

## English Conversation Courses and its impact on Learner's Development: A study of English coaching centers in Jaipur

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### Introduction:

The world today is very competitive, where only fittest is to survive and English language plays a pivotal role in a professional's life. India is a land of diversity and English serves the role of a connector among this variedness in terms of language and culture. It has become a major medium of education in almost all schools and colleges, if not every. Additionally, English today, has also become the medium of communication in every system whether its judiciary, government, constitution, and economy. With the world becoming a global village, the nation feel compelled to stay linked and connected for trade and interaction. For linking, connecting and trading with each other, English is the only language which is spoken/ understood in most of the countries. With the shrinking of the world and our economy becoming global, competence is the only criteria for the recognition of an individual. One of the pre- requisites for being the fittest in the fast moving world is the communication skills of an individual. And English being an international language has become the only language of communication on the global level.

"The English language in all an advanced and flexible one and its teaching should not be discarded altogether. Indian cannot afford to ignore this language". -Dr. Rajendra Prasad

Time and again fingers are pointed out towards the significance of different English speaking courses. We can see a plethora of courses running at various places. In order to find out the significance of these courses, a study was formulated with the following objectives.

- To find out the correlation of English conversation course in relation to the confidence level of the learners.
- To investigate the significance of various aspects of the course.
- To discover the effectiveness of English conversation course in relation to the interactive skill of the learners.
- To probe the impact of such course in relation to the body language of the learners.
- To know the worth of English conversation class in relation to personality development of the learners.
- To identify the effectiveness of this course in relation to the vocabulary of the learners.
- To discover the correlation of this course with the pronunciation of the learners.

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- To investigate the significance of the course in relation to the improvement in Grammar of the learners.

**Hypothesis:** English Conversation Courses are significant in the all- round development of learners.

**Limitations:**

- The study aims only at those who had been attending the English conversation course
- The survey was confined to only coaching centers in Jaipur.
- Due to financial constraints, the study could be limited to 2-3 coaching centers only.
- Due to time constraints, the study could only cover up 60 students.
- Hence there is further scope to expand this work by comparing it with more English coaching centers at other places.

**Methodology:** Locale of study: Jaipur

Tools continued: 5 questions based on confidence, personality development and pronunciation were made. 2 questions were related to grammar and vocabulary, 7 questions were related to the interactive skills as this category required more emphasis in such a course, and 4 questions were based on body language.

**Sample size:** The sample size in this survey is 60 students at different coaching centers.

**Tool:** The tool used for this survey was a self- structured questionnaire consisting of 30 items regarding personality development, Interactive Skill, Body language, Vocabulary, Grammar, Pronunciation and Confidence level of the learners.

**Method of study:** The pre-test was conducted at the beginning of the course. After 3 months, the same test was applied as the post test, with the same questionnaire. The method being followed for this study was statistical method. For the pre and post testing of different parameters, a survey was conducted by the researcher. For the statistical analysis of the results, Mean, SD, SED, T were derived.

**Results and Discussions**

**I. INTERACTIVE SKILLS:**

**Table 1:** Ability to initiate conversations

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	t	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
296	409	5.01	6.93	1.92	1.65	1.36	0.27	-7.074	Significant

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**Table 2:** Promptness in replying

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	t	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
299	374	5.06	6.33	1.27	1.90	2.10	0.36	3.53	Significant

**Table 3:** Ability to express your own talent and knowledge in a group discussion

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	t	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
299	374	5.06	6.33	1.27	1.90	2.10	0.36	3.53	Significant

**Table 4:** Ability to continue in a discussion

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	t	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
290	376	4.91	6.37	1.46	1.87	1.42	0.3	4.87	Significant

**Table 5:** Presence of mind

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	t	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
326	407	5.52	6.89	1.37	1.99	1.46	0.31	4.42	Significant

**Table 6:** Certainty in responding

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	t	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
308	382	5.22	6.47	1.25	1.64	1.20	0.24	5.21	Significant

**Table 7:** Ability to come up as a leader during discussion

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	t	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
289	364	4.89	6.16	1.27	1.92	1.54	0.31	4.09	Significant

A great deal of change is noticed in the interactive skills of the learners including promptness in replying, ability to express their knowledge in a group discussion, ability to continue in a discussion, presence of mind, certainty in responding, ability to come up as a leader during discussion. The shift is towards the positive side. It ranges from 1.25 to 1.191.

