CHAPTER 3

TELESCOPING THE SYLLABUS OF CBSE AND BSEB
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Telescoping the syllabus of Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Bihar School Examination Board (BSEB)

3.1 Introduction

This chapter tries to telescope the curriculums of Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Bihar School Examination Board (BSEB) for class ninth and tenth (IX & X). CBSE comes under the Union Government of India. It is a board of education for public and private schools. It was formed in 1962. CBSE is the most popular board in India, more than 17176 schools in India follow CBSE.

The Bihar School Examination Board (BSEB) is a board of education functioning under Government of Bihar, devised to facilitate education and conduct examinations at secondary and senior secondary standard in both government and private schools, belonging to state of Bihar on the basis of syllabus as prescribed by the Bihar School Examination Board.

3.2 Syllabus of English under CBSE

CBSE offer two different papers for English teaching; English Language and Literature (paper code- 184) and English Communicative (paper code- 101). Both of the papers carry same weightage, rationale and learning outcomes.

Syllabus of English for class IX and X CBSE is divided into four sections according to different language skills and their weightage of marks in the assessment of English language and literature. The four sections are Reading skills carrying twenty (20) marks, Writing Skills with Grammar carrying twenty-five (25) marks and Literature Textbooks and Long Reading Text carrying twenty-five (25) marks, Assessment of Speaking and Listening (ASL) carrying twenty (20) marks.

It is mentioned in the syllabus that there will be one written test of English at the end of each term that is summative assessment (SA) - I and Summative assessment (SA) II. There is a distribution of chapters for prose, poetry, supplementary reader and novel/ long reading text for SA-1 and SA-2 respectively. The distribution of marks for each question and the area of skill which is intended to be tested is clearly given in the
syllabus. For testing analytical and critical thinking skills of the learner, CBSE has added an open text based assessment (OTBA) under reading skill for ten (10) marks.

3.2.1 Syllabus Class IX CBSE (attached as appendices 1 and 2). Analysis of syllabus and their learning outcomes.

Classification of syllabus has been explained/discussed under four headings:

1) Reading Skills: It is expected that a learner should have an excellence of vocabulary, conceptual understanding of the text at the end of the session. They should have the sense of decoding, analyzing, inferring and interpreting the text through reading. Learners will be expected to develop the ability of critical and intellectual thinking. The Assessment of Reading skills includes ten very short answer questions each carrying one mark and two long answer questions, to which students will have to respond in one hundred to one hundred twenty (100-120) words carrying five (5) marks each.

2) Creative Writing Skills and Grammar: Writing skills include creative writing skills and grammar. The grammar portion includes the following areas:
   (a) Tenses
   (b) Modals (have to/ had to, must, should, need, ought to and their negative forms).
   (c) Use of passive voice
   (d) Subject-verb concord
   (e) Reporting
      i) Commands and requests
      ii) Statements
      iii) Questions
   (f) Clauses:
      iv) Noun clauses
      v) Adverb clauses of condition and time
      vi) Relative clauses
   (g) Determiners, and
   (h) Prepositions

The grammar items may be tested through gap filling with one word to test prepositions, articles, conjunctions and tenses. The test may also include editing or omission of words or grammatical items and sentences re-ordering or sentence transformation in context.
Creative writing skills may be tested by asking the learners to write a letter to editor/diary/article/short story based on given outline/visuals or verbal cue/s.

The assessment of writing skill includes ten very short answer questions each carrying one mark, one long answer question to which students have to respond in one hundred to one hundred twenty (100-120) words, it carries five (5) marks. One very long answer question to respond in one hundred to hundred and fifty (100-150) words for ten (10) marks. Learners’ competence and the learning outcomes were tested at the end of the session by the summative assessment. Learners’ ability of expressing an opinion, justifying, illustrating, appropriateness of style and tone, ability of using appropriate format and fluency in writing text will be tested. Furthermore, their ability of applying conventions and using integrated structures with accuracy and fluency will also be analyzed through test.

