get enough exposure to use English language outside the classroom in their day to day life.

All such problems have been addressed wisely. In fact, the course has been designed keeping in mind all these challenges. The Department has made a humble attempt to meet these challenges.

CONCLUSION

Marwadi Education Foundation is the only institute in Gujarat to introduce such a unique course for its students to develop their proficiency in English. We all know that students are at the centre of the process of education. One of the most striking features of this course is all the activities/tasks are carried out by students themselves. The teacher plays the role of a facilitator only. The students are given ample opportunities and exposure to elicit their inner abilities and talent in the classroom itself. This kind of venture makes the process of learning innovative. That's why it can be opined that Communication Proficiency in English Course is for the students, of the students and by the students.

« WE LEARN more when WE ENJOY the process OF LEARNING »

JIGAR ABHANI
Department Of Communication Skills, MEFGI

INTRODUCTION

The headline "English is an associate official language" has appeared in thousands of magazines and in media in recent years. English has become an apt symbol for globalization, diversification, progress and identity. Wherever you go, there is a touch of English everywhere. There is an imperative need of learning English because it is difficult to live in the present world without knowing English. English has also become an official language as it is used as a medium of communication in all domains such as government offices, the courts, media and the most important in the academic world. For these reasons, proficiency in English language is the best applicable subject for the engineering students. Here is the highlight of some of the basic problems that are generally faced by the students and the probable solutions which can help students to learn it properly in the classrooms. These are some of the first hand experiences which I am sharing here:

PROBLEMS FACED BY STUDENTS TO ACQUIRE PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH

When we are teaching to a class which comprises both English and vernacular medium students on the one hand and intelligent and weak students on the other, it is very obvious that the teacher cannot concentrate on every single student. The grasping level of students also varies. Along with this, there can be various other reasons due to which students are unable to learn it properly. I have identified some of the problems as follows:

› Lack of Interest

The proficiency in English deals mostly with the communicative skills wherein, more involvement from the students' side is required. The students lack interest in such subjects as they think that this subject's score does not count and hence, they don't prioritize this subject. Along with this, it happens that the students belonging to English medium think that they are good enough to communicate in English and they don't show interest in learning the topics of proficiency in English.

› Fear and Hesitation

The students do have basic knowledge of the subject but sometimes they fear and hesitate to open up. The students who have studied in vernacular medium are conscious of it and they don't try to speak fearing that their fellow students might laugh at them. If at all they try and speak, on failing to express themselves, they feel being insulted.

› Inferiority Complex

As and when they enter into the professional courses, they start feeling an inferiority complex when they see their classmates who are very fluent in speaking English as well as having a good knowledge of the subject. Inferiority complex is detrimental to their growth, and unless and until they don't come out of this, they can't experience a change.

A FEW PROBABLE SOLUTIONS:

A few solutions are mentioned below which can help students to acquire proficiency in English:

› Involvement of the Students in Various Activities:

Introducing various activities in the classroom helps a lot to the students to have an involvement and interaction with the fellow classmates. This gives them a chance to come up with their views. When environment becomes interactive and friendly, they open up, take part in the activities, share their views and in the process they enjoy learning. Activities engage attention, they make students active to participate in and it is fun.

› Motivating Them with a "can do" Attitude:

The students should be motivated with "can do" attitude. Once they start believing in themselves that they "can do", half of the work is done. They should be encouraged to be interactive in the sessions. Rather than pointing out their mistakes, they should, first, be allowed and motivated to speak. Then, they might face some problems, ask some questions and through positive feedbacks by the teacher they progress.

CONCLUSION:

As we know that proficiency in English has become one of the essential parts in the students' life, they should try to learn it with full involvement and enthusiasm as well as with active participation. They should be involved more and more into activities so that they get a chance to improve day by day. This will give them a chance to be a better professional in their near future.

SNEHA PATEL
Department Of Communication Skills
MEFGI

INTRODUCTION:

In the pre-technology education situation, the instructor is the sender or the source, the instructive material is the data or message, and the understudy is the collector of the data. Regarding the conveyance medium, the teacher can convey the message by means of the "chalk-and-talk" strategy and overhead projector (OHP) transparencies. This steered guideline model has its establishments installed in the behavioral learning viewpoint and it is a prominent method, which has been utilized for quite a long time as an instructive system in all foundations of learning. Essentially, the instructor controls the instructional process, the content is conveyed to the whole class and the educator has a tendency to accentuate genuine learning.

ICT TOOLS IN TEACHING PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH:

There were two tools used such as: I-speak – a mobile application for audio recordings and a mobile phone for video recordings. 200+ audio and video recordings, in both mother tongue and English language, were done and used as a sample. A comparative study was done on aforesaid recordings.

GIGO: GARBAGE IN GARBAGE OUT

It was found that the students were not able to speak fluently on the given topics even after giving adequate time for preparation. In order to reach to the root of the problem and mentor them effectively, their voices were recorded by using I speak, an android application and later on video recording was also done. Both audio and video recordings were analyzed and shared in the respective classrooms to give them feedback and suggestions.

