

SUPER-EGO AN INHIBITION OF STUDENTS TO SPEAK ENGLISH IN COLLEGES IN KERALA

Vivek Suresh Varghese
Mar Ivanios College, University of Kerala
vivekvarghese26@gmail.com

Abstract: This paper analyses few factors that leads to inhibition of college students to speak English in Kerala, India. In this paper a field study is done to show how Freud's "superego" can lead to inhibition in the mind of the students to speak English in colleges in Kerala. Data collected through field analysis is done to show that spoken English training can overcome the "superego" which creates the inhibition to speak English. In this project, I advocate that if we can overcome negative impact of "superego" then we can overcome the inhibition to speak English. I justify my project with the help of statistics and data collected through random interviews among the college students in Kerala. The aim of the project is to help Government Organizations and Parent Teacher Associations to promote speaking of English in college campuses, so inhibition among students can be removed to speak English.

Keywords: *English, Higher Education, Kerala, Inhibition, Communication*

Introduction

"Education should bring to light the ideal of the individual." J.P Richter.

Inhibition to speak in English stands as an obstacle for the development of personality among college students in Kerala. Kerala is hailed as the second highest literary state in India with 93.91% (Times of India, Sep 8, 2013). Kerala is an educational hub for higher education in India. In Kerala high importance is usually given for reading and writing, but the speech form in English medium of instruction is often neglected and often the mother tongue Malayalam is used as a medium of instruction by the instructors. If we analyse from Francis Bacon's point of view and if we neglect reading or conference (speaking) or writing, then a person cannot be perfect or complete (Bacon).

The main objective of the Collegiate Education Department, Govt. of Kerala is to impart best quality higher education to the eligible students of the State who complete their higher secondary level education. (Collegiateedu.kerala.gov.in) If proper "spoken form" of training is not given to College students when the medium of instruction is English then how can the objective of Collegiate Education Department, Kerala be full filled? If there is no proper training on spoken form then it will be one of the factors responsible for inhibition from student's part to speak in English.

To master the spoken form of English Language, one must have exposure to the Language. As the old adage says practice makes perfect, inhibition to speak in English can create a sense of fear and is one of the major factors that leads towards hatred in speaking English, without speaking English, we cannot master the spoken form.

Exposure to English can reduce inhibition to speak English up to a certain extend. In Kerala, usually students in colleges prefer to speak in native language Malayalam rather than in English. If their classmates speak in English, then there is a general tendency to mock at the person who speaks in English. The famous psychologist Sigmund Freud coined the term "Super Ego" (Freud, 1932).

Merriam Webster dictionary defines super ego as "a part of a person's mind that relates to attitudes about what is right and wrong and to feelings of guilt" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). In colleges when classmates mock their friends when they speak in English, in the mind of the speaker a sense of barricade develops and he feels that he is going against the norms of his classmate, even though the medium of education is in English and even it can have a positive impact in his life, the fear of "others" (friends) develops a guilt in the mind of the speaker and super ego a moralizing agent develops an inhibition in the mind of the speaker (student) and it can prevent him in speaking English and later the inhibition can lead to fear in speaking and hatred towards spoken English .

Method

In this paper the method of data collection is done through field study and personal interviews. Data collected through interviews and questionnaire shows that there is inhibition among college students to speak in English.

Field Analysis

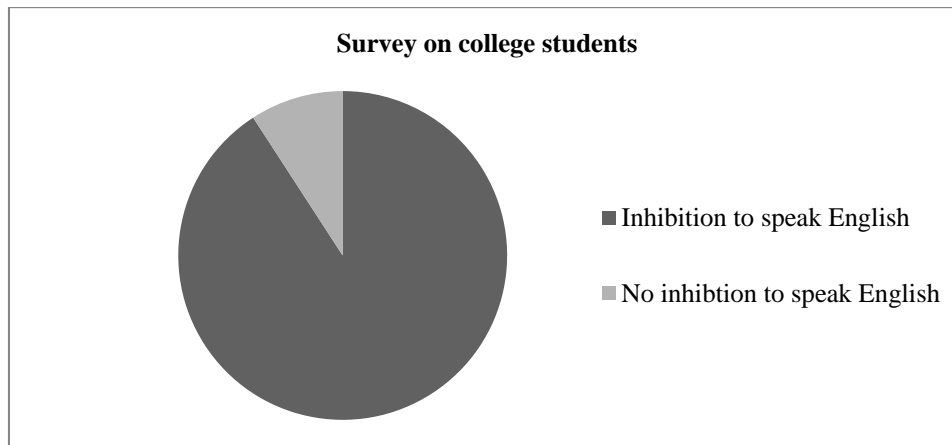


Figure 1.

