

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF BS ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE CURRICULUM: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This study engages analysis of BS English language and literature course schema of two newly established public sector universities of Sindh Province. Since these were newly established departments thus, it enhanced researcher interest making analysis of curriculum taught to English Language and Literature students. The data collection source was online information available on university websites and Prospectus. Discourse analysis method was employed drawing the outcomes. The investigated themes were 'vision, mission, introduction, course design and profile of faculty' of both universities. The research revealed very interesting results. The department of English, Quaid-e-Awam University of Engineering Science & Technology does not display 'vision and mission' of the university neither on department website nor Prospectus. The course schema needs revision making it in line with vision and mission of the department achieving academic excellence. However, in terms of faculty QUEST enjoys rich faculty. The department of Linguistics and Human Sciences Begum Nusrat Bhutto (BNB) Women University Sukkur displays vision, mission, and introduction of the department in a befitting manner. The course design is appropriate and presents a clear picture. However, it falls short in PhD faculty. The results of this study would provide insights to heads of Universities, and Sindh Higher Education Commission.

Keywords: Critical Analysis, Language and Literature, Curriculum, Discourse Analysis

1. Introduction

The department of English at Quaid-e-Awam University of Engineering Science & Technology (QUEST) Nawabshah was established in the year 2019 and the department of Linguistics and Human Sciences Begum Nusrat Bhutto (BNB) Women University Sukkur was founded in the 2020. Thus, they are two newly baby born sister universities of the province. The core purpose of establishing these departments was to cater academic needs of students who hail from suburban areas of the province. Education is precious ornament and it is responsibility of the state to provide education to the children of downtrodden masses at their door steps. In this perspective, the credit goes to Government of Sindh that it has established network of universities and its allied campuses almost in all districts of the province. It is another debate whether these universities deliver quality education to students as envisioned by multiple stakeholders such as students, teachers, parents, academicians, government and the public representatives. The blend picture can be drawn since some universities have failed providing quality education whereas; others perform excellent and achieve marvelous milestones in the field of academics. The Institute of Business Administration (IBA) Karachi and Sukkur IBA University have set new academic trends in this dimension. A strict monitoring system be adopted to improve academic performance of institutions who fall short in maintaining academic standards. A visionary leadership in terms of Heads of these academic institutions should be appointed who can uplift the image of these organization at National and International level. Pakistan needs brilliant graduates who can serve the country on academic, research, economic, and administrative fronts effectively and efficiently.

2. Literature Review

Literature and language are considered common friends thus; they are studied together. It would be no exaggeration to add that they are two sides of one coin. The departments of English have been established with different tags in Universities of Pakistan for example, Department of English Literature, Department of English Linguistics, Department of Humanities, Department of Social Sciences and Modern Languages, Department of Language and Literature, Department of Linguistics and Human Sciences, and Institute of English Language and Literature. They all offer four year BS (English literature) and BS (English linguistics) degree programs. However, in third semester

students are given an option for selecting either Linguistics or Language as their major field of study. Literature broadens mental outlook of students and it sets ground for language learning. Literature is an ally of language [1] and it allows applications of language use in different contexts. Literature acts as ESL/ EFL teaching. ESL/EFL are synonym words since they convey same meaning contextually. Literature paves the way for language teaching through communicative methods. Literature stimulates second language teaching in non-English Language speaking countries where English is taught second language (L2). Literature has important role in language curriculum because language teachers face barriers teaching language via literature. The authors [2] consider literature as valuable teaching technique. There are limited pedagogical tools and techniques that help language teaching through literature. Language teachers play indispensable role in language teaching [3] and prepare learners proficient in the field of language learning. Language teachers can teach language through literature in Pakistan since they enjoy sufficient knowledge in language and literature. In fact, both fields overlap each other in one or the other context. Teachers should define language teaching goals based on learner needs while using need analysis technique. For this purpose, they should adopt appropriate language teaching techniques that is easily digested by students. The authors [4] support literature teaching language on the base that students become acquainted with application of language reading literary texts. The authors [5] say that four elements persuade language teacher using literary text for teaching language e.g. genuine material, cultural enhancement, improvement of language and participation. Literature is used in L2 teaching due to linguistic reason [6]. Language enjoys advantage of sharing information, knowledge, thoughts, feelings, opinions and views in variety of ways. These communication modes can be verbal and non-verbal. However, 55%-65% communication is transmitted through body language communication in modern teaching. Language requires proper environment and teacher role is very important in physical classroom teaching. Linguistics is the scientific study of language use in different contexts. It is important to teach various perspectives of language such as Phonetics, Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics and Pragmatics. Phonetics is the study and understanding of speech sounds. Phonology is the systematic study of sounds used in different languages. It forms syllables, words and phrases in a given system. Thus, Phonology is depiction of systems and patterns of speech sounds. Morphology studies internal structure of words and rules governing word formation. Language and Literature students be equipped with sound knowledge of understanding word structure and word formation procedures. Students having knowledge about word formation approaches enjoy good stock of vocabulary and advanced reading comprehension [7]. Syntax is study of sentence formation, principles and processes that lead towards sentence structure and word order. Language knowledge in shape of grammar principles is already present in human mind and students has to push it for speaking L1 or L2 [8,9]. Grammar is imperative for students' language learning. It embraces process of language production and comprehension. It affects curriculum, subject concepts, and classroom techniques that teacher employs for language process. Semantics is study of meaning, meaning of words, and how word meanings form meaning of sentences. Knowing meaning of words is not enough for understanding meaning of a sentence, because two sentences containing same words can contain different meanings. Language rules guide drawing meaning of the sentence out of the meaning of words. Pragmatics studies the ways language is tied to the contexts in which it is used. Pragmatics topics arise from variety of snags e.g. presupposition, speech acts, politeness, and information structure.