While analyzing the videos & audio recordings, it was clearly found that those students who are not proficient in English are lacking in mother tongue. Students fail to find the difference among language, script and dialect, and as a result of this, they had to face difficulties speaking in English. ICT tools helped students in finding the flaws by replaying the same multiple times and they could find the room for the improvement in learning English language. Further, there was a common feedback of the students that ICT tools were very useful in making the class of Communication Proficiency in English more informative and interesting.

CONCLUSION

It is firmly believed that using such ICT tools will definitely enable students in imparting Communication Proficiency in English. If the tools are used wisely by the trainers, surely they help in achieving desirable results in enhancing proficiency in English.

« **USE OF ICT TOOLS** definitely enables students in imparting communication **PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH** »

DEEPAK J. MASHRU
Department of Communication Skills, MEFGI

« ONE LANGUAGE SETS YOU IN A **CORRIDOR FOR LIFE. TWO LANGUAGES** OPEN **EVERY DOOR** ALONG THE CORRIDOR **»**

- FRANK SMITH

The quote best describes the importance of learning a second language. With globalization, English has rapidly gained the position of the international language. Learning English as a second language is tricky, as spoken language and written language differ and thus it confuses the non-native speaker. Once confused the speaker loses confidence and might not agree to speak ever again. The learners of today are far away from the traditional teaching methods. They find these methods to be old and boring. They prefer fun filled, easy and interactive methods of learning. Learners do not wish to tread on long ways, but wish a smaller, easier track to walk upon. They hope for some magic to happen, a spell or a trick or some magical potions, which in a fraction of a second would enable them to speak English spontaneously and fluently. The idea of magic and magical world itself ignites the spark and gives wings to the learner's imagination. Magic is considered to be there in believing and imagination of mind. To quote Johann Wolfgang van Goethe in this regard, "MAGIC IS BELIEVING IN YOURSELF, IF YOU CAN DO THAT, YOU CAN MAKE ANYTHING HAPPEN"

To ignite the spark in learners, we need to first persuade them to believe in themselves, to make them aware of the magic that they behold within themselves and then to allure them into maximum participation and interaction from their side. Activities and games can be used to engage the learners and help them acquire the knowledge of English easily.

Certain fun filled activities that may grab the attention of the learners as well as transform the burden of learning English into a magical experience are discussed below:

SCRABBLE

Vocabulary plays a vital role in learning of a language. If words are spelt and explained in the class, it seems monotonous and boring. If given a task to write the words five times or more to memorize them, it is burdensome. Why not try scrabble? Players are given chance to build words, either vertically, horizontally or diagonally. The rules of points can be made and clarified before the game begins. We may also refer to standard rules of the game and a standard dictionary can be used for checking the validity of the word. Scrabble is basically a board game but it can be played on whiteboard. The game enables learners to recollect technical words, especially long words. Scrabble is an amusing way of enriching the vocabulary of the learners.

HANGMAN

Hangman is a common and familiar game. The learner from one group is asked to write a word on the board, keeping gaps for the consonants in the word. The learners in the other group are given seven chances to guess the consonants in the word. If they are able to get the correct word, they are given points for the same. Then the second group gets a chance to give a word to the former. So, the game continues.
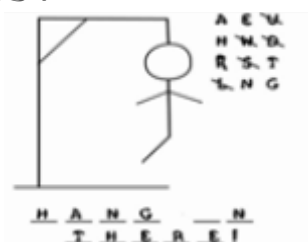
STORY WITH A TWIST

Stories paint a live picture of a person's imagination and stories with a twist rekindle the perspective of a learner. Learners are keen to tell stories as it is the best way of expressing themselves. The learners are asked to pick a strand from a well-known story. Then they are asked to add their own elements - characters, setting and maybe changing the ending of the story. This activity gives the learners a chance to recreate and reshape a story which everyone is already familiar with.

PERSONAL POCKET DICTIONARY

Language learning is a lifelong process. At times, we may come across many words that sound new and different. At this time we may not be able to remember the word immediately.
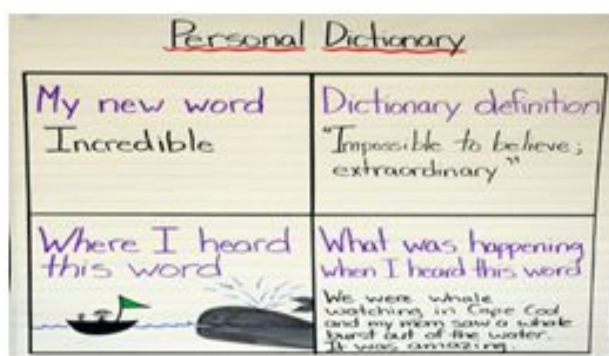
An effective way of remembering such words is to develop a personal dictionary. The pages can be divided according to the alphabets and words can be noted. This will help as a quick reference for the words that are constantly used. The learner can also note the dictionary meaning and the meaning of the word in his own mother tongue to remember it better.

