

## TRIGGERING THE IMPACT OF INTERVIEW SKILLS THROUGH ELEVATOR SPEECH TECHNIQUE: A REVIEW

**Manjusha C B<sup>1</sup>**  
Doctoral Degree  
Research Scholar  
VIT University  
Chennai

**Dr. V. Vijayalakshmi<sup>2</sup>**  
Assistant professor  
SSL  
VIT University  
Chennai



### ABSTRACT

*The world around is moving in a faster pace and it is becoming very competitive and mechanical in every sphere of life. Technology is developing day by day and it has paved way for an easy life style.. In such a scenario, people do not have time to lend their ears to anyone which would distract them from the busiest life schedules. Employment interviews in the present decade has also gone a par in recruiting process and it is only the applicant who is able to gain attention of the employer in the shortest span of time will be the most successful one.*

*This paper thrives to bring out the reviews based on interview skills and elevator speech with an objective of implementing elevator speech techniques to enhance the interview skills of the unemployed graduates. Reviews based on speaking skills, socio-psycho-linguistics and state of employment is also carved through this paper.*

**Keywords:** interview skills, elevator speech, job employment, socio psycho linguistics, soft skills

### INTRODUCTION

Interview skills of the upcoming graduates needs an earnest attention owing to an increase in the number of industries like the IT Schisms, Retail, Travel, Hospitality and other various industrial arenas. This rapid growth of industries has resulted in wide employment opportunities for the graduates. Though job openings have multiplied to a great extent, it is becoming difficult to find a suitable candidate and this implies that there are minimal of candidates who are qualified to clear the interview. Sujit Kumar HRD expert has states that students lack basic communication skills and this has resulted in increased rate of unemployed graduates. News article from The Indian Express on 18/07/2014 titled “70 percentage of engineering graduates are unemployed in the state” explicit on the lagging state of professional competency including cognitive skills.

Dr. V. Vijayalakshmi (2016) has vividly expounded the difficulties of HR team in recruiting resourcefully competent graduates. It is stated in her research article titled “The Need

*of the Hour for Professional Competence: A Review on Interpersonal Skills and Intrapersonal Skills Theories*” that it is difficult to find suitable candidates and this merely indicates that we have scarcity of alumnae who are employable (2016). The ratio between increase in the number of students who are waiting to be placed and who are employed is to be concentrated immediately because according to India Today January 25<sup>th</sup> of 2016, over 80 percentage of engineering students in India are unemployed this intensely pictures the employability status of engineering students on the whole. Fundamental importance is to be given upon this tremendously increasing unemployability condition especially of the engineering graduates.

Educational institutions have understood the need for inculcating interview skills through soft skills training as a part of academic activity to enhance the overall professional competency of the students. Hence, in order to bridge the gap between employed and unemployed ratio and to ensure better career opportunities, educational institutions have started introducing placement cells within the campus where the students are trained to equip themselves with better professional skills.

Competitive world of today is in process of discovering new things every second and Technological development has paved way for myriads of discoveries and has made life easier. In such a scenario, a graduate with good academic results alone cannot get through the interviews because employees look for employers with unique talents and skills to survive in the dynamic world. It will not be appreciable if a candidate is well versed in communication skills alone. They should be some interesting attributes as well. For this, along with interview skills, if elevator speech techniques are introduced and inculcated, there will be better chances for the students to gain the attention of the interviewer.

This paper aims to present the need for an enhanced interview skill for the modern trend through the techniques of elevator speech to grab better career opportunities. Various reviews based on speaking skill, socio psycho linguistic perspective, theories and importance of interview skill according to various experts are brought out. Structure of this paper is divided as interview skills, definitions of elevator speech, impact of elevator speech in interviews, reviews from early researches, opinions of experts and conclusion.