3) Literature and Textbooks: For teaching Language, text books of literature (184); *Beehive* (textbook for class IX), *Moments* (supplementary reader for class IX) and one Novel whether *Gulliver’s Travel* or *Three Man in Boat* are prescribed in the syllabus. There are three books prescribed for the paper English Communicative (101) they are *Main course book, literature Reader* and a *Work book.*

Extracts from prose and poetry will be given in the test paper for reference to context to improve the learner’s ability of recalling, reasoning etc. One mark in each extract will be for vocabulary. It is mentioned in the syllabus that there will be one question for testing local and global comprehension of themes and ideas. Learners were supposed to answer in thirty to forty words for each question. Long answer type questions will be given to assess how the values inherent in the texts have been brought out. Through these answers of around eighty to hundred words, learner’s creativity, their level of imagination and extrapolation beyond the text and across the texts will be assessed. There will be one very long answer question on theme or plot involving interpretation and inference and character sketch in about 100-120 words on prescribed novel. Learners will be expected to have the ability of extracting relevant information, identifying the central theme and sub themes, understanding the writer’s message and writing fluently.

4) Assessment of Speaking and Listening Skills: Fifty periods are assigned for the speaking and listening skills. Syllabus clearly emphasized to carryout speaking and
listening activities in regular classroom teaching. Sufficient practice should be given to students in order to prepare them for ASL. It is mentioned in the syllabus that assessment of speaking and listening skills (ASL) will be done formally at the term end examination in Summative assessment-II. It is suggested that schools can conduct ASL for Summative Assessment-I themselves as per the guideline provided by the CBSE.

3.2.2 Syllabus class X CBSE (attached as appendices 3 and 4)

Analysis of syllabus and their learning outcomes.

Classification of syllabus has been explained/discussed under four headings:

1) Reading Skills: For reading skills, fifty periods are supposed to be taken. It is expected at the end of the session that learners should have an excellence of vocabulary, conceptual understanding of the text, they should have the sense of decoding, analyzing, inferring and interpreting the text through reading. Learners will be expected to develop the ability of critical and intellectual thinking. The Assessment of Reading skills for class X includes twelve very short answer questions (VSAQ) each carrying one mark and four short answer questions to which students will have to respond in thirty to forty (30-40) words carrying two (2) marks each.

2) Creative Writing Skills and Grammar: Writing skills include creative writing skills and grammar, it is supposed to be completed in sixty classes. The grammar portion includes the following areas:

1. Tenses
2. Modals (have to/ had to, must, should, need, ought to and their negative forms).
3. Use of passive voice
4. Subject-verb concord
5. Reporting
   (i) Commands and requests
   (ii) Statements
   (iii) Questions
6. Clauses:
   (iv) Noun clauses
   (v) Adverb clauses of condition and time
   (vi) Relative clauses
7. Determiners, and
8. Prepositions
The grammar items may be tested through gap filling with one word to test prepositions, articles, conjunctions and tenses. The test may also include editing or omission of words or grammatical items and sentences reordering or sentence transformation in context.

Creative writing skills may be tested by asking the learners to write a letter to editor/diary/article/short story based on given outline/visuals or verbal cue/s.

The assessment of writing skill includes ten very short answer questions each carrying one mark, one long answer question to which students have to respond in one hundred to one hundred twenty (100-120) words, it carries five (5) marks. One very long answer question to respond in one hundred to hundred and fifty (100-150) words for ten (10) marks. Learners’ competence and the learning outcomes were tested at the end of the session by the summative assessment. Learners’ ability of expressing an opinion, justifying, illustrating, appropriateness of style and tone, ability of using appropriate format and fluency in writing text will be tested. Furthermore, their ability of applying conventions and using integrated structures with accuracy and fluency will also be analyzed through test.