ROLE PLAY

Learners are asked to enact upon a given situation. Acting is a skill which has always fascinated humans and thus this activity is a catalyst to help learners with the task of learning English in an easy manner. In initial stages, the day to day situation can be taken to give a known environment and then the learners may be asked in the later stages to come up with situations that may happen. This gives the learners a wide scope to express themselves verbally as well as non-verbally.

These are some the activities that can make teaching and learning English exciting and interesting. As the learners of today are technology oriented, there are a number of websites that offer these activities online and even android applications for the same are available. These activities were carried out in the class and proved to be a good and interactive way of enriching the knowledge of the learners.

« MAGIC IS **BELIEVING IN YOURSELF**, IF YOU CAN DO THAT, YOU CAN **MAKE ANYTHING HAPPEN** »

POOJA SHUKLA
Department of Communication Skills, MEFGI

COMMUNICATION PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH – A CHANGE MAKER

The first thought that came to my mind, when I opened up the schedule for first week of the 5th semester, was, "Why this Communication Proficiency in English (CPE) sessions are included in schedules of 5th semester?", "May be something related to grammar.", "Well, I'm so good at English. I don't need to attend these lectures regularly."

Like any other student I also thought the same. I thought to attend the lectures in the beginning and then started bunking them. Couple of lectures passed as Introduction to CPE and the next session started. The first activity began. It was to speak about our self for at least 2 minutes. I told myself, "That's damn easy for me." When we began the activity, the first guy came, spoke about three or four sentences, and went silent. Same happened with the second, then with the third and it continued. No one was able to speak for even 60 seconds about oneself.

And then it was my turn. I got up from my chair in absolute confidence (which, I later realized, was over-confidence) and started moving towards the stage. By the time I crossed three benches and reached the stage, I had already started shivering. With all the little confidence that I was left with, I started speaking, introducing myself. And all I said was my name, my home-town and my hobbies. Then I went short of sentences or rather the confidence to speak further. I came back, sat on my chair and thought, "Oh gauche! I couldn't speak just for two minutes, that too about myself, in front of the people I know well. How come is this possible??!!"

Having hosted many small functions in the school, it was disappointing for me. I thought sincerely about it and developed interest in CPE. I started to attend those sessions sincerely. (I haven't used 'seriously'). The next session was related to peer introduction, which I found quite easy for myself. It was about introducing your friend or class-mate to others. And then the sessions went on covering various topics. In my initial academic years of primary, I used to participate in speech competitions (which we term as 'Elocution' today). This is about almost 10 years back. After that I haven't prepared a speech on my own and delivered in front of people. But CPE brought me a chance to cherish that memory. Every student was supposed to choose two topics out of six, prepare a speech and deliver it. And yes. Now I did that easily. I took "Corruption – Can we end it?" as my topic and spoke quite satisfactorily.

Games are always a better way to learn things. We played a type of "passing the parcel" game, where the one who gets out, has to take a technical topic and explain it to the whole class. This activity was not only entertaining, but also a step of encouragement to those who are good at technical knowledge but were not so good at public speaking on random topics.

There were a lot other activities that can help us in future. For example, there were the various types of interview questions that were discussed in the sessions and also mock interviews were taken, where both interviewee and interviewers were students. Another activity was Guiding the Way, which was carried out to improve the communication skills. We were supposed to guide the person to his destination in the easiest manner for both persons who asked and the person who guided. That's all about my experience of CPE.

Now, when I look back at myself five months back, and the person I'm today, I can clearly figure out the difference. I'm able to express my thoughts to others easily. I'm able to speak in front of a mass easily and quite fluently in English. To a certain extent CPE sessions have improved my vocabulary also. The stage-fear that each and every person faces is definitely decreased by the activities that are carried out in the CPE sessions.

'Thanks' can't describe all the gratitude that is there in our hearts to our institute, MEF, for including such useful, interesting sessions in our schedules and also to the respective department that is taking so much of interest in conducting these sessions on a regular basis and for the development of every student.

AKASH JOSHI
Semester 5, Faculty of Technology, Department of Electrical Engineering, MEFGI

"A Language is not what you speak, it's how you behave". In this regard and world full of competition, English has been a mandatory and primary thing that any student has to be adroit with. As far as engineering field is concerned, globalization makes English the only link for efficient communication with the best engineering practices across the globe. Communication Proficiency in English (CPE) has been a very useful course to me for this cause.

Learning is a never-ending process and though being a pass out from an English-medium school, I felt it necessary to constantly add to the pot of knowledge. CPE is a course designed by the Department of Communication Skills, MEF, covering various aspects of usage of English language in day-to-day as well as professional life. It is designed and taught in three phases:

INTROSPECTION: (SELF-EXAMINATION, KNOW YOUR MERITS AND LIMITS)
Introductory sessions or session of extempore wherein a student is given a general topic and he is supposed to speak about it in front of the class for 3 minutes. At the end of these 3 minutes, the student comes to know exactly where he/she stands in his/her vocabulary, fluency in language, the amount of content and general knowledge of any day-to-day topic.