## II. CONFIDENCE LEVEL:

**Table 1:** Level of confidence

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	t	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
309	625	5.23	10.59	5.36	1.79	1.48	0.3	17.83	Significant

**Table 2:** Fear of audience while speaking in a group of more than 5 persons

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	t	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
287	337	4.86	5.79	0.93	2.31	2.33	6.42	2.21	Significant

**Table 3:** Level of Nervousness

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	t	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
264	270	4.47	6.44	1.97	1.97	2.78	0.43	0.23	Significant

**Table 4:** Level of anxiety while putting up your best

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	t	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
291	332	4.93	5.62	0.69	1.86	2.04	0.34	2.03	Significant

**Table 5:** Promptness in action after assessing the situation

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
311	381	5.27	6.45	1.18	1.90	1.53	0.31	3.81	Significant

**Result:** A considerable and noticeable change has been evident in the confidence level of the learners. The result of the pre- test and post- test point out at remarkably positive change in their level of confidence. It ranges from 0.1 to 5.35

### III. PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT:

**Table 1:** Attitude towards life:

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
376	430	6.37	7.28	0.91	1.94	1.66	0.33	2.76	Significant

**Table 2:** Performance rate

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
290	380	4.91	6.44	1.53	1.75	1.59	0.3	5.1	Significant

**Table 3:** Ability to cope with defeat and failure

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
305	391	5.16	6.62	1.46	1.95	1.67	0.33	4.42	Significant

**Table 4:** Explicitness in expressing your state of mind

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
302	396	5.40	6.71	1.31	1.96	1.53	6.42	0.31	Significant

**Result:** There has been a good deal of positive orientation regarding the personality development of learners. It ranges from a mean of 0.91 to 1.53 and it is a fairly good direction.

#### IV. BODY LANGUAGE:

**Table 1:** Clarity of voice

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
317	400	5.37	6.77	1.4	2.15	1.44	0.33	4.24	Significant

**Table 2: Eye Contact**

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
350	437	5.93	7.40	1.47	1.95	1.26	0.3	4.9	Significant

**Table 3: Effectiveness of facial expressions**

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
327	414	5.54	7.01	1.47	1.73	1.25	0.28	5.25	Significant

**Table 4: Ability to express your confidence through body language**

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
307	399	5.20	6.76	1.56	1.96	1.34	0.3	3.2	Significant

Result: In the category of body language, the most affected area is the ability of learners to express their confidence through body language. Eye contact, facial expressions and gestures were also found to be changed with a positive note.

## V. PRONUNCIATION:

**Table 1: Pronunciation**

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
307	413	5.20	7	1.8	1.73	1.44	0.28	6.43	Significant

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**Table 2:** Ability to stress a word according to the context

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
273	344	4.63	5.83	1.2	1.91	1.91	0.34	3.53	Significant

**Table 3:** Ability to modulate your voice according to situations

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
310	386	5.25	6.54	1.29	1.80	1.41	0.28	4.61	Significant

**Table 4:** Effectiveness of speech

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
294	381	4.98	6.45	-1.47	2.09	1.51	0.33	4.45	Significant

**Table 5:** Fluency

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
258	357	4.37	6.05	-1.68	2.13	1.89	0.36	4.66	Significant

As far as the learner's ability to stress a word according to the context, ability to modulate their voice according to situations, effectiveness of speech, fluency and pronunciation was concerned, the graph of change reflected a positive change. It ranges from a mean of 1.2 to 1.8 and it is fairly significant change.



**VI. GRAMMAR:**

**Table 1:** Proficiency in grammar

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
304	374	5.15	6.33	1.18	1.67	1.49	0.28	4.21	Significant

**Table 2:** ability to use correct punctuation

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
291	370	4.93	6.27	1.34	1.75	1.42	0.28	4.78	Significant

**VII. VOCABULARY:**

**Table 1:** Ability to use a word in various situations

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
288	369	4.88	6.25	-1.37	1.74	1.62	0.3	4.56	Significant

**Table 2:** Vocabulary

Raw Score	Raw Score	Mean	Mean	M2-M1	SD	SD	SED	T	Significant or Insignificant
Pre	Post	M1	M2		Pre	Post			
285	358	4.83	6.06	-1.23	1.75	1.31	0.28	4.39	Significant

As far as the learners' vocabulary was considered, some amount of positive change was revealed in this area as well.

