

A B S T R A C T

In this study 'An Experimental Evaluation and Analysis of Content of the English syllabus at the Pre-University level of NEHU; A case study of Rural Colleges in Mizoram,' an attempt has been made to survey the material prescribed for PU Course in English. The research subject of this course is a three-pronged scrutiny of material, impact and lessons for the future. The main focus of the study has been given to the 'General English' course at the PU level. The teaching materials, teaching techniques and evaluation procedures of this course have also been critically analysed.

The study consists of:

- i] a critical analysis of the English teaching materials introduced in the current course.
- ii] a very close and detailed study of the present course in all its aspects.

The main tools used for the study are

- i] The views and attitudes of the classroom teachers and learners elicited through questionnaires.
- ii] Observati-on of classroom practices.
- iii] Survey of relevant literature/research findings and informal interviews with students and teachers.
- iv] A detailed analysis of the existing syllabus/material and examination Question Papers of NEHU.

Chapter I of the thesis discusses the background to the study. It states the problem, scope of the study, tools/instruments adopted for the study, hypotheses and assumptions, constraints and expected outcomes. It also makes a review of the previous relevant studies.

The study as stated in Chapter I endeavours to assess

- i] how far the PU English courses of study are an adequate and sufficient response to the changing demands of the society;
- ii] whether the present NEHU English materials carry a reasonably well articulated set of aims and objectives;
- iii] to what degree the different sets of materials prescribed by NEHU at the PU level possess the qualities and characteristics of good teaching/learning materials;
- iv] what demands the present set of materials made both from the teachers and students, and the teacher's preparedness, professionally and psychologically, to play a new role in the classroom, and
- v] the changes that were brought into the examination pattern and the question papers along with each successive change in the English course of study.

The researcher hypothesizes the following for his study:-

- i] Until recently there was very little concern for the needs of the learner and the society in formulating materials,

- ii] there were practically no attempts at an innovative course of study in the University suiting local needs and conditions. Changes were the result of an attempt at adopting models from other Universities and countries.
- iii] The successive materials lacked clarity and offered little guidance to teachers and others concerned.
- iv] The nature of the teaching materials and methods adopted for teaching them and the procedures employed for evaluation are unsuitable.
- v] There were little or no attempts at preparing the teachers for successive changes.

As a result of the study it was hoped that:-

the factors contributing to the success or the failure of the present course could be identified and assessed.

In Chapter II, a brief historical account of English as a second language in India is given. It is seen that a content, structure and philosophy of higher education came to us as a legacy of the colonial rule. As Wood conceived it, higher education in India had two objectives; to provide a test of eligibility for Government service and to transmit an alien culture. The post Independence era has witnessed several reforms in the field of higher education in order to seek and pursue a policy oriented towards the needs of the resurgent nation. Finally, a brief survey of ELT in Mizoram has been made.

Chapter III deals with the curriculum development in ELT and theories and approaches to syllabus Design. It attempts to find

out.

- i) the place of syllabus in language teaching and
- ii) the types of syllabus available in language teaching-learning scenario.

Chapter IV deals with the theoretical assumptions of the present study and analyses the present syllabus of English for PU and the question papers to find out what demands they make on the students in the form of skills. The skills demanded have been listed in a tabulated form.

Chapter V gives the details of the field work undertaken, such as the selection of the sample of teachers and students, preparation of the questionnaires and data processing. The presentation and interpretation of the data collected through the field study have been included in this chapter.

In the last Chapter, i.e. VI, the findings of the study and observations based on them are presented along with some suggestions.

Some of the findings of the study are given below.

- i) Objectives of the General English Course at PU level should be, in the opinion of both teachers and students
 - [a] developing a mastery of language skills for functional use in communication.
 - [b] the use of English as a 'library language' and
 - [c] the development of study skills for use in the study of the learners subject of specification.
- ii) Both teachers and students do not favour the present set of

material for language development.

iii] Both teachers and students prefer a selection or two of a variety of prose pieces with exercises suitable for developing communicative and related skills to be used for the two years of the PU course. The textbooks prescribed are not useful and suitable for the PU students of Mizoram.

iv] Most of the teachers emphasize the need for conducting tutorials after a certain number of lecture sessions.

v] Most of the teachers feel the most important step to be taken while a new course is introduced is counselling the teachers and other professional groups on redefining objectives, prescription of materials and examination reforms well before they are attempted, followed by the production of suitable teaching/learning materials.

vi] Most of the teachers feel the need of teacher training for teachers of English at the under graduate level. A sizeable number of teachers prefer periodical in-service training programmes, intensive training programmes of teaching English of 4 to 6 months duration, along with Diploma in the teaching of English of the kind offered by CIEFL.

vii] Present examination system specially objective type is not satisfactory in terms of development of language skills.

The study makes the following recommendations:-

[i] The teachers who are required to teach English at the

UG level should invariably be recruited and trained with the following considerations:-

[a] They should be MAs in English with high Second class.

[b] They should have professional training like PGDTE, of CIEFL.

[c] They should be given periodical orientation training.

[ii] The instructional materials should be produced with the involvement of the teachers of English teaching undergraduate classes. Such materials should reflect the needs of the learner and also pay attention to the students interest.

[iii] A scheme combining communicatio-n skills in English for Specific purposes and an exposure to the study of modern literature still seems to be the most suitable package at the UG level. A reasonable allotment of weightages at this stage could be

Communication skills - 30%; ESP-35% and literature-35%

[iv] Discard traditional memory testing procedures, a practical system of testing should be evolved which would be continuous and cumulative.

[v] Any reform in approaches, communicative design and examinations should be tried out first as a pilot project and only after the feedback should it be introduced on a mass scale in all colleges.

[vi] Library facilities in colleges should be improved.

* * * * *