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The Curriculum of Foundation English: Reformation - Need of the Hour

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The principal objective of this paper is to bring out an instant reformation in the curriculum design of Foundation English for the under graduate disciplines. In 2006, the State Planning Commission wrote a letter to the Vice Chancellor of Madras University stressing its discontentment on the methods of teaching and learning of English across the state. It also suggested a few recommendations to reconstruct the curriculum and to mould the graduates for employability in the global job market.

For example, the graduates of various disciplines such as Commerce, History, and Geography curriculum would not support to work in software sectors. There is a misconception among the recruiters that commerce graduates don't have language and technical skills, but only accounting skills. Even though the Arts & Science graduates are technically competent, they are unable to get into corporate sector because of their lack of communication skills. Hence, the present curriculum should be changed to assist the Arts & Science graduates to find a job in the industry.

Therefore, this concept becomes a barrier for the graduates to get into IT & Corporate sectors. In the present scenario, every graduate is in dire need of acquiring the holistic perspective of all these required skills, Hence, the curriculum must be redesigned.

Key words: Curriculum, Technical skills, Graduates.

I.INTRODUCTION

Language is regarded as a form of activity especially, it is a form of objectivity of human beings in societies and it has the property of being patterned. Scientific study of a language involves knowing the usage and the methods of learning a language to construct a unified theory of how language works and to derive from it certain exact methods for describing languages. The theory is not of course conjured out of the air; it has origin in countless observation of language events.

English, having been recognized as the global language, added to its prior predominance, is enjoying a wider popularity in today's highly scientific and technocratic world. Recent rapid development in the field of science and technology entail the need to exchange information and views. As far as English language is concerned, it is the second language in most of the Universities. At this juncture, English, as a language for global communication, plays a vital role in our educational system and also is an assurance to getting a job in corporate sector.

It is a known fact that the world has become so competitive. Nowadays in every field better opportunities are available to those who communicate better, whatever qualities,

knowledge and qualifications they have. Job opportunity is easily available to those who participate effectively in Interviews, Group Discussions and Competitive Examinations. These skills are amended according to the present need of recruiters.

Syllabus is based on the aims, objectives, outcomes and content of a course. Together, they specify what is to be learned and how well it is to be achieved.

In fact the objective of Foundation English of Arts & Science doesn't support the employability of the rural students to be an entrepreneur in the corporate world. The curriculum of foundation English offered by various universities are not uniform. Mostly they consist of a piece of prose, a collection of poetry, short stories and an extract from drama along with some exercises on grammar & composition. This surely would not help the students to enhance their communication skills. Hence Teaching foundation English is for no obvious reason.

II.DISCUSSION

In 2006, the State Planning Commission wrote a letter to the Vice Chancellor of Madras University stressing its discontentment on the methods of teaching and learning of English across the state. It also suggested a few recommendations to reconstruct the curriculum and to mould the graduates for employability in the global job market.

In this view, Thiruvalluvar University has introduced a new syllabus of foundation English exclusively for Arts & science students with the text named *English for Life 1, 2, 3 & 4* & commerce students with the text named *Interface 1 & 2*. The objective of the syllabus is fulfilled in this comprehensive course book for students of commerce, business administration and computer science at the undergraduate level. It has been designed to cater to students' current and future language and communication needs. In view of the varying backgrounds and abilities of students entering college, a Preparatory Language Skills Unit at the beginning of the course attempts to bridge the gap between the levels of learners. The book also attempts to develop their proficiency in the four language skills (LSRW) and a working knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. Keeping in view of their specific needs, the course pays special attention to honing their listening and speaking skills in academic, business and social situations. It adopts interactive approach and participatory methods. It also deals with business writing and a few advanced areas such as meeting skills, presentation skills, negotiation skills, interview skills and team building all of which are indispensable to the job-seeker as well as the aspiring manager. The activity-oriented tasks ensure that the learning process is relevant, interesting and enjoyable to the students.

Unfortunately, there is a misconception among the recruiters from the corporate sector that commerce graduates don't have language and technical skills, but only accounting skills. Realizing that the Arts & Science graduates are, presently, technically competent and also competent in their communication skills, the job providers have started to provide jobs in the following areas:

BPO-SERVICES-VARIOUS HUES

- ❖ Data entry
- ❖ Accounting Service
- ❖ Content Management
- ❖ Financial Service
- ❖ Help desk

CALL CENTER

- BPO Service
- Research & Analysis
- Banking Service
- Telecom Service
- Legal Service
- Insurance Claims
- Data Processing.
- Healthcare BPO service.
- Interior & Design service.
- Media & Publication Service
- Marketing Research service.

The corporate industry expect the following skills as basic requirement,

- Good Communication skill in English & Grammar.
- Awareness & care for customer service.
- Problem Resolution skills.
- Working against Deadlines.
- Transaction Processing.
- Good Written Communication.
- Key Board skills.
- Numerical skills.

The syllabus recommended by Thiruvalluvar University truly satisfied the communication skills requirements of corporate companies. The syllabus introduced by Thiruvalluvar University helped and supported the students to develop their communication & technical skills. But, the syllabus has been followed by the institutions from the academic year 2008 to 2011.

It has been designed to cater for students' current and future language and communication needs. Keeping in view the varying backgrounds and abilities of students entering colleges, the Preparatory Language Skills unit at the beginning of the course attempts to bridge the gaps between the levels of learners. The course adopts an interactive approach and participatory methods. The activity-oriented tasks ensure that the learning process is relevant, interesting and enjoyable for students.

III.CONCLUSION

After the change of the syllabus, once again the University reverted the traditional syllabus of Foundation English consist of a piece of prose, a collection of poetry, short stories and an extract from drama along with some exercises on grammar & composition. This resulted in becoming a Hurdle to the graduates to enroll them in corporate sector. It is the duty of the Higher Education Department to take necessary actions to bring a change in the curriculum of foundation English that would help Arts & Science graduates to find a job in the corporate sector.

Universities will need to ensure that they understand the new mandatory assessment requirements of different courses by checking the relevant syllabuses. These changes to requirements need to be incorporated into Higher education policy and procedures. The Board still requires colleges to develop an internal assessment program that specifies the various assessment skills and weightings allocated to each skills provides a schedule of the tasks designed for the whole course.

Universities should follow Higher education policies and procedures and syllabus guidelines for assessment and reporting. They need to ensure that course requirements are followed in terms of the balance and weighting of components and types of skills.

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