## Conclusion:

To sum it up, it can be said that the English speaking courses running at the centers in Jaipur proved to be significant in all the aspects related to learners' overall personality development. But the same can be enhancing further by bringing in innovation in the pedagogical process. On the basis of these findings, this paper proposes some improvements in the area of teaching and particularly the exercises conducted in an English course classroom.

Learning English as a second language is not just a one hour a day/ 3 hours a week conversation skills proposition, but it is an everyday lifelong learning process. Teachers are highly qualified people, often with years of experience in teaching English as a foreign language. Far from ignoring or diminishing their skills, direct English invites them to raise to the challenge of truly creative work- the sort of thing they are often prevented from doing in the conventional classroom because so much of their time is devoted to mundane matters like making sure you use the right parts of irregular verb.

We struggle desperately to find out ways to carve our square peg students to make them fit into educational round holes rather than carefully considering and analyzing our students and designing square holes into which they may fit. This must underlie our attempts to improve the quality of English conversation skill education in our classes.

A good teacher needs to discover the button to press that will encourage individuals to be interested, independent thinkers. While performing the activities the teacher must connect to each student individually but at the same time, he/she must also establish among them a team feeling.

Expectations from English Conversation Class

- Increase fluency
- Develop conversation strength
- Pronunciation drills
- Confront your weakness
- Discuss current events

The main barrier to student communication is not the student ability of their knowledge of syntax, grammar or vocabulary but their facility with dealing with spontaneous language problems and lack of sufficient exposure to this language.

Students may know everything they need to deal with a specific communication situation but because they do not practice with them, so they may fail to communicate even though most of the learners have been studying English language for a very long time. The problem is that they may have rehearsed dialogues and memorized entire list of vocabulary but when they are faced with an unrehearsed language need, they may simply panic and freeze. It has been specifically observed that many students in India attend these classes for 10- 12 years and become extremely intelligent in grammar and syntax but when it comes to expressing in a particular situation, they tend to fumble and start feeling the choke in their throat. The prime reason for this is the lack of exposure for these learners. They do not get enough opportunities to practice these concepts in real life. A significant example to highlight this case could be the case of young people from different backgrounds working for an international BPO/ Call center. It is quite strange that many of these people may not be technically very sound in English grammar or syntax, however, the regular 8-9 hours of exposure in English speaking setting makes them learn the language quickly and efficiently. Majority of them learn to speak English so well that within six months of joining the BPO, it becomes difficult to ascertain whether that person ever had any problem in English speaking. Another anecdotal example of the same may be

students from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The students of UP Board/ Bihar board are found to be comparatively sounder in grammatical awareness of English language. They know the rules so well that a native speaker may also not be aware of. However, when it comes to using those syntactical structures for creating meaningful sentences, they bomb terribly. The prime reason for their failure is the lack of environment/ setting / exposure to English speaking situations. Hence, to remedy this situation, the onus depends on English language teachers to think of new innovative mechanisms where the learners could be actively engaged more and more for better English language learning.

The learners of English language can be trained through the use of various interesting communication activities from real life situations. Any language has got four important aspects.

- Listening Skills
- Speaking Skills
- Reading Skills
- Writing Skills

Listening seems to be simple, but is actually quite tricky. Many people claim to be a good listener, however, when it comes to putting their listening ability to test, majority of them fail. Reason being, maximum number of times, majority of us are hearing, not listening. Hearing is a physical activity that is involuntary in nature whereas Listening is a mental activity and it is a voluntary act. Listening requires physical, mental presence of the person and his undivided attention. For being an effective speaker in a particular language listening is extremely pivotal and is equally a challenging skill to teach. The most effective way to teach/ impart listening skills could be through several activities and games. A few activities and games could be:

- Toss the ball followed by feedback
- Chinese whispers
- Role play situations
- My story in my own words
- Connecting the link
- Using English movies and motivational ted talks and giving fill in the blanks, vocabulary/ match the following exercises based on that

Effective listening makes it easy for a learner to acquire a second language. English speaking today is demanded as a very quintessential skill for anyone who wishes to succeed in professional life. With the disintegration of the Nation's boundary wall, more and more MNCs and International organizations have set up their work stations in India. This has created huge opportunities for people with knowledge in the desired area and effective English speaking skills. The survey conducted for this paper clearly states some improvement in the students aiming to acquire second language English. Many students felt the lack of personal attention and equal speaking opportunity due to which the language learning pace is quite slow. Sometimes it takes more than a year; still the student struggles to articulate 3-5 sentences at a stretch. To resolve this issue and enable learners to learn to speak English confidently, several activities can prove to be handy for teachers in this case.