In Figure 1, after rigorous survey we got the information that 80% of the students felt that there is inhibition among college students to speak English. Only 20% were of the opinion that there was no inhibition among college students to speak English.

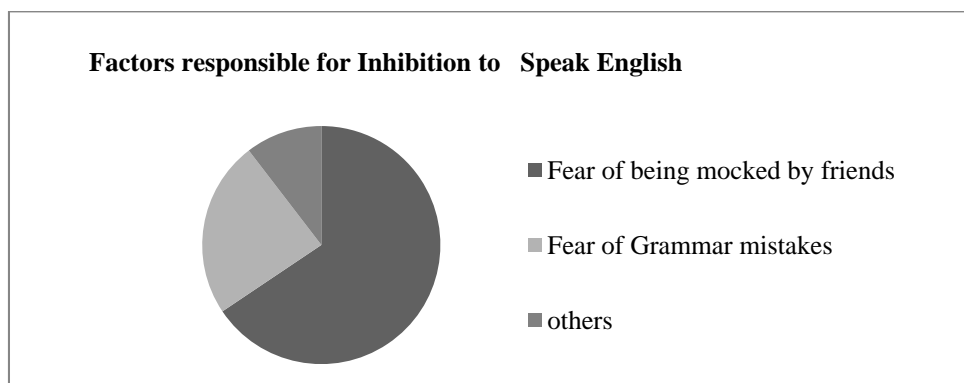


Figure 2.

In Figure 2, through field analysis we come to a conclusion that 60% of the students had fear of being mocked by classmates if they communicated in English.

30% of students had fear of grammar mistakes if they communicated in English and others who had lack of fluency in speaking English because of various other factors.

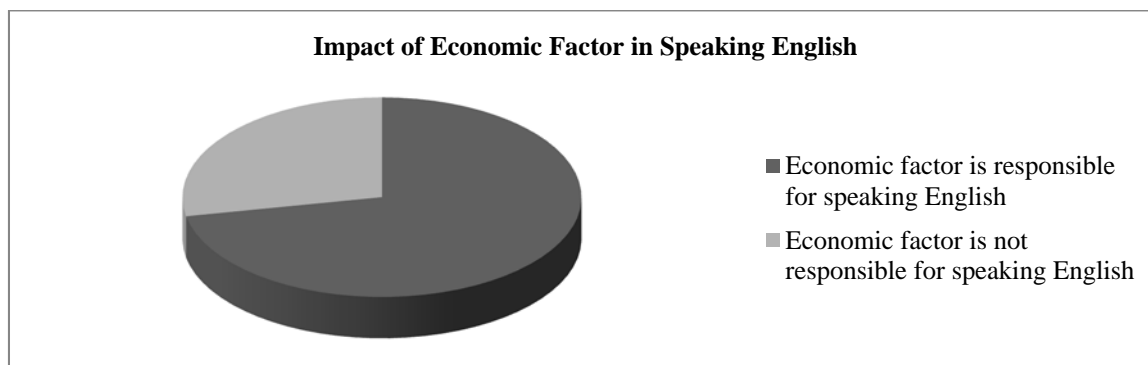


Figure 3.

In the Figure 3, we come to an argument that Economic factor is also one of the responsible factors for speaking English among college students (75%). Students hailing from rich families speak English fluently than those from other backgrounds, because most of the rich students get their primary education from private English medium schools have more exposure to English language and they also speak to their parents in English. Speaking English is considered as a status symbol in Kerala. Those with less economic background might not speak English frequently at home and in colleges and prefer to use mother tongue Malayalam, they mostly develop an inhibition to speak in English.

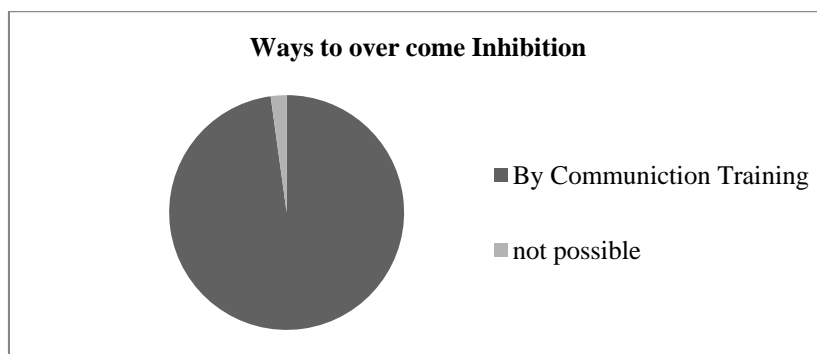


Figure 4.