INTERACTION: (HOW TO TALK WITH A COUNTER FELLOW?)
Interaction was more or less a part of every CPE session. During sessions, the idea of two-way effect which is necessary for interconnectivity while interacting was implied. Interaction of any kind, may it be a professional interaction or peer to peer interaction were all polished in CPE sessions with various activities.

DISCUSSION: (HOW TO CONVERSE IN A GROUP?)
Discussion, the most important part of proficient communication, was practiced by students in various sessions of group discussion, debates, role-play, interview skills, etc. It is the best way to actually analyze ourselves. The understanding level, efficiency in transfer of ideas and the changes experienced and betterments required can all be examined with the help of discussions that we did in above mentioned CPE sessions.

Furthermore, in place of all obsolete board and book techniques, CPE aims at direct involvement of a candidate through two-way or mass communication. An affable faculty has been a major part for effective learning. The practical approach to teaching a language was quite successfully executed. At times, we were not directly taught anything but were guided for how to learn. Sessions of CPE being very interactive led us, the students in general, to remove stage fear and develop public speaking too. In lieu of cliché and traditional method of teaching, CPE has been taught in a very interesting manner.

The whole point here is INVOLVEMENT. The more you involve and engage yourselves in these sessions, the more you gain. The theory of "Engage deeply" taught to us in the CPD (Contributor Personality Development) session applies to the CPE. Various lessons taught in CPE classes are not only useful for language betterment, but also for various stages of personal as well as professional life. The session of 'situational conversation' was an out of the box session that helped developing critical thinking wherein a couple of candidates were given a situation and they were supposed to handle the situation being of the one characters of the story. Similar was the session of 'role play' wherein candidates were given a scenario in day-to-day life and they were supposed to perform the story further. Learning with fun absolutely! Later, sessions on Group-Discussion, Personal Interview, Pronunciations, etc. were of core use.

Summing up, in my opinion I would say, it is hard to undergo progress nowadays without an efficient and effective communication with different people and again it is inevitable to execute the same without English language. In my opinion, any student who gets involved and interacts in all 30 sessions of CPE course will definitely get fluent or at least better with his English usage that includes speaking, listening, group discussions and even interview skills. Thus, he/she will be able to remove English as his area of improvement and start pursuing prowess on it. Looking forward to have level-2 of CPE.

HARSH PATEL
Semester-7, Faculty of Technology, Department of Mechanical Engineering, MEFGI

INTRODUCTION:

The shift from English as a 'subject' to be passed in the examination to English as the 'skill' to be developed is not only significant but a 21st century mandate. When institutes providing tertiary education bypass language skills, students as employees suffer by getting rejected in an MNC interview due to poor proficiency in English language. Even country's top-notch policy body, Planning Commission's Approach Paper to the Twelfth Five Year Plan says: Special emphasis on verbal and written communication skills, especially in English would go a long way in improving the employability of the large and growing mass of disempowered youth" (101). In this regard, it must be borne in the mind that English is a survival tool for access and participation in the progressive world.

ACTION PLAN FOR PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH FOR MEF STUDENTS:

In view of all the issues stated above, what is the way out? The way out is Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) which has evolved after years of research and has been accepted worldwide. It provides clear-cut benchmarking of levels and functions that a user is able to perform while on a certain level. Communication Proficiency in English (CPE hereafter) course is a customized version of A1 and A2 levels of Common European Framework of Reference.

In order to render MEF students proficient in English, we have initiated the course on Communication Proficiency in English for the 3rd, 5th and 7th semester students of all the branches from June to October 2014.

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN CPE:

The curriculum is designed by keeping in mind following CAN DO statements of A1 and A1 levels: (The User) Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. (The User) Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. (The User) Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

30 sessions were designed as per the descriptors mentioned above. Each session was designed by keeping in mind one hour of time duration. All the topics are based on the language functions an average user is required to perform to effectively communicate in English.

LEVEL 1 (INCLUSIVE OF A1 AND A2): FLOW OF THE SESSION

FLOW	DETAILS
Learning Outcome	Learners are explained significance of the concept/language function in professional life.
Introduction	Very briefly, the topic is introduced.
Video	A short video (less than 5 minutes) is screened for the further orientation and discussion of the concept.
Structurally Speaking	Learners are made aware of necessary grammatical structure relevant to the topics but focus is more on the function.
Examples	Examples in the form of dialogues and conversations are given to the students.
Useful Expressions	Apart from structural accuracy, learners are provided with some useful expressions (used in the professional world) as per the topics.
Speaking tasks	After discussion the above mentioned units, various speaking tasks are given to the students which function as simulations to actual life situations. These speaking tasks cover maximum time of the session followed by the feedback on individual students.