- Role play activities based on day to day life situations, Going to the Market, Buying a movie ticket, Requesting the teacher to extend the deadline of assignment submission, Visiting a relative's place, discussing something with family, Meeting friends at a get together, etc.

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- Movie paraphrasing A few good films like Paddington; Life is beautiful, To Sir with Love, Pursuit of Happiness. The students can be asked to listen, take notes, paraphrase and present in front of class.
- Simple and funny Extempore topics like One day I get up to see my hair turned white and teeth turned black, A day without electricity, Parents are demanding on their children, My reading habits, Books or Internet, Light travels faster than sound; some people look brighter before they speak, Unemployment- its remedies, How I choose my friends, Favorite business personality, Pride and prejudice spoil relationship, Favorite author, Benefits women think of being a man, The day Facebook no longer rules the world, How to be a perfect lady and gentleman, How to impress people, Nervousness/ Speech anxiety, Mobile phones should be banned in classroom, Saving money, Five things I have learnt from life, Cycle- the best mode of transport, “I...”, Good manners are important, There are better clothes than torn denim jeans, etc.
- Using ten minutes motivating Ted Talks or using Campus debates on current issues from Rajya Sabha TV to stir the thought process of learners and conducting a discussion after that. Some good ted talks are by Arunima Sinha, Anand Kumar, Kiran Bedi, Campus Debate- Social Media, Jaipur(Rajya Sabha TV).
- My story in my own words activity: Everyone likes to be heard and loves to talk when he/she is certain that people will listen to them patiently. This activity proves to be a trendsetter when it comes to removing inhibition from within the learners and motivating them to talk. 99% students find it interesting and enticing as this activity does not compel them to put any piece of information through cramming and regurgitating further. The learners feel very thrilled and excited to talk without fear.
- Complete the sentence activity: It is a simple and fun filled activity. It not only helps students to remove their inhibition, but also helps them to think on the spot and articulate. The focus of this activity, initially, should not lie in helping the learners being grammatically correct, instead, the learners should be encouraged to just speak their heart out. Initially the teacher may notice fumbles here and there, searching/ stuck for words, however, once the learners are able to overcome their fear, then the teacher can start telling them the correct grammatical rules.
- Perceive the Picture Activity: A picture may be shown to a group of learners and they can be asked to discuss their interpretations within the team. The teacher should encourage the learners to take down some brief notes of their understanding so that the notes may come to the rescue of learners at the time of speaking if they fumble. Initially simple pictures may be used and as the session progresses, the difficulty level may also be increased.

**Reading:** Students do not like to read much these days. Reading is an important skills and ignoring it can have severe repercussions in the process of language acquisition. It directly impacts the ability of speaking. Reading provides information in an easy and entertaining way. Many a times, students are not able to speak in English due to lack of proper thoughts. Reading helps to develop deeper insights about a particular topic and hence enhances the speaking ability. While reading a particular book, students can make use of SQ3R and KWL strategy which will enable them to read a book quickly with improved comprehension.

**Writing:** These days proper/ formal writing has taken a back seat because of the rise of social media. Students like to spend 1-6 hours daily on internet for chatting and connecting with people. A specific set of lingo has been created for the online users keeping their convenience in mind where they can just type in a

letter or two and the word automatically pops up automatically fits in to complete a particular expression. This prevents the students from retaining the correct word and their spellings which in turn lead do unavoidable writing disasters. To avoid this, the trainers at various English coaching centres can use some of these activities and see a significant improvement in students with regular practice.

- Word Chunks exercise: Success, Youth, Strength, Failures, Optimism/ Pessimism, If you think you can, or you think you can't, you are right, Determination & Grit, Goal, Pulled down, Don't Succumb, Self- Motivation & Passion, Strength & Weakness. The students can be asked to develop a paragraph on the basis of word chunks given above. To make it more exciting and fun-filled, a time limit like 3-5 minutes can be allotted for the activity. This may set a perfect tone for any writing session.
- Para Puzzle: A paragraph on any topic can be used for this activity. Each sentence should be written in separate lines. Cut every sentence of the paragraph, jumble them up and secure all the strips of sentences in an envelope. The students may be asked to take out all the strips of sentences and arrange coherently in proper order. This works amazingly wonderful and the students also enjoy. To make it more fun filled, attach a time limit to the activity.

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