SKILL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH TERMINOLOGICAL COMPETENCE: QUALITY ENHANCEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Learning outcome holds prime importance in student-centred teaching learning approach of Higher Education. Quality is expected and appreciated in Teaching Learning process in Higher Education for effective and impressive results. An established system of technical and scientific terminology is important for the development of a field or discipline. An effective communication system is possible only when the words, concepts and terms of that specific discipline are well defined. The predefined terms of that particular discipline are known as technical terminologies. Scientific terminology holds a great importance as it would not only facilitate effective communication and understanding of a discipline but would also promote research and other academic advancements across disciplines. Words have the flexibility of getting new meaning across nations and cultural domains with the up-gradation of domain specific principles and concepts. Main issue lies in rendering the meaning to the word appropriate to region, time, culture and field or domain, indicating that the terminologies should be clear, simple, precise, and easy to understand, and they should be regularly reviewed through high level committee. In order to enhance the linguistic potential of the teachers and better communication with students in higher education, there is a need to organize workshops and seminars. Moreover, it is important for the academic institutions to teach terminologies for effective delivery of lecture. Terminological competence and its translation to the students require terminological skills and constant awareness.

KEYWORDS*: Terminologies, Psychology, Scientific, Language, Cognition

INTRODUCTION

Considering the global competition in education sector, quality higher education is the need of the hour. An educational institution cannot have a unique identity if the efforts lack in teaching learning process. It is important to understand that interest in a subject facilitates the learning process as well, and interest can be generated through the meaningful interpretation and understanding of terms and concepts of a domain. Learning outcome is the output of what the student could grasp and understand through the skills and competencies of a teacher. A term is a word that contains linguistic characters, and systems (Ananiadou, 1994), and the term may be a single word or may comprise multiword. Proper use of terms and concepts enhance the quality communication and reduces the chances or errors while expressing to others. "Terminology is a set of terms representing the system of concepts of a particular subject field" (Sonneveld & Loening, 1993). According to Gelinas and Hussman (2015), terminology is a young profession that has a bright future. Popp (2001) related terminology with epistemology, which deals with the theory of knowledge. Terminological competence includes the ability to grasp the words of a subject and also to obtain the knowledge regarding the same. Translator needs to be capable of expressing the meaning of the term with accuracy. Terminography is another word that means the science, craft of describing terminology (Yubin, 2008). Terminologies can be divided into three major types as:

- Classical terminology: These are the univocal term e.g. ISO. These are defined by non-vocal reference point.

- Descriptive terminology: These are the polysemous words defined in dictionaries (Temmerman, 2000)

- Socio-cognitive terminology: This is the language that is related to a specific domain in context of situations, thoughts and verbal terms (Temmerman et al., 2005).

Accordingly, two types of terminologists have evolved, i.e. traditional terminologists that studies the terms in isolation without consideration to the context whereas, modern terminologists determines the meaning of terms as per textual variations (Pearson, 1998). According to research, scientific terminology is of dual importance for the librarians in understanding the

terminologies of their own discipline and that of others for research and academic development. Synonymy, homonymy or polysemy has a significant role in understanding as well as complicating the meaning of a term (Ananiadou, 1994). Deep processing is required while developing the terminological competence, so that recall can be more effective.

Predefined language use in humans is a physiological activity that gets influenced by various systems. It is a proven fact that the native language has a strong effect on the perception of individual about the world. Although it is a debatable issue if it is due to higher mental perceptual processing or simply language based interpretation of the world around. Human cognition has the ability to categorize the experiences perceived in the environment through higher mental processing. Experiments on color perception have widely been used on the basis of Whorf's principle of linguistic relativity (Heider & Oliver, 1972). This principle indicates that individuals belonging to different language perceive the environment according to the language and terminologies used in their language. Though critiques question whether language affects thought and other cross-linguistic effects or not (Pinker, 2007; Munnich & Landau, 2003).

