

LOST IN WORDS: THE SILENT EMOTION BEHIND WRITING

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EDITORIAL

ABSTRACT

A comprehensive write-up successfully delivers the message that is intended to be conveyed. The cautioning rate of budding dentists failing at the craft of writing plain English can directly affect the field of research.

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Academic writing is commonly referred to as scientific writing which is characterized by a structured document that aims to transmit scientific ideas and knowledge. English is the main language for global communication and also for disseminating scholarly works. Writing is the heart of academic life which is always seen as an integral part of science used to document and communicate ideas, activities and findings to others.

In research, success is based on the number and impact of an individual's publications. Rejection of papers not for the quality of the research, but for the quality of English is a common problem faced by non-native English researchers. The dominance of English has created a considerable bias in the scientific research community. Critical scientific findings are going unnoticed due to a dearth in knowledge about the English language. The fact that only 5% of the world's population speaks English as a native language poses a huge problem for many researchers.

Research in the dental field is progressing rapidly in India. However, lack of command in English is one of the many barriers for the growth of dental science and scientific publications in India. Many researchers view writing as a necessary evil and the least enjoyable part of the research process. The postgraduates do scientific research, but only a handful get their work published. Supervisors and guides of students themselves fail to get their work published more often.

Apart from general academic writing skills, writing in English is perceived difficult. One seems to pay attention to rules more than ideas. When such professionals can't write a paper successfully or when their paper is rejected, they are discouraged by it and quit the efforts. A Catch-22 ensues, and the enthusiasm to pursue a career in research dwindles. Researchers should have an academic writing competence to produce a quality text in order to express their ideas, hypothesis and insights. As far as the Indian dental scenario is concerned, the inquisitiveness in scientific writing needs to be installed right from the undergraduate level. The roadblock of scientific writing can only be removed if a researcher sees basic linguistic prowess as a need and not as an imposition.

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