COMMUNICATION PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH: A CASE STUDY

ACTIVITIES IN FOCUS

| PEDAGOGICAL RATIONALE	SESSIONS/ACTIVITIES SPEAKING TASKS
INTROSPECTION	How to answer difficult questions? Discover your unique way of communication
INTERACTION	Answering Interview Questions Interacting with Peers/Colleagues
DISCUSSION	Group Discussion for Effective Communication Expressing Oneself as per Need and Purpose

DATA ANALYSIS:

60 subjects (from all the semesters and branches) were given a questionnaire to be filled up. There were 10 question items in the questionnaire covering: (a) 1-5 structured MCQ questions and (b) 6-10 free questions wherein they were supposed to write hands-on experience and utility of CPE for employability.
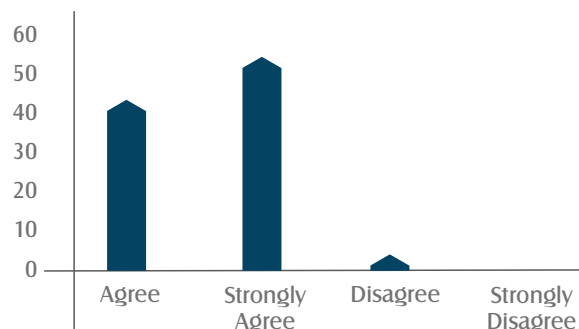
COMMUNICATION PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH COURSE POLISHES ONE'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS.
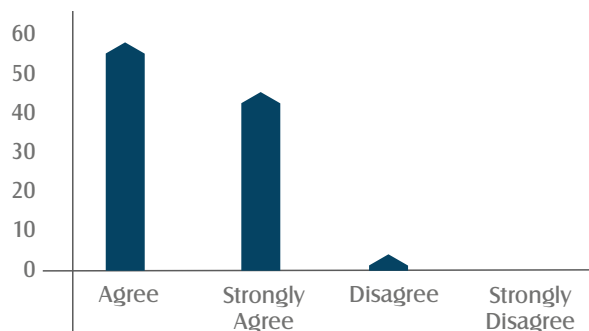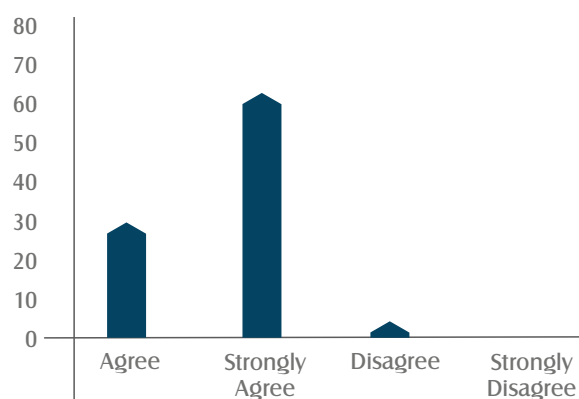

EVERYONE GETS CHANCE TO COMMUNICATE HIS/HER IDEAS IN ENGLISH IN CPE SESSIONS.
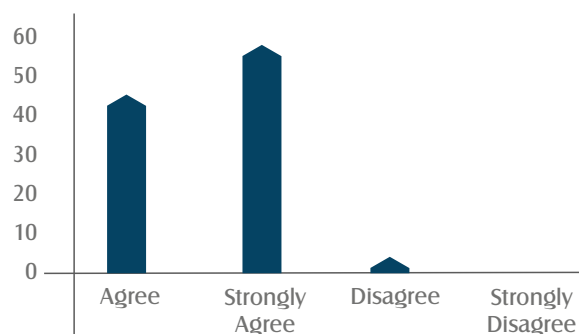
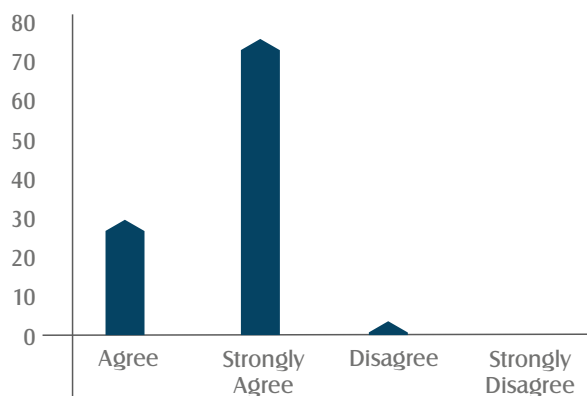## THE COURSE GOES BEYOND TRADITIONAL GRAMMAR LECTURES.

CPE TEACHES ENGLISH WHICH IS ACTUALLY NEEDED IN THE PROFESSIONAL LIFE.

COMMUNICATION PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH: A CASE STUDY

CPE LECTURES ARE EXTREMELY INTERACTIVE AND ACTIVITY BASED PRACTICAL SESSIONS.