3) Literature Textbooks: Sixty classes are supposed to be taken for the completion of the course that comes under literature textbooks and novel. For teaching language, text books of literature (184); First Flight (textbook for class X), Footprints without Feet (supplementary reader for class X) and one long reading text that is novel whether Diary of a Young Girl-1947 or The Story of My Life are prescribed in the syllabus. There are three books prescribed for the paper English Communicative (101) they are Main course book, literature Reader and a Work book.

Extracts from prose and poetry will be given in the test paper for reference to context to improve the learner’s ability of recalling, reasoning etc. One mark in each extract will be for vocabulary. It is mentioned in the syllabus that there will be one question for testing local and global comprehension of themes and ideas. Learners were supposed to answer in thirty to forty words for each question. Long answer type questions will be given to assess how the values inherent in the texts have been brought out. Through these answers of around eighty to hundred words, learner’s creativity, their level of imagination and extrapolation beyond the text and across the texts will be assessed. There will be one very long answer question on theme or plot.
involving interpretation and inference and character sketch in about 100-120 words on prescribed novel. Learners will be expected to have the ability of extracting relevant information, identifying the central theme and sub themes, understanding the writer’s message and writing fluently.

4) Assessment of Speaking and Listening Skills: Fifty periods are assigned for the speaking and listening skills. Syllabus clearly emphasized to carryout speaking and listening activities in regular classroom teaching. Sufficient practice should be given to students in order to prepare them for ASL. It is mentioned in the syllabus that assessment of speaking and listening skills (ASL) will be done formally at the term end examination in Summative assessment-II. It is suggested that schools can conduct ASL for Summative Assessment-I themselves as per the guideline provided by the CBSE.

3.2.3 Observation:

It was observed that as mentioned in the syllabus enough time was given for the improvement of the English language. But all the four skills were not equally treated in the syllabus as well as in the classroom. The syllabus reveals that there is not a single book or topic is assigned for the practice of speaking and listening skills all though fifty classes were assigned for speaking and listening skills. Teachers were advised to encourage classroom interaction among peers, students and teachers through activities such as role play, group work, etc., but it was not being followed regularly in the classroom. Due to lack of proper practice, learners were unable to become an effective listener as well as a fluent speaker, to speak with appropriate pronunciation and with proper accent. “Listening skill, which plays an important role not only in communication but also in interpersonal relationships, is unfortunately one of those skills that is given the least significance in school education. Teachers generally believe that the listening skill emerges spontaneously in time, just like breathing. However, listening skill can only be improved by hard work and repetition as it is the case in reading skill”. (Kutlu & Aslanoglu, 2009)

Though the performance of the learners were satisfactory, but they were not much competent and proficient as they were supposed to be. Performance of the learners in writing and reading skills was good but they need more practice in speaking and listening skills to become a proficient English speaker in future. According to Kutlu
Aslanoglu (2009, 2014), “Reaching educational achievement is not probable for a student, who cannot comprehend what he listens to or reads, and who is not capable of expressing his ideas and feelings clearly and accurately through verbal or written communication. Developing the students’ listening skills is directly related to putting forward the factors that take a part in the listening process. In other words, determining the factors that play a role in the listening process is of vital importance not only to the schools and families that educate students, but also to the institutions that train teachers”.

3.3 Syllabus of English under BSEB (attached as appendices 5 and 6): These syllabi are easily available in almost every book shop in Bihar. As a researcher, I have noticed that all the BSEB affiliated schools are following this syllabus. They are the revised syllabus for the 2015-16 batch while on internet there is another syllabus which was used to be followed in 2008. This syllabus is available with more details (attached as appendix 7) and has a long list of learning objectives, learning strategies, learning outcomes etc. I found this syllabus more effective and perfect if it could be followed as per the instructions and details mentioned in it. However, the present study has focused only on the current syllabus.

