

Inadequate Usage of Vocabulary in English Language Reduce the Quality of Communication in Academic Setting with Reference to UvaWellassa University of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The use of rich vocabulary is undoubtedly salient for an academic setting to maintain the quality of communication in any given context. Unfortunately, it is observed and experienced through empirical observation that a significant number of academicians do not employ a rich vocabulary at meetings, classroom settings, and such other important gatherings while maintaining accurate syntactic constructions. Instead, the general use English Language is employed in all instances where it does not reflect the quality of communication which directly makes an impact on impressive communication. Hence this article focuses on critical observation of the use of vocabulary at statutory meetings and its contribution to maintaining the quality of English Language communication in an academic setting.

Keywords- vocabulary, communication, academic setting, English Language

Introduction

The employment of rich vocabulary depending on the nature of the academic setting impresses the participants of a given statutory meeting. Most of the statutory meetings: Faculty Board Meetings, Senate Meetings, Council Meetings and Sub-committee meeting of Senate are attended by academicians. The special phenomenon observed in many of these meetings is that the applicable use of vocabulary in statutory meetings is hardly used. Instead, the general vocabulary along with the rare use of terminologies used in their given disciplines is haphazardly used. Thus, it is observed English for professional communication is hardly visible in such

statutory meetings attended by most of the academicians. Therefore, this paper aims at producing an overall overview on the use of English Language vocabulary used in the above context with reference to English for professional communication in academic settings. After all, the knowledge of the vocabulary is essential for both the academics and students in maintaining the quality of university-level meetings (Ahmad, S. R. 2016). Thus, discussing the vocabulary needed for professional communication will have a greater impact on the quality of academic communication.

The Need of Vocabulary in English Language Communication

It is evident that vocabulary (not the terminology in a given discipline) is crucial in the aspect of fluency in communication particularly with regard to productive skills, speaking and writing. Before writing, speaking plays a pivotal role in any given context. In the academic setting, speaking in the standard form employing rich vocabulary shall undoubtedly enhance the aspect of quality along with the accurate syntactic construction. Similarly, in statutory meetings in an academic setting, the quality and proficiency are reflected when a large vocabulary in the English Language is employed. According to Maxwell (2013), nobody is a native speaker of academic English which means that both native and non-native speakers have to learn a specific variety either EAP, ESP or EPP. In the development of a manual of lexis for general academic use, with self-experience in the field of English for Academic Purposes, around 1900 words were collected to be used as the foundation for enhancing the proficiency of the users both learners and novice academicians.

However, it has been evident that academicians in the context of professional English use have shown less use of rich vocabulary even if they have been serving in the field for nearly a decade. Therefore, this paper is significant for those who are aspiring to be world-renowned scholars in a tertiary education context where they ought to be able to use rich vocabulary in the academic context.

Scope of vocabulary to deal with English for Professional Communication

According to the research carried out by Cohead, A. (2021), in reaching a satisfactory level of academic proficiency, roughly between 3000 to 8000 words are required. Further, Cohead reveals that academic spoken texts require less vocabulary density than that of a written academic text.

The frequency of the use of vocabulary depends on the requirement and thus it can be either high, low or mid according to the information provided in the journal: Nation 2016. It is important to note that English Language speakers of different purposes expect various ways of employing high-flown vocabulary.

Equally important to know that most participants are in difficult situations when particular words are used which are used in other disciplines. For example, the word 'credit' as 'the credit of this huge work should go to Mr. Tennakoon. The word credit is frequently used in the field of banking and management rather than in other fields. So, the people in the field of management and finance find it difficult to grasp the contextual meaning of the given word, in this case, credit. However, the use of the abstract meaning of vocabulary enriches both written and spoken corpora.

What is required for professional communication in English is the vocabulary for English for General Academic Purposes. These are words along with accurate syntactic construction that professionals encounter in any given field of communication. This contains according to Dang et al, (2017) 1741-word families which cover 90.3% out of 13-million-word families in academic speech corpora.

Overview of Expressions used in General at Statutory Meetings

It is observed that some so-called responsible members tend to use slang language at official meetings. For instance, 'I say, you listen'. From this utterance, this participant chairing a meeting attempts to explain something else. Such expression annoys some fluent participants at such meetings. This occurs when the speaker is not fluent in communication. This sort of communication embarrasses the participants. On the other hand, it spoils the recipients of knowledge. At times, some bright learners too are spoiled due to lack of communication.

The other point which was observed is the hard rude and ill-mannered language used by some of the responsible academicians. There is no politeness at all in their communication. Learners who are prone to be in such settings get themselves spoiled by such people even if learners come from civilized backgrounds. Not only their speeches but also their written corpora too are harsh and impolite.

The use of tone is also equally significant in their communication. At some statutory meetings, it was found that the tone of some of the participants as academics is not in the

accepted context of communication. This is tolerated in most of cases since many are on the same line of proficiency and are not aware of it. Others tend to be muted since pointing out such may cause embarrassments to themselves and not for the concerned.

The frequent use of polite expressions is hardly visible at such statutory meetings. Instead, impolite, harsh and shabby colloquial expressions are employed. All those factors so far discussed are summed up, it is evident that the quality of academic communication is hardly observed.

Conclusion

Unless a deal of effort is put into proficiency in professional communication, there can not be a quality of academic communication among participants. Thus, it requires them to accumulate a substantial number of vocabularies along with accurate syntactic construction in order to maintain the quality of academic communication. There is much more to be done by all those participating in statutory meetings in maintaining the quality of academic communication which reflects the quality of academia.

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