

MIND YOUR ENGLISH

by

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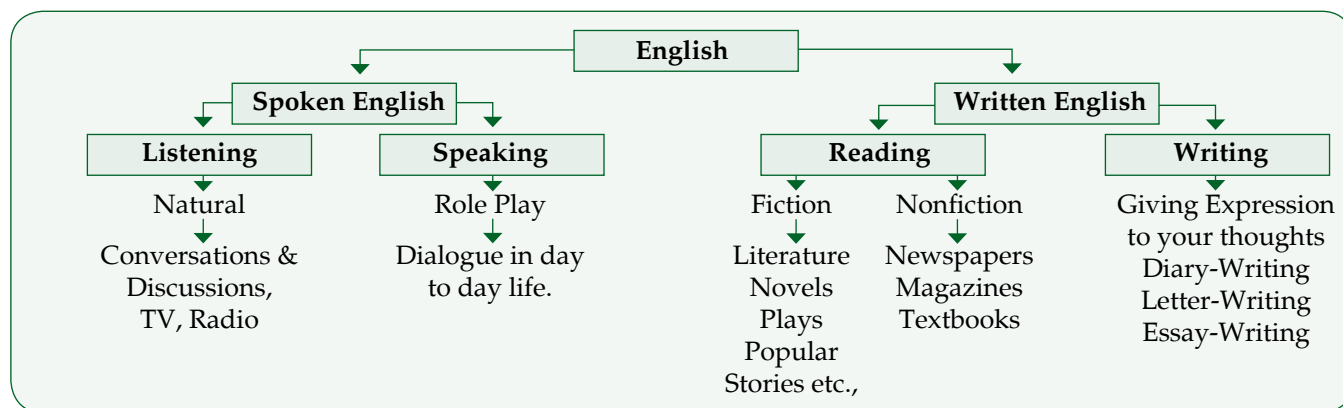
INTRODUCTION:

English is now the native language of about 300 million people and more than hundred million people besides are acquainted with it. In the days of Shakespeare, English was spoken by only five and a half million people. But in the new millenium, English is regarded as the language of world diplomacy. It is hailed as the first language in the world. Let me chalk out some tips of English Learning for Indian students keeping the communicative approach of teaching English in mind.

WHAT IS COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH?

Communicative Approach is a new approach of

learning English which emphasises language ability and thus ultimately preparing students for effective communication in real life situations. In this approach, deductive and inductive reasoning is given importance. It is activity oriented and learner-centred. It is also student friendly since it stresses Learning by Doing - a variety of realilstic activities and exercise types have been developed to encourage students and think for themselves. Equal importance is also given to the integration of the four language skills - Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. While "Spoken English" depends on your listening and speaking skills, "Written English" depends on your reading and writing ability.



1) Listen attentively:

Language starts with the ear. When a baby starts to talk, he does it by hearing the sounds of his mother and imitating them. This gift of imitation gives us the gift of speech. By a historical coincidence, we in India are used more to British English than to American, Australian or Canadian English. So our obvious choice is the widely accepted variety of British English called RP. It is certainly a good model

for imitation provided a native RP speaker is available as a model. The phonological system of the mother tongue of the English learners will have an influence on the phonology of their English.

So what you have to do is that you must HEAR English, spoken on films, on the TV and on the radio. But mere hearing is not enough. You must listen to it not for the meaning but for the sound of it. Pickout the Englishness of the sounds you

hear. And by this novel way of Listening, you can acquire new ways of using your speech organs and new speech habits.

2) Speak effectively:

Imagine that your friends know only the English language. Compulsion moulds the Spoken English in you. Never mind even if you talk incorrect English.

Learn the English way of using tone. For ex.,

“Thank you” – If you say with a falling intonation, it means sincere gratitude. On the other hand, if “Thank you” is uttered with a rising intonation then it means that the matter is purely routine and casual.

Intonation thus denotes the attitude of the speaker.

A strong command usually takes the falling intonation. But if it is said in a rising tone, then it sounds as a request. Thus your tone will lay bare the attitude of yourself.

Thank you	-	sincere gratitude
Thank you	-	casual
Open the Window	-	a strong command
Open the Window	-	a request

A tape – recorder is of much use here. Record on a tape recorder a long passage by an English Speaker. Try to imitate it and record the speech in your own voice. Then listen to it carefully and critically and see where your performance does not match the original. The ideal of Speaking Effective English will be realized once you acquire perfect English Pronunciation.

1) Read voraciously:

Bacon said, “**Reading maketh a full man**”. English is the best library language in the world today. Read the daily newspapers extensively. No entertainment is so cheap as reading nor any pleasure so lasting. Get a habit, a passion for

reading. Do not fly from book to book, but read systematically, closely, thoughtfully analyzing every subject as you go along and laying it up carefully and safely in your memory. Imbibe the knowledge and enhance your reading skill. If your reading skill is enhanced, then definitely you can activate and enrich your English, improve your communicative and linguistic competence.

2) Write creatively:

Horace Lorimer said, “**Writing is like religion. Everyman who feels the call must work out his own salvation**”. Scrabble, Word-building, Word-play are some of the games by which you can increase your writing ability. Be acquainted with all the rules of Grammar. Refresh then and there the Essentials of English usage. Inculcate the habit of thinking in English. Increase your vocabulary and word power in English by learning five new words from the dictionary everyday. Improve your spelling ability by regular and consistent practice.

Practice makes Perfect. So never give up. Neglect nothing. Keep on trying to write without error. Keep a diary and record your daily day to day events in English. Maintaining such records will definitely enhance the writing skill in you.

CONCLUSION:

“**Perfection consists not in doing extraordinary things but in doing ordinary things extraordinarily well**”. Keep in mind the following four rules as far as English is concerned:

- (1) Listen attentively
- (2) Speak effectively
- (3) Read voraciously
- (4) Write creatively

If you follow the above golden rules to enrich, enliven and improve your English, then no doubt you will be the uncrowned king as far as your command over this language is concerned.