Bar chart: Agree ≈ 28, Strongly Agree ≈ 73, Disagree ≈ 2, Strongly Disagree ≈ 0 (y-axis 0–80)

FOLLOWING ARE THE SELECT RESPONSES OF THE FREE-QUESTIONS (6-10):

I find CPE useful because..,
It helps us in improving English Grammar and Pronunciation. It also makes the students confident, active towards surrounding by doing activities like Speaking about City, Public Speaking, Speaking on Current Affairs etc.
Milan Kalola, Semester-7, Department of Electrical Engineering, FOT, MEF

Activities conducted in CPE are effective for example..,
Group Discussion, Situational talk, Speaking about Hometown.
Tanvir Khorajiya, Semester-7, Department of Mechanical Engineering, FOT, MEF

My confidence of speaking in English has increased because...,
It gives me chance to overcome my fear of speaking in front of my classmates.
Priyanka Doshi, Semester-3, Department of Computer Engineering, FOE, MEF

I am able to express myself in English more effectively because..,
In CPE sessions, many activities are done like how to express our thoughts in front of people and how to talk in English.
Mahek Chag, Semester-7, Department Civil Engineering, FOT, MEF

I feel CPE is useful for employability for three reasons:
A. It is useful in group discussion
B. It is useful in personal interviews also
C. It reduces our stage fear of speaking
Kaushik Santoki, Semester-7, Department of Electrical Engineering, FOT, MEF

FINDINGS:
The findings this case study revealing following aspects:
⟩ Classroom delivery has been very effective
⟩ Students found the course extremely useful
⟩ Classroom activities are well defined and executed
⟩ Students could find English in direct connection to employability
⟩ The course has been successful in increasing students involvement & confidence
⟩ CPE has been able to impart important skills like Public Speaking, Facing Interviews, Group Discussion etc.

CONCLUSION:
Communication Proficiency in English Course (Level 1) as a first attempt of its own kind in the technical education has marked a significant beginning in terms of pedagogically authentic method of teaching English. The course has potential to transform the way English is being taught to Engineering Students in Gujarat. The students' responses in this case study, and in the classrooms, have clearly suggested that CPE is exclusively student-centric and activity-based course. Level-2 is going to be the next stage of what the Department of Communication Skills could achieve in the execution of CPE level-1.

VISHAL BHADANI
Department of Communication Skill, MEFGI

DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES

&

FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

› **SAMVAD – A FACULTY FORUM**

Can proficiency in English be imparted?
Samvad - A unique venture of the Department of Communication Skills, MEF is a platform where discussions regarding various issues and aspects of pedagogy can take place with active participation of the attendees. One such issue "Can proficiency in English be imparted?" was addressed on 1st October at MEF campus. Following were the eminent faculties of the Department who addressed the above mentioned issue as panelists of the session:

Mr. Vishal Bhadani,
Department of Communication Skills MEFGI
Ms. Krishna Parikh,
Department of Communication Skills MEFGI
Mr. Deepak Mashru,
Department of Communication Skills MEFGI

The session commenced with the panelists' views on the subject and followed by a Panel Discussion. It was then declared open for Q&A session, where the audience expressed their views and presented some of the issues they regularly face in the classrooms. The panelists tried to answer all the questions in the best possible manner.

The panelists deliberated upon the use of technology in the classrooms, such as language software, mobile apps, video recording of the students' presentations along others with their pros and cons. The panelists also discoursed the political correctness of 'Proficiency in English'. Two levels of awareness: i.e. awareness of the student and awareness of the teacher were defined and its relevance was gauged. Seeing the multiplicity of interpretation and application of Communication Proficiency in English course, an orientation workshop for same was agreed upon.

At the end Dr. Sunil Sagar, head of the Department gave his valuable insights and motivated the faculties to work in collaboration. The session ended with a vote of thanks by Mr.

› Rushiraj Waghela, Coordinator of Faculty Forum.

Presentation of Research Pursuit:

A research is an integral part of higher education which defines one's position in academic world. Samvad provides a platform to the teachers to present and discuss their research among academicians, scholars and fellow researchers. The first presentation of Research Pursuit under Samvad took place on 29th October, 2014. Ms. Pooja Shukla, Pro-Term Assistant Professor, Department of

Communication Skills, presented her doctoral research in progress on T.S Eliot's Murder in the Cathedral: A Rasa Perspective. The speaker initiated her talk by introducing Rasa Theory expounded by Bharatmuni in his treatise Natyashastra and its place in Indian Poetics. To add to the presentation Rasa Box Experiment was performed by the speaker which was followed by an Open House Discussion. This session proved to be a booster for genuine research which is a prerequisite for a good teacher. The session ended with valuable insights and suggestions by Dr. Sunil Sagar, Head, Department of Communication Skills.

AN ORIENTATION WORKSHOP ON CPE

The Department of Communication Skills, MEF, organized an orientation workshop on CPE (Communication Proficiency in English), a course for engineering students on 11th October, 2014. As agreed upon on 1st October, 2014 at the Faculty Forum, the workshop was

conducted to identify, clarify, verify and rectify the issues involved in the effective execution of

CPE. It was commenced with a Power Point Presentation by Mr. Mihir Dave, Assistant Professor, Department of Communication Skills, MEF. He talked about the conception, creation and execution of CPE course. He also shared his experiences of being a teacher of CPE course. It was then followed by Q & A. The faculty members of the department expressed their views and presented some of the issues faced in the classroom. Mainly, following questions were addressed in the workshop.

> What are the issues involved in the effective execution of CPE course?
> What should be done and what should be avoided in the classroom?
> What kind of activities can be/should be carried out in the classroom?
> How can students be motivated to participate in the activities?
> What kind of modifications are needed to make this course student centric rather than teacher centric?
> How can teachers work collectively to make this

course more effective and fruitful?

