

# Language as a Mode of Communication in Higher Education

Dr. Syed Javed Iqbal Kamili  
Head Department of Commerce and Management  
Gandhi Memorial College, Srinagar

Dr. Waqar Ul Nisa  
Department of Education

## Abstract

*Language is essentially a means of communication among the members of a society. It is a prerequisite for transmitting knowledge and common understanding from one person to another. There is an intimate relationship between knowledge and power. Power determines the kind of knowledge we acquire, particularly language. The purpose of this paper is to show the role of English in the present world. There are practical reasons for using English as a mode of communication especially in higher education as most of the academic research is published in English that helps students to stay connected with their field and contemporary world. In many technical fields, much of the content and vocabulary is available in English (dissertations and research).*

**Keywords:** *Language, Communication, Higher Education*

## Introduction

Language is essentially a means of communication among the members of a society. The real and ultimate use of language comes with the literature which is written in that language. Every language is used for expression because people have emotions, sentiments, feelings, ideas, thoughts and philosophy and for this reason require language for their expression. As a tool of communication among the members of a society, language is influenced by the society where it functions. English is read all over the world today because of the importance of its literature. Literature is the expression of life in the words of truth and beauty. It is a written record of man's spirit, of his thoughts, emotions and aspirations. It is the history of human soul characterized by its artistic, suggestive and permanent qualities that helps us to know man and his soul. It preserves the ideas of a race upon which our civilization is established. Language is a prerequisite for transmitting information and common understanding from one person to another and can best be summarized as the transmission of a message from a sender to a receiver in an understandable manner and is commonly known as communication. Hence knowledge can be transmitted through language. There is an intimate relationship between knowledge and power. Power determines the kind of knowledge we acquire particularly language. Let us understand this with the use of Sanskrit in ancient India because Sanskrit speaking people were in power at that time. If the speakers of a particular language are rulers, obviously it has an advantage. It will be imposed as an official language. In India, after the Muslims, when British came, they replaced Persian by English. Then English became the official language of India. Ultimately language leaves

behind its impact on the speech of people, on their lives, literature, culture etc. English is the language of international communication even among the non English speaking people. It is the language of international trade, commerce and industry, politics and international relations. It has facilitated the mobility of students and teachers, industrialists and businessmen, travellers and explorers through different nations. It has also opened worldwide chances of employment.

This involves expression of ideas and feelings to another individual or group of individuals and depends on the capacity of an individual to evolve a desired response through communication skills. In the past, communication was essentially defined as a process of creating shared meaning through the use of signs and symbols. The process occurs in and among dyads, groups, and larger social structures through many means and for many purposes. Communication is not merely a process of creating shared meaning, but also of constructing social realities in ways that are coordinated and actively managed. In the past, many scientific and technical professionals worked independently as an individual performer with little interaction or collaboration with others and not necessarily oriented towards being a team player. Today's environment of restructured and reengineered workplace finds every human behaviour responsible to supervisors, managers and departmental heads. One of the most critical challenges is to justify every effort of communication with the scientific and technical community as increased communication skills elevate human ability to compete. The responsibility for communicating well with people of different functions, personalities, authority demands that scientific and technical professionals continually improve their communication skills. Every communication has personal as well as organizational aspects and the success of an individual in an organization depends on effective communication skills with an understanding of the dynamics of organizational communication. Communication in organizations can be broadly classified into formal and informal communication. Formal communication takes place through the system in an organization where hierarchy plays an important role and is effected in upward (subordinate to superior), downward (superior to subordinate) and horizontal (between same levels) directions. Informal communication (grapevine) in an organization is oral, active and powerful where the speed of the message spread through this network is tremendous. Hence distortion at any stage cannot be identified which is probably the reason that it is considered as the medium for spreading of rumors or false message.

#### **Scope of the Study:**

The present study focuses on the use of English language as a mode of communication. The study is focusing on the objectives given below.

#### **Objectives**

The study has been conducted mainly to:

1. To analyze the role of language learning in Higher Education Department.
2. To give some suggestion for using language as a mode of communication in higher educational institutions.

#### **Methodology**

The study is focused on the secondary data sources. The secondary data was collected from various published and unpublished sources from various journals, magazines, articles, yearbooks-statistical digest and media reports etc. Keeping in view the set objectives, this research design was adopted to have greater accuracy and in depth analysis of the research study. Available secondary data was extensively used for the study.

### Data Analysis

The Department of English, the first ever post graduate department of the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir University, is engaged in teaching and research since its inception in 1954. Sex wise enrollment in the post-graduate Department of English of the University of Kashmir has been given below in Table 1 and percentage statistics has been used to analyze the data.

**Table 1: Showing Sex-wise Enrollment in Post –graduate Department of English**

Year	Male	Female	Total
2003-04	35.93%	64.04%	128
2004-05	46.03%	53.96%	126
2005-06	50.35%	49.64%	141
2006-07	55.79%	44.20%	138
2007-08	39.70%	60.29%	136
2008-09	59.64%	40.35%	228

*Source: Digest of Statistics, University of Kashmir.*

An examination of Table 1 shows that females have attained highest enrolled percentage of 64.04 per cent in the year 2003-04 that declines to 53.96 per cent in the year 2004-05. Further it declines to 49.64 per cent in the year 2005-06 to 44.20 per cent in the year 2006-07. It has been observed that an increase in the enrolled females has rapidly increased to 60.29 per cent in the year 2007-08 but has again declined to 40.35 per cent in the year 2008-09. Upon further examination of the data, it has been observed that male enrollment was at its lowest peak of 35.93 per cent year in the year 2003-04 and has increased consistently from the year 2003-04 to 2006-07. There is a decline in male enrollment in the year 2007-08 when it was 39.70 per cent and has further increased and reached to its highest peak of 59.64 per cent in the year 2008-09.

### Conclusion

The findings suggest that both students and teachers acknowledge the important role of English in the present world. English is an international medium of communication is understood and reorganized by everyone. It has been perceived that being knowledgeable in English is the key factor for better career,

huge advantage in terms of knowledge, status in society and better communication in entire world. It dominates the international media which unites people around the world together and is considered as the essential carrier of language, politics that regulates the law, and in businesses which most of the companies use to compete in global market. There are practical reasons for using English as a mode of communication especially in higher education as most of the academic research is published in English (about 94 per cent of research in international, high-impact publications is in English). It helps students to stay connected with their field and contemporary world. In many technical fields, much of the content and vocabulary is available in English (dissertations and research). This is the reason that universities have often switched to English, especially for courses in science, technology, engineering, mathematics etc.

## References

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