Giving a specific meaning to a word in cultural and subject specific boundaries is a challenging task. The language of teaching or instructions is one of the reasons that contribute towards the underperformance of students in education sector. Research indicates that the success of students in academics is also dependent upon the use of terminology (Paxton 2009). However research also maintains that language is not the barrier in academic knowledge (Alexander 2010). As per the pedagogical requirements, it is important for the educators to impart knowledge in the language the students are more comfortable. Mother tongue is considered as a more preferred language in earlier research as well (Auerbach, 1993). Thus, there is a need of scientific development of terminology for educating the youth in different disciplines.

It has been observed that in the field of Psychology, very little effort has been done with respect to development of terminologies in the mother tongue. However, research indicates that language is considered as the basic mean through which higher mental processing is done like enhanced thought processes (Vygotsky, 1978). The emotional expression of a concept in the

mother tongue makes the concept easy and enhances the understanding of the discipline. This is the reason language is called the heart of mental healthcare (Swartz & Kilian, 2014). The major problem with the concepts of psychology is that they are too complex and their meanings get changed while translating them from one language to another, where cultural differences adds to the problem to a higher degree. Research indicates that professionals have not been taking the use of terminologies as a serious matter in different disciplines (Ovando 1989).

Scholars, academicians have strongly been trying to upgrade the scientific vocabulary and terminology through research, workshops, studies and seminars (Alexander, 2010). There is theoretical basis (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991, Gadamer, 1975, Nabudere, 2011; Peavy, 1997) of the relationship of psychology with the use of language, terminologies, concept formations, learning across cultures. Gadamer (1975) gave the concept of hermeneutics which states that language has a strong role in making a meaning to our practices beyond boundaries i.e. reaching in other's horizons of understanding. In the similar manner, Vygotsky talked about socio-cultural dimension in the formation of cognition and higher mental processes, as individuals and society are considered to be interdependent on each other. The concepts become a part of inner psychological world of the individuals through mediation and language was considered as one of the most significant meditational tool. He talked about zone of proximal development or ZPD, which is defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level [of the learner] as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1986)".

For an effective teaching learning process, there is a need to develop terminological competence in students. Terms of a discipline holds the core position and needs to be strengthened through rigorous use of those terminologies while teaching or during communication with the students. Terminological competence can be brought in existence through conscious efforts. Term education is a meaningful and significant activity that comes under teaching process. Students are considered to be literate in a specific domain when they can effortlessly use the terminologies related to that

specific domain. As the disciplines grow, new terminologies keep adding in literature and it is important to absorb and understand the same by both teachers and students.

While explaining the meaning of terminologies to the students, the role of teacher is more important. This suggests that terminological skill possessed by the teachers make the journey of students more flexible and also generate interest in the subject. Terms like obsessions, compulsions, pyrophobia, anhedonia, etc. are incomplete without the explanation in simple language. Breaking the term into simpler parts and then explaining the same to the students needs terminological skill on behalf of the teacher. With the growth and development of discipline, it is not important to strengthen the existing terminologies but terminological competence is required in acquiring and understanding new terms that get added to the discipline through research. There is a need to develop subject specific dictionaries for the terminologies related to that subject. Student centred competence development is a step towards positive learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Terminological competence of teacher has an influence on the learning and interest factor in students. Effective teaching-learning in higher education can only be attained through conscious efforts in terms of terminological skills and competence. The experiential learning and hence the knowledge of a nation like India cannot be put on global front if terminologies are not properly developed. The psychological experiences can't be shared across cultures and nations without having well defined terminology system. Consequently, Indian psychologists would be trained as per Indian population only, and would not fit in treating patients belonging to other cultures. Moreover, the emotions and expressions attached with the terminologies are lost if they ate not well defined. Once the standard terminologies are developed for a discipline, they should be communicated to schools, colleges and universities for proper implementation. Teaching terminologies would help in overcoming the issues of putting special efforts in creating terminologies and coining new terms by the scholars in the field, as the scholars would themselves be motivated to come up with novel and appropriate terms. More cross cultural research and academic contribution is possible with the development of scientific technologies. Learning outcome

can be made more effective through the skills of teachers in terms of their terminological competence and explanation of those terms in a language that is easy to understand and generate interest in students. This would give rise to students who can further take the learning of subject ahead in applied fields.

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