At the end, Dr. Sunil Sagar, Head of the Department, summed up with his valuable insights and suggestions. He motivated the faculty members to work with positive frame of mind and also provided the possible solutions for some of the issues related to CPE. The workshop ended with a general consensus among the faculty members about the need for collective efforts for effective and successful execution of CPE course.

« HOW CAN TEACHERS WORK collectively to make this **course more** **EFFECTIVE AND FRUITFUL? »**

Department's Facebook Page: A User-friendly, Promising And Learning Platform

Facebook is one of the most used social media among the youth all over the world. Understanding the pulse of 21st century students and their association with social networking sites such as facebook, the Department of Communication Skills at Marwadi Education Foundation, launched a facebook page in the year 2013. The page was created, with a belief of engaging students in a space where they feel comfortable and offering yet another platform to facilitate ELT and various communicative skills so that the learning outcomes would improve.

In the year 2014 the page "likes" has increased from 1000 to 2500+. This upsurge in figure displays in bold that when the mentors and mentees find a common platform, in this case facebook interaction becomes not only easier and meaningful but also more willing.

With change in time new methods should be embraced. Learning - relearning being part of the process. In 20 years, the Internet has changed nearly every aspect of our lives. Education needs to catch up. Education should be progressive. A new culture of learning is emerging where students have direct access to information-rich resources. Facebook can do much in this regard. Leveraging the power of facebook to work with students makes sense.

The journey has just begun – join us now to make education more social.

Link of CS Page:
www.facebook.com/cs.mefgi

The Blog of CS Department:

The 21st century is the era of technology. The use of educational technology has grown in theory and practice. Educational technology has taken on a new meaning through the changing nature of our workplace. To cope with today's scenario, the Department of Communication Skills, MEF has started a Communication Skills Department Blog, 10th October, 2013, with a vision to expose and engage teachers and students with English Language enrichment through advanced technology. The Departmental Blog has successfully completed one year. At present, it blossoms day by day by the relevant contribution of the learned faculties of the Department. It is a collective effort with a vision to inculcate English Language among the learners.

From education cartoons to games for teaching conversation skills, from importance of research to contribution of literature in communication, through such various creative posts the blog is laden with ELT and communication skills resources. Since the Departmental Blog's vision is to enrich English Language, it enriches teachers' efficiency too in their teachings. With more than two hundred and fifty various posts published on the blog, it is hope that it will be groomed more and more by its relevant posts in the coming days and become the most essential educational tool in enhancing Communication Skills.

Link of Blog:
www.csmefgi.blogspot.in

FRENCH LANGUAGE COURSE

After the successful completion of Spanish Language Course, the Department of Communication Skills offered the basic level course in French Language to the MEF students. The facilitator appointed, Ms. Ester Castro, a French Language trainer from SNK School, conducted 10 sessions. Ms. Anuradha, a trainer from SNK School, has been conducting the rest of the sessions. The Course is decided to be of 40 sessions (Each session of 1.5 hours). In total 15 students registered for the course. The course started on 31th January, 2014 and is at the verge of completion. It will be followed by Course End Evaluation and Certification.

SCOPE QUESTION BANK

The Department of Communication Skills was assigned the task of preparing the question bank for language evaluation by SCOPE (Society for Creating Opportunity through Proficiency in English), an initiative of Government of Gujarat. The questions were expected to be based on the Level – 1 of Common European Framework. In total 2400 MCQ type questions were prepared by the faculty members of the Department.

GATE CLASSES

English language plays a vital role in almost all the competitive exams. The students of our region fail in these exams mainly due to lack of English language proficiency. Keeping in mind this deficiency, MEF has initiated GATE coaching classes at the campus. Mr. Vishal Bhadani, Assistant Professor, Department of Communication Skills has been assigned the task of coaching the verbal aptitude to 7th and 5th semester students since August, 2014. He has also prepared the learning material for the same.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG) ACTIVITIES

Marwadi Education Foundation has been facilitating the activities that enhance the integral development of the students in all phases of life. Special Interest Groups (SIG) of the first semester hostel students are formed for the said purpose. SIG students' activities are organized at a regular intervals for various subjects. On October 8, 2014, a workshop was held for SIG - 1. Considering Effective Public Speaking as one of the most significant skills that students are required to

develop for the professional development, a special workshop was designed and imparted by Mr. Vishal Bhadani, Assistant Professor, the Department of Communication Skills, among the group of SIG students. The workshop included theoretical discussion, language and structure, video as a case study, fighting fear and engaging audience, simulation: two minutes' public speaking tasks and feedback session. The second session of the SIG was conducted on October 13, 2014. A good vocabulary is an asset to the overall communication skills as well as a great help in cracking competitive exams. It is in this regard that students were engaged for learning how to build vocabulary smartly and rapidly. The interactive session included types of vocabulary, context clues: synonyms and antonyms, word parts: prefix, suffix and basic etymological study of words, what and how to read, preparing vocabulary cards, using technology for vocabulary building: mobile apps and blogs. These activities proved to be of a great help to the students in enhancing their communicative skills.

