

A Critical Analysis of Pedagogy of English in B.Ed. and DEL.Ed. Courses in Manipur

Dr. M. Gunamani Singh, Ph.D., M.A. English, B.Ed., M.Ed.

Abstract

The contents prescribed for pedagogy of English in B. Ed and D.EL. Ed courses which are compulsory for student teachers aspiring to teach English language in school are very important as these PSTE programmes are preparing teachers to cope up with any issue relating to teacher education. A lot of change has been taking place in the education system, according to which it needs to address the issues arising out of the children from different backgrounds. It is meant to strengthen the capacity of an education system to reach out to all learners ensuring a stable growth of the society. A developing society should ensure inclusive education irrespective of language, gender, and ethnicity/cultural and disability.

With growing student diversity education system is witnessing a paradigm shift from conventional methodologies to innovative inclusive pedagogy practices. Addressing diverse learning needs require not only recognition of multilingualism but also realization that sign language, Braille, picture based, tactile etc. might also be used by students with special needs to express themselves and also to communicate with others. Being the Lingua Franca, English is an essential part of school curriculum in Manipur. Therefore, there is need to explore the preparedness of English language teachers to identify and take care of the language learning needs of diverse learners (Children with Special Needs, Children with Dyslexia, Children with Dysgraphia, First generation learners etc) studying together in inclusive education settings. With insufficient exposure about the diverse learners, when teacher is introduced to the different learning needs in the service, they find faults with the individual learner rather than modifying his/her pedagogy practice. Majority of English Pedagogy course of B.Ed. under Manipur University and D.El. Ed under SCERT don't adequately prepare student teachers to be sensitive towards diverse and individual needs. While there is a unit on inclusive structure in most PSTE programs, it is evident that pedagogy paper is not updated and need to be re-evaluated.

Keywords: Pedagogy of English, Manipur, NCTE-2014, Diversity, Inclusive Setting, Innovative Pedagogy, Dyslexia, Dysgraphia

1. Introduction

A well-trained classroom teacher is the single most important factor in the success of inclusive education programmes (Sharma and Das, 2015). He or she should be very sensitive to the educational needs of children with disabilities. Pre-Service Teacher Education (PSTE) prepares

teachers for teaching in classroom. As the name indicates it is the education of teachers before they enter the education system as teachers are entrusted with the responsibility of teaching the students. Ideally, PSTE should be an enriching experience for student teachers so that they could justify the demanding role of teaching professional.

In the recent past, the call for understanding the individual needs has laid foundation of inclusive education setup. However, mere understanding is not enough for the successful implementation of inclusive schooling. Education system needs to explore and expand its boundaries, where children are not merely physically included in the schools, but opportunities are consciously and thoughtfully created for effective participation. Undoubtedly, it is the prime responsibility of the Pre-service Teacher Education (PSTE) to prepare teachers to address the diverse learning needs of students in inclusive classrooms.

Several studies had been conducted to find out the teaching/learning process of English in Manipur. Singh (2002) explored the problem, prospect and status of English in Manipur in his research “A Critical Scrutiny of the Position, Problems and Prospects of English in Manipur”. Devi (2006) explored the difference between the sentence structures in English and Manipuri language in her research “Sentence structure in English and Manipuri Language’, A contrastive study. Sujeta Beishamayum (2010) explored linguistic problems in learning English language in her research “Communication and linguistic problems faced by Meiteiron speakers in learning English language.”

However, there is no study available with regard to the study of “A Critical Analysis of Pedagogy of English in B. Ed. and DEL.Ed. courses in Manipur. In the light of the above background, we will investigate the contents prescribed for pedagogy of English in B. Ed. and D.El,T.Ed. courses and find out how the PSTEs are preparing teachers for their roles in inclusive education settings.

The Structure of the Paper

In section 1.1, we will discuss the methodology adopted in the study while section 1.2 discuss objectives of the research paper, 1.3 deals with questions of the research or hypothesis and 1.4 section deals with observation and in the section 1.5, we have findings and an analysis of syllabus of B.Ed. under Manipur University and D.El. Ed. under SCERT. This is followed by section 1.6, where we discuss the findings of the study conducted and conclude with some of remedial measures in order to address the diverse needs of students in English classroom.