## **INTERVIEW SKILLS**

Employment interviews are accepted selection procedure keeping in mind many different points of view like communication skills, professional competency and academic performances. In organisations around the world, employment interviews continue to be one of the most frequently methods to assess candidates for employment (Ryan, McFarland and Baron, 1999; Wilk and Cappelli, 2003). According to Frank G. Zarbord school of Business, Purpose of interviewing is “to market your skills, and to allow the employer to discover why you want to work there specifically, whether or not you can do the job, and if you are a good fit. The goal of the first interview is to get the second interview.” To market professional skill, and to create an opportunity for the employer to understand the hidden talents to hire the candidate depending

upon the eligibility and aptness is the basic scenario of employment interview because it is time for the candidate to fight against the battle alone where the knowledge gained and skills acquired are put to test.

Employment interview is the arena where the soft skills competency and professional etiquettes of the candidate are also tested. Within the short span of time, the applicant will have to impress the interviewer through an enhanced communication skills, body language and expressions of attitude. The contender is put in a platform where maximum has to be explained in the minimum time. Until and unless the aspirant has a good command over language and it will not be possible to reach the zenith of success as spontaneous user of positive words to exhibit the passion and willingness to work.

## **ELEVATOR SPEECH**

An elevator speech is a clear brief message or “commercial” about oneself. It communicates who the person is, what the expectation from the company is and the ways the person can benefit a company or an organisation. In the rapidly developing world of today, technology plays a vital role. Robotics is becoming a boon in all the tech arenas and the concept of Humanoids are emerging. In such a scenario, there are high possibilities for robots to conduct interviews and if it is programmed in a way that there are word limits for each answers, then elevator speech technique will be the only way for performing better in the employment interviews conducted by robots. (Times of India).

A few of the definitions of elevator speech are:

Business dictionary defines elevator speech as “Very concise presentation of an idea covering all of its aspects, and delivered within a few seconds (the approximate duration of an elevator ride).”

Investopedia defines elevator pitch as “A slang term used to describe a brief speech that outlines an idea for a product, service or project. The name comes from the notion that the speech should be delivered in the short time period of an elevator ride, usually 20-60 seconds.”

“An elevator pitch is a brief, prepared statement that defines a product, service or outlines the value of an organization or individual in as little as 15 seconds, the length of time of a typical elevator ride.” (Whatls,2012). Furthermore, it is added that typically, an elevator pitch begins with an introduction, quickly moves on to a short summary of the subject and concludes with a question or provocative statement intended to make the listener think about the pitch later on. An effective elevator pitch contains clear language that the audience understands and uses layman's terms rather than hard-to-follow technical terms. The pitch is personalized for the intended audience and can be tailored to suit the interests of varied listeners (2012).

To market oneself in an employment interview, appropriate vocabulary is in demand. In a short span of time, the candidate must be able to tell even the minute details of all the achievements without creating any boredom. For this, the techniques of elevator speech are of great help. 'Platinum 90' or the first ninety seconds of meeting the interviewer is always the prime time to impress the employer. If this 90 second is used aptly, it will add to the successful moment.

For a better elevated speech, enhanced speaking skill and choice of vocabulary is in demand. From a course work designed by Sridhar and Sahana of IIT Bombay on *Creating your Elevator Speech*, it could be understood that a well crafted elevator speech should be Precise; Problem must be emphasized, should have proper examples and should be free from vague points (2014, 2015). Speaking is a usual act and is carried out by all living beings. But when it comes to a professionalized way of speaking especially in an interview, there are many people who stammer. A well refined speaking skill encompassing good vocabulary, wise usage of words and the need of time management is required. There are ample of researches done to prove that art of speaking is intertwined sociological and psychological state of a person apart from their cultural background.

### **CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF EARLY RESEARCHES**

Kamonpan Boonkit,(2010) in her the research article titled "*Enhancing the development of speaking skills for non-native speakers of English*" states that

"through task based pedagogy, a confidence factor was gradually developed. A task-based pedagogical design provided opportunities for the course participants to speak in different situations, which helped to make 'passive' vocabulary 'active' and also expanded the English lexicon derived from varied speaking topics"(2010).