« **MARWADI EDUCATION FOUNDATION** has been **facilitating the activities** that enhance the integral development of the **STUDENTS IN ALL PHASES OF LIFE** »

BOOK PUBLICATION

Mr. Deepak Mashru, Assistant Professor, Department of Communication Skills, published two books viz. Management 2 and Engineering Economics and Management co-authored by Ms. Amee Parekh and Mr. Arshey Shah.

ANDROID APPLICATIONS LAUNCHED

I Speak

Mr. Deepak Mashru launched a mobile application I Speak on July 24, 2014 which is useful in enhancing the speaking skill along with self-

assessment. It covers words & phrases, common questions and topics related to IELTS and TOEFL speaking section. Further, one can practice for most commonly asked interview questions too. It has a very simple and user-friendly interface.

Everyday English

Another mobile application launched by Mr. Deepak Mashru on August 5, 2014 is Everyday English. It works on the concept of Read, Remember and Speak which can help to enhance competency in the English/Gujarati/Hindi languages by just sparing some minutes of the day. It consists of words and phrases of day to day life, idioms and proverbs followed by practice tests. Internet connection is not required for both the applications.

RECORDS FROM WORLD RECORDS INDIA, WORLD AMAZING RECORDS & INDIA BOOK OF RECORDS

Mr. Deepak Mashru was the coordinator and instrumental in making these records possible. The list of the same is as under.

> Maximum People taking Oath on the Environment Day
> Maximum People wearing tie together to Support Environment.
> Maximum People writing Essays together
> Longest Rangoli on the theme of Patriotism & Unity of Religions
> Maximum People participated in the Tiger Jump simultaneously
> Maximum People played Musical Chair together

PAPERS PUBLISHED

A paper titled Images and Representation of Women in Literature: A Perspective by Dr. Sunil Sagar, Head, Department of Communication Skills, was published in Research Scholar, an International Refereed e-Journal, Vol. II Issue 3 in August 2014.

Western Siddhartha in Indian Wrapper, a paper by Mr. Vishal Bhadani, an Assistant Professor in Communication skills was published in a multilingual journal Sahitya Vithika.

STORY PUBLISHED

Mr. Vishal Bhadani's story entitled as "Boroplusnu Sammaiyu" is published in the special Diwali issue of Mamta - Magazine of Gujarati short stories, edited by Madhurai.

JUDGED NATIONAL LEVEL PAPER READING COMPETITION
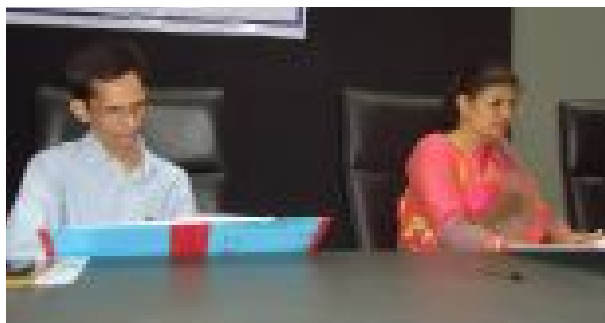
Dr. Sunil Sagar, Head, Department of Communication Skills, served as a judge at national Paper Reading Competition for MA students organized by and held at Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies, Saurashtra University, Rajkot, during September 26-27, 2014.

EXPERT TALK DELIVERED

Mr. Vishal Bhadani delivered an expert lecture on Creative Writing at the Department of English, Christ College, Rajkot on July 12, 2014.

Dr. Sunil Sagar, Head, Department of Communication Skills, delivered an Expert Talk on Innovation and Personality Development at LE College, Morbi, on August 02, 2014.

Mr. Deepak Mashru delivered a lecture on "Effective

Communication Skills" to the staff members of C. U. Shah University on May 16, 2014 and a motivational lecture delivered to the students of ICAI Jamnagar Branch on August 3, 2014.

PRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION

› Dr. Sunil Sagar, Head, Department of Communication Skills participated in a workshop on "Building a Model for World Class Institutions in India" organized by PDPU, Gandhinagar, and held on May 14, 2014

› Mr. Vishal Bhadani and Mr. Mihir Dave participated in a seminar on Darshak Sahitya Aachaman organized by Lokbharati Sanosara, on July 27, 2014.

› Ms. Sneha Patel presented a paper on Use of handheld devices and mobile gadgets in class rooms and its effect on students' learning in UGC sponsored National Seminar on "Use of Computer and Internet: Sociological and Educational Analysis" organized by Shri J. M. Panara Arts, Commerce and Computer Science College, Manavadar in July, 2014.

› Ms Sneha Patel also presented a paper on Teaching English to the Students Who Prefer Regional Language as a Medium in 9th International and 45th Annual Conference organized by ELT@I on "English-From Classes to Masses" held at Vivekananda Global University, Jaipur, Rajasthan in August, 2014.

› Mr. Vishal Bhadani and Mr. Mihir Dave attended a Workshop on Developing Question Items organized by SCOPE, Ahmedabad on July 19, 2014.

THANK YOU

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