1.1. Methodology

The contents prescribed for pedagogy of English courses which are compulsory for student teachers aspiring to teach English language in school were studied to find out how the PSTE is preparing teachers for this role. Pedagogy of English syllabus of PSTE programs under Manipur University and SCERT post 2014. The year 2014 has special significance here, for this was the year when the NCTE revised the PSTE curriculum and issued directives related with for revised curriculum and duration of the PSTE to meet the need of the hour in teacher education. The core curriculum of PSTE remains same for all students aspiring to be teachers of various subjects but

different subjects like English, Mathematics, EVS and other subjects have different pedagogy courses.

1.2. Objectives of This Research Study

- Study how PSTE programs prepares English teachers for identifying diverse learning needs in inclusive education settings
- Study how PSTE programs prepares English teachers for modifying pedagogy practices for addressing the diverse learning needs in inclusive education settings
- Study how PSTE programs preparing English teachers for adapting the assessment evaluation process to assess the students achievements in inclusive education settings
- Study how PSTE programs prepares English teachers for working in collaboration with special teacher, counsellors and other allied health professionals to address the diverse learning needs in inclusive education setting.
-

1.3. Research Questions or Hypotheses

1. Is the PSTE program preparing teachers to identify the learning needs of students arising due to disabilities, learning difficulties, social and economic disadvantages?
2. Is the PSTE program preparing student teachers to modify the pedagogy based on the identified needs of the students?
3. Is the PSTE program preparing teachers for teaching in Inclusive Classroom and making Teaching Learning and Assessment Activities Accessible to all students?
4. Is the PSTE program preparing teachers to work in Collaboration with Special Educator/Resource Teacher/General?
5. Is the PSTE program preparing teachers to teach in inclusive classroom rather than in segregated setting?

1.4. Observations

Being the Lingua Franca, English is an essential part of school curriculum in India. The present paper explores the preparedness of English language teachers to identify and take care of the language learning needs of diverse learners (Children with Special Needs, Children with Dyslexia, Children with Dysgraphia, First Generation learners etc) studying together in inclusive education settings. The table below explains the nature and identification of different Learner’s in language classrooms.

Table-1:
Diverse Learning needs of students in language classroom:

S.No.	Nature of Challenge	Identifying characteristics
1.	Dyslexia (challenges associated with verbal aspect of language)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in reading • Lots of mistakes in writing, spelling, speaking etc. • Difficulty in following verbal instructions • Inability to follow sequence of letters while writing /telling spelling of a word

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in memorizing written words.
2.	Dysgraphia (challenges associated with written aspect of language)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty with physical act of writing. • Difficulty in organising and expressing their thoughts in writing. • Slow laboured typing with poor spelling and grammar
3.	First Generation Learners (difficulty may result from lack of support for learning English at home)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have inconsistency in academic achievement • May show irregularity in completing the written work/assignments • May hesitate in participating in discussions
4.	Children with English as second language (difficulty may result from lack of support for learning English at home)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May hesitate in speaking in English in front of peers • May have inconsistent academic performance
5.	Children with social and economic disadvantages (difficulty may result from lack of support for learning English at home)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May hesitate in participating in group activities • May show absence of interest in peers • May have unstable academic result and performance.
6.	Children with disabilities such as VI, HI and Autism (difficulties may arise due to nature of disability)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VI/Low Vision students can't follow visual teaching materials • HI students can't follow verbal instructions • Autistic child is sensitive to social environment around e.g., apparent indifference to pain/temperature, adverse response to specific sounds or textures, excessive smelling or touching of objects, visual fascination with lights or movement • Children with disabilities may also feel shy and find it difficult to mingle and initiate conversation with other children

1.5. Findings

Keeping the discussed diverse children and their needs (Table-1) in mind, we enquired the pedagogy course of English and their reliability towards preparing reflective and sensitive

professionals. The content prescribed for pedagogy of English course which is compulsory for student teachers aspiring to teach English language in school was studied to find out how the PSTE is preparing teachers for this role. The tables below gives analysis of pedagogy of English course of PSTE program in Manipur. The tables below also indicate whether the pedagogy of English syllabus mentions the diverse needs of students in the context of learning English or not. Overt mention of these needs or the children having such needs indicates the further possibility that the course might be preparing English teachers for teaching in inclusive education settings.