Creativity of topics was considered to be a speaking strength, and errors in pronunciation and grammatical structure were categorized as weaknesses of the research findings. Suggestions for speaking improvement for EFL learners mainly covered listening skills, which included listening to music, watching movies, and frequent practice of listening and speaking skills from multimedia websites. The task-based learning design in this qualitative action research could be applied to promote a particular skill or integrated-skill pedagogy in EFL/ESL and other language learning context( Kamonpan Boonkit, 2010).

Research article of Kamonpan will aid the present research study in understanding the basic nuances of speaking skills. Power of vocabulary and the need of choosing apt word could also be understood through this article.

Dr. V. Vijayalakshmi in her research article titled "*The Need of the Hour for Professional Competence: A Review on Interpersonal Skills and Intrapersonal Skills Theories*" (2016) aims at explaining the need for soft skills for the professional competence and reviews the theories of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills where in need for acquiring those skills are considered as

the need of the hour by many experts. It has been concluded stating that Soft skills or behavioural skills, which are a cluster of personal qualities like friendliness, optimism, communication skill, teamwork and goal setting, play a significant role in a person's success and they help one in adapting to novel circumstances. By reviewing the theories on interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, it has been proved that the traditional notion of emphasising on technical knowledge alone is no longer useful for the success of an organisation. So, training the students in soft skills is necessary to gain professional competence. Change is imperative and we need to understand this and must be willing to change. This would lead to a better tomorrow resulting in an improvement in the employable quotient.

Seyed Mahdi Araghi in *“Review of Problems of Adult Efl Learners’ (Efl) Speaking”* (2014) has very aptly brought out the various psychological and sociological issues that adds on to the problems of speaking. The problem of learners' language anxiety remains one of the greatest obstacles that teachers have to overcome in language classrooms. The present study was an attempt to review the speaking problems of adult EFL learners. While discussing different factors such as age, aural medium, sociocultural, and affective factors influence EFL learners, Brown (2007) suggests that adult EFL learners learn body language, gestures, eye contact, physical distance in addition to linguistic and semantic rules of the foreign language. On the other hand, there were some factors that cause anxiety for EFL learners. Regarding anxiety of adult EFL learners, the researchers in this study also agree with Steinberg & Horwitz (1986) about the difference between anxious and relax students. The researchers also have experienced that anxious learners paid more attention to accuracy and correct message rather than fluency and interpretive messages. It is suggested that the learners, especially adults, seem to be afraid of making a wrong answer in front of the teacher and their classmates. Thus they try to accept the risk of presenting answers that they are not sure about its accuracy that would make them to focus on forms rather than transfer the message. In sum, the researchers Seyed and others propose that awareness of different factors in adult EFL learners' speaking may help both EFL teachers and learners in their teaching and learning .Finally, with this knowledge in mind; EFL teachers and adult learners may not face with similar mentioned problems again and they can try to remove other barriers of speaking as well.

### **AN INSIGHT TO THE VIEWS OF CONNOISSEURS**

Interview skill is a combination of communication skills and soft skills it is because applicants are graded based on their ability to communicate and talents to handle various professional situations. While focusing on the clusters of interview skill, impact of communication skills like listening, speaking, reading and writing skills are also to be highlighted hence, the following reviews would act an aid in torching the importance of enhanced communication skills for an enriched interview skill.

Backlund, (1990) assigns three areas of knowledge that influence oral communication effectiveness: social knowledge, self-knowledge, and content knowledge. If any one of these is weak oral communication will be somewhat impaired. Other problems that hinder oral

communication are: dominating the conversation, using inappropriate volume and pitch, using excessive small talk ignoring someone and constantly interrupting people.