In figure 4, through field analysis we got the information that 97% of the students felt that through Communication Training they can overcome the inhibition to speak in English.

Result

According to the survey in Figure 1, 80 % of the students had inhibition to speak English in colleges in Kerala. In Figure 2, 60% of the students had fear of being mocked by classmates if they communicated in English. In Figure 3, 75% of students felt that economic factor is responsible for speaking of English among students. In Figure 4, 97% of students had the view that by communication training can overcome inhibition to speak English.

Various Factors Leading to Inhibition as Recorded from the Survey

- Shyness among students is one of the factors that lead to inhibition among college students to speak in English.
- Fear of grammar mistakes.
- Inferiority complex.
- Lack of fluency.
- Lack of exposure.

- Fear of alienation - The students usually prefer to use mother tongue Malayalam in colleges, when they hear some one speaking in English, they try to alienate that person, this is one of the factors that leads to inhibition among students to speak English.
- Preference for Malayalam.
- Suppression and lack of encouragement by teachers / professors is one of the factors that lead to inhibition. The teachers / professors might not be well versed in spoken English; they naturally try to suppress the one who speaks English well.
- Fear of being mocked.
- Professors / teachers advise students that speaking English is necessary, but they (teachers/professors) themselves are comfortable with their mother tongue Malayalam, and do not act as a role model in speaking English. The students imitate the teachers / professors and will naturally show inhibition towards speaking English.

Suggestions from the Students

Grace marks must be given to those students who speak English well; this can create an urge in the mind of the students to speak English. Introduce scholarships to promote English language and conduct training programmes for students to speak in English.

Conclusion:

One of the biggest drawbacks is that in English medium schools and colleges in Kerala, even though the medium of instruction is in English, the explanation of subjects such as English, Science, Mathematics and History are in the mother tongue Malayalam. The diversion of teacher's medium of instruction from English to Malayalam is one of the factors that can lead to inhibition of students to speak English. Even as teachers prefer to speak Malayalam in schools and colleges, there is also a tendency for students to follow and imitate the teacher. The students cannot be blamed for the inhibition they have, it is the system of education that has to be reviewed.

As a result from this field study we come to a conclusion that the fear of the "others" can be considered the most important factor that leads to inhibition among students in Kerala, and the only way to overcome "Super Ego" which stands as an inhibition agent among college students to speak English is through good communication training and exposure to spoken English Language. Taking tests like IELTS and TOEFL etc can improve the confidence level of students and they can assess their own level of communication. Having gained international recognized certificates, it can boost students to overcome the fear of "others" (friends) and the fear of Super Ego can be removed. Parents must also encourage their kids to speak in English. The Education Department must ensure that for English medium schools and colleges, the medium of instruction by teachers / professors must be in English. If speaking of English is promoted, then the fear of the Super Ego and inhibition to speak English by students will be removed.

Having frequent debates in English, spoken English courses and training sessions taught by native English Speakers can have a positive impact on the students to speak English in colleges in Kerala.

Special thanks to the students who took part in this survey from various affiliated Colleges under Government Universities in Kerala.

References

Bacon, F. The Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral, of Francis Ld. Verulam Viscount St. Albans, Of Studies. Authorama.com. Retrieved 28 November 2014, from <http://www.authorama.com/essays-of-francis-bacon-50.html>

Collegiateedu.kerala.gov.in,. Welcome to Our Website. Retrieved 28 November 2014, from <http://www.collegiateedu.kerala.gov.in/>

Freud, S. (1932). The Anatomy of the Mental Personality by Sigmund Freud. Marxists.org. Retrieved 28 November 2014, from <https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/at/freud2.htm>

Super ego. Merriam-Webster Online: Dictionary and Thesaurus. Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/super%20ego>

The Times of India, (2013). Tripura beats Kerala in literacy. Retrieved 28 November 2014, from <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/education/news/Tripura-beats-Kerala-in-literacy/articleshow/22416019.cms>