

Role of BOS in Designing Business Communication Syllabus for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Courses: A Constructive Model

Dr. Neeta Chakravarty
Associate Professor & Head,
Dept. Of English, R.J. College
Ghatkopar (w), Mumbai-78.

Abstract

The Board of Studies (BOS) in any discipline has a significant role in designing the curriculum, drafting the syllabi, disseminating the objectives of the courses and in ensuring uniformity and standard in the learning outcome. The BOS in English of various universities in India has the added responsibility of taking English literature and language together, besides protecting the teacher's work-load and the learners' needs. In addition, the BOS in English will also have to look into the expectations of the learners from three streams – Arts, Science and Commerce. This paper is an attempt to propose a constructive model of the positive intervention of BOS in English for both the undergraduate and postgraduate courses and in making English studies relevant and feasible in the era of globalization, without neglecting the interest of the rural learners. The paper will try to examine the complex leadership and management potentials of the BOS in English. The BOS in English, in the coming age, will have to take into account the needs for professional skills, communicative competence, along with the need for human values which can be attained through literature. It will also have to address language-literature relationship and contradiction more sensibly. Further, the BOS will have to be perceptive about the learning difficulties, remedial needs and the problems at the entry level learners. In addition, the BOS, by bringing together the teachers of urban, semi-urban and rural colleges will have to remove the myths and biases of English studies. In such a context, the BOS can facilitate cross-cultural, cross-regional understanding of the aspirations and needs of the learners and teachers. This paper will analyze all these factors and propose a viable and constructive model for the BOS in English that would not only design syllabi in English literature and language but would also

literature- different genres and different literary eras. As a forward integration to this situation, is a reality of the research degrees in English. Doctoral research works in literature is still very popular though a vast majority of these research scholars serve the community as teachers of Communication Skills and Business Communication. Hence, it becomes imperative for the BOS in English to look into the expectations of the learners from three streams – Arts, Science and Commerce.

Hypothesis: The hypothesis of this project is that if the BOS plans the teaching program in a continuum from the entry level to the exit level then more students will opt for the subject and find appropriate employment.

Method: The method followed is reflective writing on the basis of available data.

Available data and Analysis of relevant factors: As per 2007 statistics, published by MHRD GOI in 2010, Maharashtra has 42 Universities and 3258 colleges. Total enrollment is 30.82 lakh students. The GER for Maharashtra is 18. Both Graduate and Post Graduate higher education candidates have enrollments in Arts and Commerce leading the numbers. Quoting this data, Dr. Anil Kakodkar, in his report submitted to the Govt of Maharashtra in July 2011 regarding steps that may be taken to improve the quality of higher education, states that “lack of vocationalization and skill development gaps drive a lot of students into employability issues at the end of their higher education stints”.

Using data from the Adult Education Survey (AES 2011), a study published in September 2015 by Joint Research Centre (European Commission) considered the number of languages adults know and their proficiency level in the two best known languages in 25 Member States. To understand the relationship between language knowledge and employment status, the study examined data from Member States to examine whether skills in foreign languages increase the employment rates of 25-64 year-old adults. In addition, the analyses capture different relationships between language skills and employment for specific languages - English, French, German, Russian and Spanish – and age groups (25-40 and 41-64). Findings indicate that knowing foreign languages and being proficient in them is an important factor for being employed.

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could be eliminated if the BOS in English has a central mechanism to plan and execute a graded syllabi for the undergraduate and postgraduate courses in English.

Suggested Model: In this paper, we try to propose an integrated model that would not only make the curriculum graded but also will try to win over a good number of the students of compulsory English to opt for the ancillary subject too.

The primary step is in designing the syllabus of Communication Skills at the entry level graduation programme. This syllabus could be made more relevant by integrating soft skills like presentation skills, Group Discussion, Interview Skills and telephone etiquette by emphasizing the experiential learning of these components and by making them a part of the projects and internal assessment. The proposed model proposes that the introduction to literature at the F.Y.B.A. level be made an integral part of the Communication Skills paper. This would involve the incorporation of poetry and literary prose to the Communication Skills syllabus. This move, it is felt will not only generate interest in literature but will also make literature study easy for literature students. At the same time, it is proposed that the literature subject syllabi be broadened to include news writing, copy writing, creative writing, travelogues, biography, film writing etc to accommodate the contemporary literary taste. Such a move will maintain the interest of students in literary language rather than conventional genres of literature. In applied components such as Business Communication, Mass Communication, Advertising and Journalism, a subject like Media Language may be included as it would involve the study of language used in various media and would make the learners understand the linguistic features of reporting, copy writing etc. Similarly, in the postgraduate syllabus, one could include a subject like Communication Components as a part of backward integration and further include modules of Research Methodology as a part of forward integration. Such papers would make the learners comfortable in a new course due to familiar areas of study and at the same time trigger their interest in research and induce them to imbibe the requisite research skills.

In the light of the Credit system, such a progressive model would involve allocation of assignments and presentations in a more conscientious and planned manner so that the desired changes may be brought about in the learners. For instance, learners may be asked to write research papers. This could be in the form of a small dissertation, or full length papers on soft

Conclusion: To conclude, the Board of Studies in English, being a very important and responsible body, has thus to oversee, firstly a balance between the language and literature component keeping the needs of students of rural and urban areas in mind in the wake of globalization while also being aware of the possibility of tending to be partial to the aspirations of one group and overlooking that of the other. Simultaneously, the Board of Studies must build up research capabilities in a gradual and sustained manner. The missing links in both undergraduate and postgraduate courses must be traced and incorporated as soon as possible. Designing of a continuum to the syllabi at every level is extremely important to revamp the standard of English studies in India. This will make English graduates and postgraduates more employable, in line with the suggestions of various education commissions set up by the Government of India.

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