Noam Chomsky is renowned linguist because of his magnificent contribution in the field of language. He says that child is gifted with accepting grammar that evidences knowledge of his mother tongue. He introduced innateness hypothesis because there were certain facts that were not properly studied. Chomsky illustrates that children acquire language competence quickly. He claims that all children are born with a language acquisition device that supports in learning language [10]. Chomsky made distinction between 'competence and performance'. For him, competence is shared knowledge of ideal speaker-listener set in a same speech community. Performance is the process of applying underlying knowledge to actual language use. Hymes got Chomsky's view about language too narrow because of sociocultural factors. He expressed that Chomsky's language competence theory is not sound enough to comprehend language acquiring phenomenon [11]. He led his own communicative competence based on linguistic competence, and communicative competence. First component deals with producing and understanding grammatically correct sentences and second discusses producing and understanding sentences appropriately in particular situation. Canale & Swain theory of communicative competence comprises of four components, grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence and discourse competence. Grammatical competence is mastery of linguistic code verbal, non-verbal. It speaks about vocabulary knowledge, morphological knowledge, syntactic, semantic and phonetic rules. It enables speakers using skills and knowledge required for understanding and expressing literal meaning of utterances. Sociolinguistic is knowledge of rules and conventions that underlie appropriate comprehension and language use in different contexts. Strategic is knowledge of verbal and

non-verbal communication strategies that are used to compensate communication breakdowns due to insufficient communicative competence in oral activities. Paraphrasing, circumlocution, repetition, reluctance, avoidance of words, structures or themes, guessing, and message modifications are examples of communication strategies. Canale illustrated that communication effectiveness can be attained through strategic competence. Discourse competence is mastery of rules. It determines ways in which meanings are pooled to achieve meaningful unity in spoken language or written text documents.

2.1 Department of English Quaid-e- Awam University of Engineering Science & Technology

The department of English offers four (4) year BS English Language and Literature degree program since 2019. It is newly established department and the second batch has been enrolled in the department. Besides English Department, an English Language Centre (ELC) functions at QUEST since establishment of the university. It is under administrative control of the department of Basic Science & Related studies and its core job enhancing English language and communicative competence proficiency of Engineering and Science students to prepare them better human capital for the workforce. ELC offered English language subjects at initial stage focusing grammatical competence of students. However, with passing years analyzing learner needs communication skill courses were added in existing pool of English language subjects. These communication skill courses focus on communication skill proficiency and competency such as listening, reading, writing and speaking skills of students. Along with theory, students are trained through audio visual aids under the head of practical component.

2.2 Department of Linguistics & Human Sciences Begum Nusrat Bhutto Women University

The department of Linguistics and Human Sciences offers four (4) year BS degree program in English Linguistics and Literature. This program is aligned with inter-disciplinary pedagogical approach based on blended approach of effective classroom teaching, research, hands on practice on complex concepts and theories. The department envisions that languages are taught in communicative and practical methods maintaining cultural sensitivity and global harmony. The department offers effective teaching and learning pedagogy, proper classroom size, congenial classroom environment, equipment, resources, and technology that ultimately lead student retention in the university. Higher Education Commission (HEC) teaching and learning material is available for teachers and the taught.

3. Method

The purpose of this study was critically and minutely analyzing English Language and Literature curricula designed for English Language and Literature students. Attaining the objective, two (2) newly established English Language departments of Public Sector Universities of Sindh province were surveyed. They were Quaid-e- Awam University of Engineering Science and Technology (QUEST), and Begum Nusrat Bhutto (BNB) Women University Sukkur. The rationale for selecting these universities was based on the phenomenon that these newly baby born sister universities share common characterizes. For instance, (i) they are new departments, (ii) they offer same four year BS degree program, (iii) they are located in lower part of the province, (iv) they follow Higher Education Commission (HEC) curriculum, (v) they are Higher Education Commission (HEC) recognized institutions. Data were gathered from the information available on university websites and online Prospectus. In order to gain in depth insights vision, mission, introduction of the department, course design and faculty profile were analyzed. Discourse Analysis method was used drawing outcomes of the study.