Table-2

S.No.	Universities	Course content of Pedagogy paper of English in-lieu with inclusive setup
1.	Manipur University (B.Ed.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language across the curriculum discusses first language acquisition and second language learning, language diversity, multilingualism and basic language competencies- LSRW. • Objective of the pedagogy paper includes importance of English language as a second language • Learner’s assessment includes Remedial teaching (error analysis attitude towards errors and mistakes in second language learning). • Reading and reflecting on texts. • Sessional work includes Diagnosis of learner difficulty in speaking English and preparation of remedial exercises.
2.	SCERT, Manipur (D.El. Ed.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedagogy of English: historical view of English as a second language, general principles of teaching English, behaviouristic, Structural and Eclectic Approach, Cognitive and Constructivist Approaches. • Different types of learners, teaching in a large class room and Methods of teaching. Strategies for writing, assessment

Table 3

Diverse Challenges	Whether these curriculum of B. Ed. and D.El.Ed discuss them in their Pedagogy papers of English.
Language learning disabilities (Dyslexia, Dysgraphia)	No
Other Disabilities requiring attention of language teachers (VI, HI, Autism etc)	No
First Generation Learners	No
English as a second language	Yes
Disadvantages (Social or Economical)	No

1.6. Discussion

The above tables are prepared after closely studying the objective, Course content, Practicum and suggested readings of Pedagogy paper of English for Manipur University and SCERT. The tables clearly show that majority of English Pedagogy course of Manipur University and SCERT don't adequately prepare student teachers to be sensitive towards diverse and individual needs. With insufficient exposure about the diverse learners, when teacher is introduced to the different learning needs in the service, they find faults with the individual learner rather than modifying his/her pedagogy practice. While there is a unit on inclusive structure in most PSTE programs, it is evident that pedagogy paper is not updated and need to be re-evaluated.

Conclusion

To justify the need of inclusive English classroom, teachers must be prepared in the PSTE programs. They must understand the individual differences of different learners and yet embrace them together. It is ironical that student teachers are introduced to the concept of inclusive education through an isolated paper or unit and the same is not included in all pedagogy papers. Only if student teachers are trained and empowered to enhance the learning opportunities for diverse learners can they provide enriching experience to all young minds. Supposing the situation that in a class there might be three students with different learning needs when given a text to read. Considering the fact that one is First Generation learner, other one is child with autism spectrum, and the third one is Child with Visual Impairment. If the teacher is well aware of the needs of these learners, he/she can modify his/her approach of teaching by introducing the story via discussion, non-verbal communication, use of tactile graphics to support the participation of these children. These innovative approaches will not only be helpful for special needs children but will be engaging to the whole class. Although there is no one way or solution to be appropriately prepared to deal with inclusive classroom and diverse needs, PSTE is the central key to enable and enrich the student teachers to be reflective and sensitive professionals. It is the responsibility of the English language teacher to value and treat learners' needs equally and to offer equity-based quality education to them. This can only be achieved if the English language teacher himself/herself is enlightened and sensitized to deal with diverse learners, without segregating them from their peers and is also ready

to work in collaboration with the special education teachers. The same applies to language teachers who could be sole partners of evolution.

References

1. Curriculum Frame Work: Two-year B.Ed. programme of NCTE December 2014.
2. Curriculum Frame Work: Two-year D.EL.Ed. programme of NCTE.
3. Syllabus for Two Year Bachelor of Education (Secondary) programme: Manipur University.
4. Syllabus for Two Year Diploma of Education programme: SCERT, Manipur.
5. Lawrence Ingvarson, John Schwille (2013), An Analysis of Teacher Education Context, Structure, and Quality-Assurance Arrangements in TEDS-M Countries. Australian Council for Educational Research Michigan State University.
6. NCERT (2006) National Focus Groups-Position papers: Education of children with special needs NCERT, New Delhi.
7. Tompkins, Gail E. Teaching Writing Balancing Process and Product, Mc Milan; California, 1994.

Dr. M. Gunamani Singh

Lecturer, (SCERT) State Council of Educational Research and Training

Government of Manipur, Lamphelpat

mutumgunamani1@gmail.com