Bashiruddin, (2003) conducted a study to improve student's Oral Communication Skills (OCSs) in lower secondary public school in Karachi, Pakistan. The sample of the study consisted of two schools systems work side by side. One is the private English medium school and second is government Urdu-medium school. English is learnt as a second language in both cases. Both students' and teachers use Urdu language or the regional language to communicate inside the class, and practice traditional methods which focus on reading and writing skills, but productive skills such as: listening and speaking is given importance. The results of the study discussed the reasons of weakness of students in communication were the English language teachers (ELTs) are not proficient in speaking English and this is the main obstacle in the way to teaching English in Pakistan.

Urrutia, & Vega (2006) conducted an action research project on understanding and actions taken to improve speaking skills through games in a public school called "Federico García Lorca" in Colombia. The sample in this study was twenty girls and twenty boys from 14 to 18 years old. Questionnaires, teacher's journals and video recordings were used as data collection instruments. The results of the study were the majority of students considered that speaking is the most complicated ability to work out; also, the researchers noticed that students sometimes used English, but the majority of them did not speak during the English class.

Cotter (2007) argues that as students learn to use English in the classroom setting, they should also be involved in learning about how language works. They should be asked to reflect on various aspects of language, to develop a common language for talking about language, and to use this knowledge to evaluate texts critically in terms of effectiveness, meaning and accuracy. 'Someone who speaks well would similarly understand when to use different grammar points.

Hamzah & Ting, (2009) conducted a qualitative and action research study on success of using group work in teaching speaking in English classroom in a school. The sample of the study was 33 students and 3 English teachers. The researchers conducted three oral activities where students were observed using questionnaires and three experienced teachers were also observed. Questionnaires, observations and interviews were used as data collection instruments. The researchers carried out a series of questionnaires in Malay language where students could provide their opinions about the group work activities to improve speaking skills and their consciousness of participation in those activities. The results of the study expressed enthusiasm in group work activities and proficiency in spoken language because they were certain of expressing themselves in small groups which avoided anxiety to speak in another language.

Smith and Strong (2009) state that adult language learners are goal oriented and direct their learning to achieve their needs or demands. So, they often look for immediate and relevant value from their studies, and they learn best when they have a role in reaching their learning objectives. Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (1998) agree confirm what Smith and Strong (2009)

said about attributes of adult EFL learners that were propose. Additionally, Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (1998) offer that adults are mature, competent, experienced, multitalented individuals who live complex lives and fulfill a variety of different life roles. These learners have different experience for their learning and may learn in very different ways. Some of them prefer a more process oriented approach with active experimental problem-solving tasks over memorization, while others may prefer learning styles developed during their school years.

## CONCLUSION

Interview skill which is a cluster of personal traits like communication skills, team work, managerial ability, and problem solving aptitude plays a noteworthy role in the life of a person's accomplishments and it would assist them to become accustomed to new scenarios. In the rapidly developing competitive world, the demand for professional skills keeps increasing. Any sector like aviation, hospitality, industries, educational fields etc, will prefer candidates who have the ability to make things easier. Priority will be for those who have the aptitude to deliver innovative ideas crisply without killing the time of listeners. In short, a person with good language proficiency and equipped with knowledge of how to elevate themselves will be successful one. So, one has to be strong in the techniques of speaking to master over interviews. Life keeps changing resulting in many new challenges and if only a person is equipped with necessary professional skills, it would be possible for them to tackle the challenges in a better way. Endowing oneself with enriched vocabulary and spontaneity would make them more qualified and would improve their level of employability.

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**Author note**

**Ms Manjusha C B<sup>1</sup>** is a Doctoral Degree Researcher of VIT University Chennai and is pursuing research in Soft skills focusing on ELT- Interdisciplinary Approaches to Literature and Arts.

**Dr. V. Vijayalakshmi<sup>2</sup>** is serving as Assistant Professor in School of Science and Languages of VIT University Chennai and is also guiding Doctoral degree researchers.