3.3.1 Syllabus class IX BSEB (attached as appendix 5)

Syllabus of English for class IX is divided into five sections. All the sections and their distribution of marks are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTIONS</th>
<th>TEACHING ITEMS</th>
<th>MARKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Writing:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Letter and short writing task.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Grammar and translation</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Text books &amp; supplementary readers(prose and poetry)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>New supplementary reader</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1) Reading Skills: As shown in the syllabus, one chapter of prose and poetry is supposed to get completed in a month and after every two or three months one month is assigned for complete revision only. There are only two books for English; Panorama part-I for reading prose and poetry and Panorama English Reader part-I for supplementary reader.

2) Writing Skills: The syllabus focus on practicing letter writing, paragraph writing, writing report, notices and messages as well as translation of Hindi into English. Letter writing includes formal letters and informal letters.

Informal letters include writing letter to friends and family. Formal letters include writing letter to chairman of panchayat or mukhiya, to Headmaster, to a bookseller and to editor.

3) Grammar: This section includes; sequence of tenses in connected speech, reported speech in extended texts, modals, use of active and passive, subject/verb concord, non-finite, punctuation marks, synthesis using cohesive devices, preposition, clauses, phrases and idioms.

3.3.2 Syllabus class X BSEB

Syllabus of English for class X is divided into four sections. A brief summary of the syllabus is given below with reference to the syllabus (attached as appendix 6):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTIONS</th>
<th>TEACHING ITEMS</th>
<th>MARKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>a) Letter writing</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) A short writing task</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>a) Grammar</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Translation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>a) English reader</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Supplementary reader</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1) Reading Skill: There is no specific description of any sub skills of reading to be focused in course of English syllabus. Two books are prescribed for reading skills. They are the continuation of books prescribed for class ninth. *Panorama part-II* for prose and poetry and *Panorama English Reader part-II*.

2) Writing Skills: The syllabus focus on practicing letter writing, paragraph writing, writing report, notices and messages as well as translation of Hindi into English. Letter writing includes formal letters and informal letters. Informal letters include writing letter to friends and family. Formal letters include writing letter to the principal, to the municipal commissioner, to the postmaster, to telephone authorities, to a bookseller and to the editor. Short writing task includes writing a paragraphs, reports, notices and messages.

3) Grammar: Grammar syllabus includes; sequence of tenses in connected speech, reported speech in extended texts, use of non-finites, use of passive voice, punctuation marks, preposition, synthesis using, phrases and idioms including phrasal verbs and prepositional phrases, clauses, subject verb agreement.

3.3.3 Observation: It was observed that English in BSEB affiliated schools is taught as a subject not as a language. It is quite clear from the syllabus that it does not focus on developing communicative skills, rather its focus is only to complete the syllabus before examination. It follows the methodology of rote learning. The syllabus reveals that it has completely ignored the listening and speaking skills of language.

Syllabus of BSEB does not focus on teaching language. English is taught only as a subject to complete the course at the school level. Writing skills are mainly focused in the syllabus. There are literature books assigned for reading but it does not work on pronunciation, building vocabulary and accent. Except writing skills, students were in need to know much about reading, listening and speaking skills.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the close observation and analysis of the syllabi of English followed in CBSE and BSEB affiliated schools. It comes to the conclusion that CBSE syllabus gives enough time for the improvement of the English language. Though the syllabus does not treat all the four skills equally, still it was found that CBSE syllabus is better than BSEB syllabus because CBSE focus on all the four skills and teach
English as a language not only as a subject while BSEB syllabus has completely ignored the speaking and listening skills and taught English only as a subject not as a language. Syllabus of BSEB could not make the students competent enough to become a proficient English speaker. In CBSE affiliated schools, students are being assessed for their speaking and listening skills while there is no such kind of assessment in the BSEB schools. It furthersuggeststhat thereisaneed to teach communicativeskills to school students as theyarerequired to communicateeffectivelyin different communicativesituations, think creativelyandcritically, demonstrategood interpersonal and team skills. Therefore, the English courses in CBSE and BSEB schools should bemodified based on the needs of the students and expectations of the university administration.
REFERENCE