

BARRIERS OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

T. Chandra Kumar

Thiagarajar College, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract

Any form of communication, including sign language and brail used by people with speech difficulties, requires linguistic ability. In circumstances when language barriers exist, communication might be challenging. A language barrier to communication is the inability to communicate using that language. Any system of academic instruction, assessment, grading, and reporting that is based on students proving mastery of the knowledge and skills they are expected to learn before moving on to the next lesson, getting promoted to the next grade level, or receiving a diploma is known as proficiency-based education. Expert means having extensive knowledge and experience in a trade or career. Proficient means being adept, skilled, or proficient. A thorough skill gained from practise and training in interpreting other languages is implied by the term "proficient."

Keywords: *language proficiency, academic institutions, grading, profession, foreign language.*

Introduction

A person's capacity to utilise a language for a number of tasks, such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing, is referred to as language competence. Guidelines created by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages are frequently used to assess proficiency. The term proficiency describes the capacity to carry out an action or function. It deals with the capacity to utilise language in the actual world to carry out linguistic tasks in the real world, spanning a variety of contexts and issues.

Accents and Dialects

Even if people from various areas speak the same language, their accents and dialects (the way they use words) vary. Although persons speaking different dialects and accents use the same languages in theory, the meanings, connotations, and interpretations of words vary, which may result in a variety of disputes. For instance, even though both parties speak English, a Scottish farmer and a Londoner cannot understand the majority of what is said to them. In Scotland, the terms "ham" and "bacon" can be used interchangeably, but they have different meanings in England. Similar to this, pidgin is a shortened form of a language that is used by those who do not speak a common language. Words and phrases can imply meanings that lead to misunderstandings. For instance, the acronym "LOL," which is used in chat language, used to stand for "Lots of Love," but it has since changed to "Laugh Out Loud." When someone says LOL, the other person is free to deduce the meaning for

themselves or from what they already know. Depending on the situation and need, people will use either or both abbreviations.

No Clearly Speaking

It is impossible to understand those who speak softly or with a small voice. The recipient may understand something different than what the sender is trying to convey. Despite using everyday language, some people might have trouble understanding the feedback and the message's meaning. This could also be a barrier to communication.

Use of Slang and Jargons

Technical terminology used in communication is known as jargons. Depending on a person's many vocations, specialties, and technological fields, it could be different. For instance, the technical language used by lawyers and surgeons differs greatly. If they start conversing, neither of them will understand what the other is saying. Language barriers may arise because some jargons, such as adjournment (lawyers' and police's term for postponing a defendant's trial), BP (medical jargon for blood pressure), etc., are solely used by those in related professions. Slang usage similarly impedes efficient communication. For those who are unfamiliar with the slang meaning, using the word "grass" to describe marijuana may present a barrier.

Choice of Words

Before speaking, it is important to think through the word choice used to describe something. When someone expresses agreement with something, it might be seen as sarcasm, which is derogatory in tone. Words with multiple meanings, homonyms, homographs, and homophones should never be used because they send the wrong message and can be read in a variety of ways. As a result, the message will not be delivered as intended, creating a sort of communication barrier caused by language.

Language and Literacy Skills

In a given language, some persons have a relatively limited vocabulary while others have a very large one. The drive to acquire new words is heightened by reading and education, although this may not be the only factor. Reading and following their own interests are two ways that people might expand their vocabulary. If someone utilises the language as their unofficial language, their vocabulary is likewise reduced. Similar to this, linguistic ability refers to a person's proficiency in a certain language. When a person with a high vocabulary and strong language skills converses with someone who has weaker language skills, the second person will not understand the words used, which will result in a misunderstanding of the entire message.

Grammar and Spelling

Grammar and spelling create a barrier to communication since people from different cultures may use the same term in different ways. Similar communication barriers are created by grammar and spelling errors in written communication. For instance, someone might accidentally type done instead of don. Since don is also a correct word, the computer's spelling and grammar checker does not flag it as incorrect. However, a single word can alter the entire meaning of a statement or render it incomprehensible. These are some of the main reasons why people have trouble communicating in another language. There are other other factors that can contribute to obstacles like physiological and physical ones, such as language difficulties, noise, distance, or the usage of metaphors and similes. Language obstacles can sometimes be addressed via practise or other means, such as translation, interpreters, language classes, visual aids, etc., but sometimes they remain challenges for the rest of a person's life. The absence of these obstacles is necessary for efficient communication.

Language Barrier-Breaking Techniques

Through Kate Berardo In situations involving international commerce, language limitations are a frequent problem—and a two-way process. Native speakers frequently fail to recognise that the biggest obstacles to effective communication are frequently not the other person's accent but rather their own style of speaking. Make sure you're not creating your own barriers to effective global communication by using the strategies listed below.

1. Speak clearly and gradually. Put your attention on speaking slowly and with clear enunciation. Even if you are under time constraints, take your time when communicating. Doing so frequently requires more time because it may lead to misunderstandings and poor communication, which will require more effort to resolve.
2. Request further explanation. Ask for clarification if necessary if you are not certain that you have understood what others have said. Don't assume you comprehend what was said.
3. Repeatedly make sure you understand. Verify both your understanding of what has been communicated and the understanding of others. Use open-ended inquiries to gauge other people's comprehension while practising reflective listening to confirm your own understanding (e.g., "So what I hear you saying is... "). Rather than asking if anything is clear, instead, "What's your understanding of this process?"
4. Avoid using idioms. Language used in business is frequently culturally distinct due to context. Baseball lingo, such as "Straight off the Bat," "Ballpark figures," "Out in left field," "Touch base," and "Strike a deal," is widely used in the US. As a general rule, be aware that your communication may be more challenging to understand if the phrase requires understanding of additional information, whether it be a game or metaphor.

