

Importance of Standards in Testing Technical English for Engineering Students of Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT Employability of engineers has become questionable in the recent years. One of the reasons for poor employability skills is the lack of communication skills in English. Teaching of English language is not augmented by testing of English. The technical English syllabus for engineering students advocates teaching of all the four language skills but does not specify testing of these language skills. After teaching the skills, testing is done on reading and writing skills in English. Listening and speaking are not tested in the first year of study. After testing is done, grades are awarded based on the marks the students score in the examination, but the grades are not valid or reliable as the grades do not relate to the ability of the student per se. The grade places the student according to the criterion for pass in Technical English but does not shed light on the language ability of the student. This paper highlights some of the issues in testing Technical English for engineering graduates, and the advantages of examinations if standardised.