

# An Experimental Case Study of Motivating Engineering Students to Learn Proverbs

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## Abstract

The paper presents an attempt that was conducted in a classroom to help the Second Year B.Tech. Computer Science students to be familiarized with Proverbs in an interesting manner. Engineering students in JNTUH, as part of their curriculum, are required to be taught Proverbs in the First Year of their Course study in English Language sessions. Proverbs are an integral part of languages and literature, tested and proved to be of great value for a Language Learner. The paper deals with introduction, history and functions of proverbs briefly. A Questionnaire was circulated to the students and the responses analyzed. The findings turned out to be very motivating to the teacher. The importance of using Proverbs in enhancing the L, S, R, W Skills is presented from the Learner's point of view. The exercise proved to be successful and the Learner's participation was wonderfully encouraging. The Outcome was quite inspiring both to the Learner and the Teacher in the Lifelong Learning aspect.

**Keywords:** Proverbs, Curriculum, Questionnaire, Lifelong Learning

## Introduction

Proverbs in any language are an integral part of expression, and are the Figures of Speech that upgrade the articulation of the Literate. They are used to inspire, educate, dictate morals etc. to individuals. Enhancing expression to reason, think and act are the primary functions of Proverbs. All the Receptive and Productive Skills are refined by the employing Proverbs. The functions of Proverbs are universal, specifically Proverbs in English are renowned globally. They strengthen the language in interrogating, educating, reasoning, apologising, forecasting, excusing etc. They are the product of the various fields of study and are Semantic, Cultural and Literary in nature.

Proverbs are prescribed to be studied, comprehended and used in B.Tech. First Year English Language Sessions. A task was given to the Tertiary Level students to motivate them to know the importance of Proverbs in improving their linguistic skills. The technical students were administered a questionnaire to be answered and the interest displayed was quite encouraging. The researcher presented the findings to the Faculty of English in Geethanjali College of Engineering and Technology, the response was encouraging.

### Method

The sample students selected are from B.Tech. Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Branch of Engineering (AIML). They are all Advanced Learners in English Language Learning. The time allotted for the students to explain the importance, usage and examples was 20 minutes. The students were asked to take up activities like Listening to proverbs in Laboratory sessions or on YouTube, familiarise or recollect the Proverbs heard, speak and write one sentence using a Proverb. The intention was to inculcate the spirit of knowing the usage of the beauty of Proverbs.

Cloze tests were administered to test the familiarity of the students with the Proverbs.

For example: Fill in the blank:

1. A stitch in time \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ while the sun shines.

A Questionnaire pertaining to the knowledge of recognition of the use of Proverbs in general as a part of Survey for Lifelong Learning was circulated to 50 students in the session. The Survey proved to be more interesting to the students as they were able to study and enjoy all the elements of using Proverbs, like Humour, Time Management, Discipline, Human Nature, Nature etc. Every field of study contributed to the genre of Proverbs so the scope of the subject of studying, developing and adding to their treasury of linguistic skills improved.

### Questionnaire

The Questionnaire had 10 questions totally pertaining to the meaning, origin, interest, awareness of the students.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Roll Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Branch:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Medium of instruction up to intermediate.  
(A) English                      (B) Other
2. Your favourite proverb. Why?
3. Do you like to listen to stories? Yes / No
4. What do you think is the end product of a proverb?  
(A) Instruction                  (B) Pleasure                      (C) A & B
5. Mention the proverb you explained in the Listening & Speaking activities.
6. The explanation / storytelling activity was interesting.    Yes / No
7. Do you enjoy reading, learning and learning proverbs?    Yes / No
8. In one sentence, mention how proverbs improve your expression.
9. Give two examples of other language's proverbs you are familiar with.  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_

10. Will you continue to improve your speaking & listening skills in the future by using proverbs?  
Yes / No

### Sample Response Sheet of One Student

**Name:** VIjay Kumar Nethi      **Roll Number:** 21R11A6647      **Branch:** CSE-AIML-A

1. Medium of instruction up to intermediate.

(A) English      (B) Other

**Answer:** English

2. Your favourite proverb. Why?

**Answer:** "Don't judge a book by it's cover", is my favourite proverb. This proverb says that we should not judge anyone by appearance, we don't know how much talent is hidden behind him. This proverb gives good message to everyone, so I like this proverb.

3. Do you like to listen to stories? Yes / No

**Answer:** Yes

4. What do you think in the end product of a proverb?

(A) Instruction      (B) Pleasure      (C) A & B

**Answer:** (C) A & B

5. Mention the proverb you explained in the Listening & Speaking activities.

**Answer:** Actions speak louder than words.

6. The explanation / storytelling activity was interesting. Yes / No

**Answer:** Yes

7. Do you enjoy reading, learning and learning proverbs? Yes / No

**Answer:** Yes

8. In one sentence, mention how proverbs improve your expression.

**Answer:** Proverbs improve our expressions by conveying a moral.

9. Give two examples of other language's proverbs you are familiar with.

1. Goorantha dhaniki kondantha.
2. Kuutiki gathiledhu kani meesaniki sampengga nune.

10. Will you continue to improve your speaking & listening skills in the future by using proverbs?

Yes / No

**Answer:** Yes

### Data of the Students' Responses Received

1. Medium of instruction up to intermediate. English: 48, Other: 2
2. Your favourite proverb. Why? All the students wrote different proverbs.
3. Do you like to listen to stories? Yes: 50
4. What do you think in the end product of a proverb? C: 50
5. Mention the proverb you explained in the Listening & Speaking activities?  
All the students spoke their favourite Proverb and explained the meaning enthusiastically.
6. The explanation / storytelling activity was interesting. Yes: 50
7. Do you enjoy reading, learning and learning proverbs? Yes: 50
8. In one sentence, mention how proverbs improve your expression.  
All 50 students responded positively.
9. Give two examples of other language's proverbs you are familiar with.  
Each student gave two proverbs from other languages like Telugu, Hindi etc.
10. Will you continue to improve your speaking & listening skills in future by using proverbs? Yes: 50

### Future Scope

Proverbs can serve as interesting lead-in activities because they are meaningful, and they contain some good values that can be practiced in daily life. In relation to character building, proverbs bear some educational values which can be used to build the students' character. English proverbs as the crystallization of collective wisdom are the essence of English. Based on the features of English proverbs, a teacher can make use of the English as a lead-in activity. He/she can use them in teaching English skills, or the linguistic components of English. The students can develop their Bi-lingual Linguistic skills also.

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