

Linguistic Impediments in the Advancement of Research in Academics: An Interdisciplinary Approach

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Abstract

This topic is based on the major project from U.G.C. and has entailed a rigorous field work and voracious reading of books on research in subjects of humanities such as History, English Literature, Economics, Political Science and Education. The project has covered a time period of almost two years and one more year of work is left with me. During these two years, I have prepared questionnaires and distributed it amongst professors working not only with Kanpur University but with other universities and colleges affiliated to those universities. This campaign has brought in commendable result and I have a wide variety of opinions from supervisors in colleges and universities far and wide. My effort to prove, that English Language is an indispensable medium for a research of class and distinction has been readily accepted and appreciated by the professors and supervisors every where. Professors and supervisors everywhere, lamented on the falling standard of research for which, language constraint is one vital reason. Talking to them I have discussed certain steps which the scholars should adopt to enhance their knowledge of English Language for channelising their research in the right direction. This problem of acquiring control over the foreign language which is essentially needed for advanced studies was dealt with by the various experts invited by me for their lectures in the workshops organized by me under the project. The books consulted by me written by various experts of the subjects, surprisingly had references of foreign historians, politicians, economists, litterateurs and educationists and their theories which further endorse my justification of English language as an appropriate medium of today.

Research emerges from the possibility of perception of solution to the existing problem. Just selecting a topic does not allow the researcher any help to go ahead with his project. He has to invent means and ways of reaching his goal. This invention brings him face to face with problems. The problem in the question is the difficulty or hazard faced by the researcher and to go ahead with overcoming the difficulty in research. A problem alone sets the wheels of research to turn. Among the various problems faced by the researchers, we are going to focus on the medium of expression adopted by the researchers in his pursuit of accomplishing his research and to exemplify in it.

The quality of research has received a great set back of late and much has to be blamed on the weak power of expression of the research scholar which decapitates the healthy growth of a research. As research is the pinnacle of advanced studies, the most acceptable language is English

Language used widely in India and abroad.

The tools available for a research scholar such as biographies of the pioneers of the various subjects, international journals, commercial magazines, materials siphoned through internet, attending seminars and conferences, consulting digital libraries and through international publications, are such sources of information which are the stipulating measures to be taken by the scholars for not only improving the quality of their research but also for giving class to their work.

If we refer to the sources seriously, we would see that all of them require the scholars to have adequate knowledge of English Language to manipulate them fruitfully. The biographies of the pioneers of Economics, Sociology, Literature, History, Political Science, Education and Science as well are compulsorily and originally available in English. Later they might have been translated into other languages.

Then a research scholar has to consult the international journals for first hand knowledge in their field of research so that when they go about their work, they do not miss out on any piece of information that might make a dent in their otherwise immaculately prepared material. And not to be mentioned again, all the international journals are compulsorily published in English and hence, research scholar has to have a proper knowledge of English.

Next in the list are the commercial magazines which are an important tool of reference for the scholars of economics and commerce. This magazine has to cater to the international markets alongwith the indigenous market. As in this time of globalization the world has shrunk into our pockets in the form of modern technology and consequently, both international and national market are closely interlinked and each directly influence the other. In such a condition, the commercial magazines present the current market trends both international and national in the condensed form and prove very useful for the research scholars dealing with international market trends or the same in relation to the indigenous market. Such a versatile magazine has to be written in English Language in its original form.

The other most important tool which the scholars of both Arts and Science faculty including the technocrats use commonly is internet. Again the materials available on internet are all in English and hence a scholar has to have knowledge of English in order to benefit from this source of information. Moreover any research without internet as a tool is quite unacceptable because this source gives the most up-dated material and data and in shortest possible period of time.

Besides these, the scholars of research have to do extensive reading in order to strike upon a land which has not been harvested or has yet to be cultivated by an able farmer i.e. a scholar. Reading of foreign publications have a two-fold positive effect on the research scholars--- firstly, he gets a thorough knowledge of his field of research and is motivated with ideas and queries to pursue his research and secondly, he improves his command over language by rigorous study and voracious reading.

Lastly when the scholar successfully caters to the above mentioned tools, he finds himself confident and is able to prepare research papers related to his topic of research and present them in seminars and conferences. Before he can do so it is also advisable for him to attend number of seminars and conferences to learn the style of presentation and attain confidence for facing the audience. Hold on his topic as well as on language will contribute amply to his confidence. This is acquired by him through indiscriminate reading and information gathered in the process. After discussing the utility of English Language in handling the various tools of research, I would like to throw some light on the various steps that a scholar may take to strengthen his hold on English Language. The following are the results of the study conducted:

- Firstly, the scholars make lots of grammatical mistakes while writing which they can overcome by practicing grammar at least for an hour each day.
- Secondly, besides their course book, they should start reading short stories written in simple language prescribed for primary classes and then move on to the stories prescribed for secondary classes and so on.
- Thirdly, scholars should assign sometime, say at least once a week to express them through writing their impressions on any incident that caught their attention during the week and show it to their language teacher.
- Fourthly, the scholars should watch English news on the T.V. daily and try to grasp the language and catch their expression by noticing the way they speak. This will not only help them to frame their words but also help them to pronounce them correctly while they speak. Such an effort will not only help them with their vocabulary but also provide them with confidence to face the audience and present their paper admirably.
- Fifthly, the scholars should learn to be patient listeners. They should attend seminars conferences, lectures and workshops and listen carefully to all the paper- presenters and lecturers and learn from them and not slink out or stay out from such gatherings. The reason is that, their attentive listening of the speakers will not only provide them with fruitful matter but instill confidence in them for their future Endeavour.
- Sixthly, the scholars should start taking interest in helping their brothers, sisters, juniors or children with their English study so that while helping them, they may also help themselves by learning the language gradually with each class.
- Seventhly, the scholars should try to speak simple sentences at home and also amongst their friends. They can also copy the news-readers and stand before a mirror and talk to themselves.
- Lastly, the language workshops should be made compulsory for all research scholars before they can enroll themselves as research scholars. The science students aiming to become doctors and engineers should be given proper language classes for a better outcome as they would represent our country outside when they go for their advanced studies abroad.

These steps may not do wonders in a jiffy but can go a long way to do so if the scholars seriously think about implementing them.

