

The Development of Language Competencies and Research Culture of Students through Research Work

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Abstract

Nowadays the demands and the challenges young people face in order to be competitive participants of the globalized labour market have demonstrated the need for professionals with sound knowledge in their field and good mastery of English as a lingua franca, an international means of communication for non-native speakers of English. For an individual passing through the levels of tertiary higher education in languages, linguistics, and communication, doing a research is one of the most important components of their studies. It is widely spread to evaluate the final results of the research work done by students. But a little research has been done to assess the impact it can have on them as an individual, as a future scientist, as professionals with high research qualities on one hand and as a learner of a second language on the other. In this paper, we have tried to demonstrate the gradual development of research culture, language competences, the topic, learning and cognitive capacities, and personal qualities from an undergraduate study till the doctoral research of language and culture acquisition.

Keywords: *research culture, learning and cognitive competencies, language data, language acquisition;*

"Every language is a vast pattern system, different from others, in which our culturally ordained forms and categories by which the personality not only communicates but also analyses nature, notices or neglects types of relationship and phenomena, channels his reasoning and builds the house of his consciousness"

(Benjamin Lee Whorf).

The matter of identity is one of the central topics for most of the developing countries. On the one hand, globalization gives huge opportunities for young people to receive education abroad, to work in international companies and organizations etc. On the other hand, the demands and the challenges young people face in order to be competitive participants of the globalized labour market have demonstrated the need for professionals with sound knowledge in their field and good mastery of English.

For an individual passing through the levels of tertiary higher education in languages, linguistics, and communication, research works are compulsory. It is widely spread to evaluate the final results of the research work done by students – course papers, presentations, and “diplomas”. But a little research has been done to assess the impact it can have on them as an individual, as a future scientist, as professionals with high research qualities on the one hand and as a learner of English as a second language.

Developing research culture and language competences takes time. In the context of research work these two groups of important skills develop simultaneously.

Research competencies or indicators of high-quality research culture fall into the following 3 groups:

1. *Learning or cognitive* – observation, identification, description, comparison, analysis, synthesis, abstraction, hypothesizing, argumentation, reasoning, interpretation.
2. *Communicative* – data collection, writing, academic, business, professional communication, using high-tech., negotiation, presentation.
3. *System:* self-organization, chronotype management, adaptability, goal-setting, prioritizing, decision-making, integrity, creativity (thinking out-of-the-box), loyalty, ethics, emotional self-regulation, sequencing, inhibition, anticipation, flexibility.

For the students the research culture starts from learning the source: from the culture research. These sources are mainly presented in English. It means that students get acquainted with scientific discourse. Scientific discourse contains several elements such as academic skills, language skills, intercultural sensitivity and understanding, interpersonal skills and audience. All these skills necessary

for a good scientific discourse can be helpful in all the spheres of one's life. Thus SCIENCE WRITING helps to develop an enhanced understanding of English written pattern, and English as a system in general.

In this paper, we have tried to demonstrate the development of research culture, language competences from an undergraduate study till the doctoral research of language and culture acquisition.

Title

BA paper	MA paper	Dissertation
<i>Imitation as the initial stage of linguistic modelling of reality</i>	<i>Imitation as the initial stage of language acquisition (ontogenetic, phylogenetic and second language acquisition)</i>	<i>Imitation as the initial stage of verbal cognition and linguistic categorization</i>

Scope of activity

<p>Reading academic literature in native language and in English</p> <p>Comparing these theories</p> <p>Summarizing what has been read</p> <p>While reading vocabulary, grammar was enriched</p> <p>Translating into English the material read in Armenian and Russian.</p> <p>Start developing writing skills</p> <p>Get acquainted with the core features of the academic writing</p>	<p>A theoretical review of the existing hypothesizes and research.</p> <p>Express the author's attitude towards those theories.</p> <p>A brief structural design of the problem we were planning to elaborate in the nearest future – second language acquisition.</p> <p>Learn how to review the literature</p>	<p>An analysis of all significant theories of language origin and language acquisition. From a new perspective, according to which ...</p> <p>Elaborate the hypothesis...</p> <p>Find application to that new knowledge</p>
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As you see, the author of the above-mentioned BP, most of all is reading. Reading is an important part of doing a research, being a student in general. During our studies, we read a lot. But just reading is not enough. Students have to deal with that material, new information they have gained. While reading one enriches his/her vocabulary, grammar, translates a lot. At this stage the student starts to compare the sources, different types of information concerning the matter, to summarize that material. She starts to develop her writing skills.