5. Avoid using jargon. Be careful while using TLAs (Three Letter Abbreviations) and other organisational jargon that other people might not understand. If you do, include a brief explanation of what they are in parentheses so that others can learn to use the same terminology you do.
6. Describe the fundamentals of business. Terms like "success," "doneness," "meetings," "punctuality," etc. can have different meanings to different people in the context of international business. Spend some time outlining what they mean to you and others early in your communication. Spend time developing a common vocabulary.
7. Be precise. Clearly state your expectations and due dates. Say "Please submit the completed report by 5 pm Eastern Standard time on Wednesday, February 21" rather than "Please get back to me ASAP."
8. Select your communication channel wisely. Select your method of communication with care (phone or video conference, email, instant message, etc.). Don't "overuse" email, please. The medium can occasionally be unsuccessful, despite being helpful. Change the medium when communicating a complex or contentious message, or when there is a need to diffuse tension or conflict.
9. Make information available through many sources. Send emails that recap phone conversations afterward. Provide presentations, agendas, and other documents in advance whenever you can so that people working in their second language can become comfortable with the materials.
10. Show patience. Communication across cultures requires more time. You cannot expect your conversation to flow as quickly and easily as it does when you are speaking with someone from your own culture, if not always.

Proficiency in Cognitive Academic Language

Even an intermediate student needs at least five years to fully develop the academic language found in school textbooks.

Interpersonal Communication Foundational Skills

- Social, common, and conversational language.
- It takes one to three years to become fluent.
- Frequently contains a "quiet period."

Challenges to Learning

In essence, it's about recognising obstacles to learning and establishing surroundings that can ease problems.

Learning Challenges for a Large Number of Students with General Learning Disabilities

- Working memory (short-term or long-term memory)
- Observational learning
- Generalization
- Attention span/lack of focus
- Motivation (due to lack of success/fear of failures/avoidance)
- Working memory (short-term or long-term memory) (the transfer of learning across settings)
- English language proficiency obstacles: strategies and activities
- Prevent role-reversals caused by language problems.
- Interact with bilingual personnel on all levels.
- Hold meetings in both languages with interpreters.
- Offer resources on websites or newsletters in both languages.
- Create a repository for bilingual resources.
- Offer adult ESL and literacy classes
- Pronunciation

The following significant recommendations have been made: English teachers should pay close attention to how exercises for teaching oral skills are planned and should "realize that teaching speaking is different from teaching other language skills such as writing and reading:

- facilitating EFL learners by giving them the most opportunities to practice the language; ensuring a speaking environment that is rich and supportive by utilising collaborative.
- original work and sources:
- involving every student, even the timid
- those who actively participate as well;
- lengthening students' chatting periods;
- giving feedback to pupils who respond positively;
- soliciting more speaking from students by posing provocative questions;
- provide constructive written comments in addition to oral input;
- Ignoring students' pronunciation errors when they talk, especially at first;
- steering clear of constant correction that can irritate students;
- encouraging students to participate in speaking exercises both within and outside of the classroom;
- delivering individualised assistance and attention while moving about the classroom during speaking exercises;
- diagnosing learners' difficulties expressing themselves in the target language;
- providing the necessary lexical items in advance to assist learners.

The Following are Significant Pedagogical Factors that Norrish Identified While Discussing the Causes of Oral Barriers

Carelessness: It is a significant factor that results from a lack of motivation.

First language interference: Since learning a language is similar to forming habits, when a person is learning a second or foreign language, their old habits—those associated with their **first language**—interfere with the establishment of new habits. Due to the parallels and variances between the mother tongue and the target language, this interference has a variety of negative effects.

Translation: Another significant issue with translation is the literal translation of phrases and sentences from the source language into the target language.

Overgeneralization: The process of learning a foreign language is negatively impacted by the overgeneralization of grammar rules.

Material-induced errors: A poor choice of instructional materials can result in two different types of mistakes, such as "the ignorance of rule restrictions and false concepts."

Errors as part of language creativity: When learners construct new sentences, mistakes could be made due to a lack of proficiency in the target language. When learning a second or foreign language, these kinds of mistakes are frequent.

Foreign language errors: A foreign language must be primarily learned in a classroom in order to be considered learned.

Conclusion

"Able to understand all styles and forms of the language pertinent to professional demands and to utilise the language fluently and accurately on all levels important to professionals' needs." Everyone has a duty to assist kids in overcoming their obstacles to success.

References

1. Ajaja, O. P. (2011). Concept mapping as a study skill: Effects on students' achievement in biology. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, 3(1), 49-57.
2. Al Asmari, A. R. (2015). A comparative determination of barriers of oral English learning faced by preparatory year students. *European Scientific Journal*, 11(35).
3. Gupta, A. (2005). *A study of existing perception / understanding of education for sustainable development of Indian teachers*. Lucknow: Prithivi Innovations.
4. Ibrahim, Z. S., Ali, M. A., Saleem, F., & Khan, T. M. (2013). Perceptions and barriers towards English language proficiency among pharmacy undergraduates at Universiti Sains Malaysia. *Pharmacy Education*, 13(1), 151-156.
5. Khan, I. A. (2016). Barriers in the learning of English: An exploratory study. *British Journal of Education, Society & Behavioural Science*, 15(2).