



Identifying Curricular Gap between Global and Local ELT Programs

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Abstract

The objective of this gap analysis is driven by the hypothesis that ELT curricula in India are not at par with internationally acclaimed ELT curricula. To test this hypothesis, the study makes a comparative gap analysis by extracting ideal curricular components of internationally acclaimed ELT curricula and ELT curricular components used by premier Indian institutions specialized in ELT programmes. The data were collected through document analysis; whereas, the collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. As for the major findings, the study revealed a huge gap between internationally acclaimed ELT curricula and the Indian ELT curricula.

Background of the Study

According to 1971 census, India, popularly known as a museum of languages, has about 1652 languages and Indian states can be called linguistic states as they are formed based on language(s). Since every state is in the pursuit of establishing its own exclusive linguistic identity, the prevailing multilingualism has an adverse impact on English education as it deprives the learners to master English to an optimal level. Indian Ministry of Education advocates three

language formula which is conventionally practiced in rural areas as mother tongue (L1) + state's official language (L2) + English (L3). If we look at the 7th All India School Education Survey 2007 report which was initiated by the National Council of Educational Research and Training with the objective of creating a uniform school database for the country, we find that 90.61% of schools at the upper primary stage follow three language formula and 84.86% of schools follow the formula at the secondary stage (Meganathan, 2009). On the other hand, urban schools lay the emphasis otherwise as English + state's official language + mother tongue. Therefore, the students in India can be broadly categorized into two types; the one is having the regional language as medium of study from the primary level and the other is having English as the medium of study (Murali, 2009). Along with these two types, we should add an extra category called semi-urban students who receive their education through English and regional language(s) in parallel. It is imperative to mention here that the first type of students (rural students), who receive their education in regional languages, constitutes 75% of student population in India and the remaining 25% comprises semi-urban and urban students (Jha, 2014).

Although a host of local researchers like Bhandari (2019), Dhanavel (2009), Bhardwaj (2012), Reddy (2012), Meganathan (2009), Murali (2009) etc. in India have discussed ELT issues from different perspectives, e.g. assessment, syllabus design, language planning, gender, large class size etc. but there is almost no research concerned with exploring and rectifying the impediments in mastering English.

Accompanied by the aforementioned factors responsible for the dismal state of English especially in rural areas, this study also holds the curricular components of Indian ELT programmes responsible for the dismal performance of teaching and learning English.

Statement of the Problem

Linguistic and pedagogic inadequacies found in Indian ELT practitioners resulting from sloppy ELT curricula can be viewed as the statement of problem for this study. There is a worldwide belief in academia: "*We teach what we were taught.*" Acquisition of curricular contents of *an ELT programme has its direct impact on the ELT practitioners in terms of their teaching-learning performance. A widespread fact in Indian ELT fraternity especially in rural areas is Indian English language teachers teach what they know, what they have, what they think, and what they believe. They do not go beyond that; whereas, ELT practitioners in global scenario especially in native countries think out of the box. They teach beyond what they know, what they have, and what they believe. They also develop additional expertise in behavioral psychology and intercultural nuances to acclimatize themselves to the overseas learners. Thus the competence and proficiency in English language can be determined and maximized by improving the quality of curricular contents of ELT programmes. Given the statement of the problem, the study poses two research questions.*

Research Question

- What is the degree of gap between internationally acclaimed ELT curricula and the Indian ELT curricula?

Discussion and Analysis

In response to the research question, the study gathered the curricular components of 25 Internationally Acclaimed and 25 Indian ELT programmes (Jha, 2017).

Table.1: Curricular Components of Internationally Acclaimed ELT Programmes and their Presence and Degrees of Presence in Indian ELT/English Programmes (IEP)

	Curricular Components of Internationally Acclaimed ELT Programmes (CCIAEP)	Presence of CCIAEP in IEP	Degree of CCIAEP Presence in IEP
1.	Application of Linguistics to Language Teaching	+/-	10%
2.	Classroom Management and Observation	-	0%
3.	Continuous Professional Development (CPD)	-	0%
4.	Culture and Intercultural Communication	+/-	15%
5.	Curriculum Development and Syllabus Design	+/-	15%
6.	Delta Modules	-	0%
7.	Designing Online Learning Environment & Evaluation	-	0%
8.	Discourse Analysis	+/-	15%
9.	Distinguished Lecture Series	+/-	5%
10.	English for Specific/Academic Purposes	+/-	15%
11.	English Phonetics for Second Language Teachers	+/-	10%
12.	Field Based Research	-	0%
13.	Foundations and Current Issues in Bilingual Education	-	0%
14.	Investigating Individual Learner Differences	-	0%
15.	Language Assessment and Testing	+/-	5%
16.	Language System: phonology, lexis, syntax, & pedagogic grammar	+/-	10%
17.	Methods of Teaching Second Language Teaching for Pre-K to 12	+/-	10%
18.	Methods of ELT	+/-	25%
19.	Master's Thesis and Field-based Internship	+/-	10%
20.	Second Language Research Methodology	-	0%
22.	Theories of Second Language Acquisition	+/-	5%
23.	Sociolinguistics of English as a Global Language	-	0%
24.	Teaching Practicum	-	0%
25.	Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms	-	0%
26.	Teaching Four Macro Skills Using Authentic Materials	-	0%
27.	Technological Literacy for Language Classroom	-	0%
28.	Workshop, Seminar, and Distinguished Lecture Series	-	0%
29.	Summer Projects	+/-	10%

The curricular components listed in the left column of table.1 are vital components of an ELT curriculum which were gathered commonly from the ELT curricula of prominent ELT programme, i.e. MA (Applied Linguistics and TESOL). As for the two right columns, they list the presence of curricular components and their degrees of presence in Indian (ELT/English) programmes by selected Indian universities at postgraduate level.

Having assessed the presence and degrees of presence of CCIAEP in IEP in table.1, the study finds five striking facts as pedagogic lacunae in Indian MA (ELT/English) programmes as follows.

1. Of the 29 CCIAEP, 14 CCs are not present in IEP. In other words, IEPs are devoid of 48% CCs. It is imperative to add that India's MA (ELT/English) program is more oriented towards covering components of English literature rather than English language.
2. It is also evident that IEPs offer up to 50% of CCs but the average inclusion or presence of CCs in IEP is 11.42% which is negligible.
3. Of the 29 CCIAEP, *curriculum development and syllabus design, theories of second language acquisition, teaching four macro skills using authentic materials, second language research methodology, and teaching practicum* are considered as the backbone of an ELT programme but if we see their presence in IEP, it is only 4%.
4. Teaching Practicum, a key component for an ELT curriculum, is also absent in IEP. Teaching without practicum is like learning to drive without ever encountering traffic".
5. It is noteworthy that *methods of ELT* component was found to be present in IEP with 25%. However, it remains more in theoretical and less in practical form.

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