By the end of the 5th year, the future researcher has already learned how to review the literature. She even makes her first steps to analyse what she has already ready. She has learned to structuralize her work, to plan her future work.

As a post-graduate student, the author of the above-mentioned dissertation analyses the existing theories from a new perspective. She has already something new to say about the matter. On the basis of the analysis, she has put forward a new hypothesis and finds application to that new knowledge.



Language data

BH	babble 1.կարկաչել, խոխոջել 2.թոթոսել 3.բրբլալ 1.балтать 2.журчать buzz բզզալ, տզզալ, դզզալ, жужжать roar 1.մռնչալ, մնչալ 2.գոռալ, ոռնալ 1. реветь 2. шуметь 3. рычать 4. хохотать)
MP	OE – <i>wa</i> (wail); ON- <i>væla</i> (to lament) - root is <i>væ</i> “woe”; OS – <i>væ</i> (sorrow); OHG - <i>vei</i> (sorrow); Goth. - <i>wai</i> (sorrow); Lat - <i>væ</i> (cry of pain); Lett. – <i>wai</i> ;(alas); Arm. – վայնասուն [vaynasun] (the root is [vay])
Dissertation	The word woe nowadays is translated into Armenian as վայնասուն [vaynasun]. In Old English (OE) this word was <i>wa</i> , in Middle English (ME) period it became <i>wo</i> which meant “calamity, sorrow”. The English word wail come from Old Norfe (ON) <i>væla</i> “to lament”. Its root is <i>væ</i> “woe”. Thus the roots of there words sound similar – <i>wa</i> , <i>væ</i> . They were also compared with words, which have similar or close meanings in other languages. For example, Old Saxon (OS) - <i>væ</i> (sorrow); Old High German (OHG) - <i>vei</i> (sorrow); Gothic - <i>wai</i> (sorrow); Latin (Lat) - <i>væ</i> (cry of pain); Lettish (Let) - <i>wai</i> (alas); Armenian (Arm) վայնասուն [vaynasun] (the root is <i>vay</i>). All the words mentioned above have similar or at least close meaning: a sound or exclamation made by human being caused by pain, sorrow. We all know that pain, sorrow are psychological states of a human being. And despite different nationalities and different historical development - the Armenians and the English - express their pain and sorrow with similar combinations of sounds. Arm. վայ , Lett. <i>wai</i> ,OE. <i>wa</i> , OHG. <i>vei</i> , ON. <i>Væ</i> , Lat. <i>væ</i> . Human universals find their reflection in linguistic universals-among them emotions and their expressions.

The above chart demonstrates vividly when and what kind of language data is collected and analysed by the author. During the first stage she mainly works with dictionaries – etymological, English-Russian, English-Armenian, Armenian-Russian etc. She has to find English onomatopoeias and their equivalents in Armenian and Russian. For her MP she already has to give, first, the formal – phonetic classification of the 60 onomatopoeic words in three modern languages - English, Armenian, Russian and second, diachronic-etymological ascendance to the phonosemantic origins considering the background data of other languages.

Later she analysis the collected language data from a new perspective. First, she studies imitative language phenomena in various languages – noise words, onomatopoeia, sound symbolism etc. After she illustrates the principle of isomorphic function of imitation in the process of linguistic categorization with examples of onomatopoeic words from Armenian, Russian and English. Third, she gives the classification of English onomatopes into a dozen of classes according to the language-specific sound combinations and classification of Armenian onomatopes according to the phonological system as compared to the one suggested for English, and discusses the phonetic and phonological peculiarities of these units in Armenian and English.

Furthermore, she presents new language data in her dissertation:

- a) documented samples of infants’ speech from a psycholinguistic perspective,
- b) documented samples of imitation in the early verbal behaviour of monolingual and bilingual infants,
- c) documented samples from the speech of students (18-29 years old) studying English as a second language,
- c) analysis of the examples of imitative action at different levels of linguistic categorization – phonological, morphological, grammar and word formation.

The results of analysis of the success model presented here demonstrate the gradual development of the topic, learning and cognitive capacities, and personal qualities. During the first stage of her research work, the student acquires receptive (passive) knowledge and learns to express the acquired knowledge. Later she learns to analyse, systematize that knowledge. Afterward, on the basis of the analysis, she puts forward a new hypothesis, finds application to that new knowledge and successfully defends her dissertation.



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