4. Findings

4.1. Quaid-e- Awam University of Engineering Science and Technology BS English Curriculum

4.1.1 Vision of the Department

The vision of the Department of English, Quaid-e- Awam University of Engineering Science and Technology is neither available on university website nor Prospectus-2020.

4.1.2 Mission of the Department

The mission of the Department of English, Quaid-e- Awam University of Engineering Science and Technology is neither available on university website nor Prospectus-2020.

4.1.3 Introduction of the Department

“The department of English has been established in the view of the contemporary global trends in English language and literature...has a vibrant, adept, highly foreign qualified and enthusiastically motivated faculty with the significant number of PhDs. Motivating principles...includes meeting the language requirements of English in Pakistan... a guiding principle is to facilitate innovation through social, cultural, political and economic processes... to master the art of innovation and creativity through literary learning, and high moral character building... department first time offers distinguished BS program in English Language and Literature in line with HEC NSRC-2017-18...harmonized approach between Language and Literature...understanding of curricular and creative tasks driven through language learning...understanding the research needs for future, students are required to submit research dissertation as a pre-requisite for earning the degree... department also offers a range of learners need based short courses to develop, excel and maintain the most effective and updated skills to the undergraduate and graduate students of other departments... department has dedicated and well equipped audio-visual resources and labs... department has actively engaged to host the talks of prominent national and international scholars of English Language and Literature to provide the exposure of growing trends of language teaching...in the month of March 2019 in which international speaker and prominent linguist Associate Professor Dr. Elizabeth M. Anthony from Department of Languages and linguistics, Center for Language Studies, UTHM, Malaysia engaged the students...department of English envisages enhancing the students’ literary sensibilities, academic integrity and professional uplifting of values essential for lifelong learning”.

4.1.4 Course Schema of Quaid-e-Awam University of Engineering Science & Technology

The course description of Quaid-e-Awam University of Engineering Science & Technology is provided in Table 1-4.

Table 1. First Year [First and Second] Semester Course Schema

<i>First Year</i>									
<i>First Semester</i>					<i>Second Semester</i>				
<i>S #</i>	<i>Name of Subject</i>	<i>Credit Hr. (Th.+ Pr.)</i>		<i>Marks</i>	<i>S #</i>	<i>Name of Subject</i>	<i>Credit Hr. (Th.+Pr.)</i>		<i>Marks</i>
1	Functional English	3	0	100	1	History of English Literature	3	0	100
2	Introduction to Literary Studies	3	0	100	2	Phonetics and Phonology	3	0	100
3	Introduction to Language Studies	3	0	100	3	Communication Skills	3	3	100
4	Study Skills	3	0	100	4	Introduction to IT Skills	2	1	50+50
5	Introduction to Psychology	3	0	100	5	Statistical Methods	3	0	100
6	Islamic Studies/ Ethics	2	0	50	6	Pakistan Studies	2	0	50
<i>Total</i>		<i>17</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>550</i>	<i>Total</i>		<i>16</i>	<i>01</i>	<i>500+50</i>

Table 1, shows first and second semester course schema of Department of English, Quaid-e-Awam University of Engineering Science & Technology.

Table 2. Second Year [Third and Fourth] Semester Course Schema

<i>Second Year</i>									
<i>Third Semester</i>				<i>Fourth Semester</i>					
<i>S#</i>	<i>Name of Subject</i>	<i>Credit Hr. (Th.+ Pr.)</i>		<i>Marks</i>	<i>S#</i>	<i>Name of Subject</i>	<i>Credit Hr. (Th.+Pr.)</i>		<i>Marks</i>
1	English Through Technology	3	0	100	1	Academic Reading and Writing	3	0	100

2	Novel/Short Story (Fiction)	3	3	100	2	Prose (Non-fiction)	3	0	100
3	Major Literary Movements	3	3	100	3	Syntax	3	0	100
4	Introduction to Morphology	3	3	100	4	Sociolinguistics	3	0	100
5	Introduction to Philosophy	3	3	100	5	Poetry-I (Classical Poetry)	3	0	100
6	International Relations	2	0	50	6	Creative Writing	3	0	100
<i>Total</i>		<i>18</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>600</i>	<i>Total</i>		<i>18</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>600</i>

Table 2, displays third and fourth semester course schema of Department of English, Quaid-e-Awam University of Engineering Science & Technology.

Table 3. Third Year [Fifth and Sixth] Semester Course Schema

<i>Third Year</i>									
<i>Fifth Semester</i>					<i>Sixth Semester</i>				
<i>S#</i>	<i>Name of Subject</i>	<i>Credit Hr. (Th. + Pr.)</i>		<i>Marks</i>	<i>S#</i>	<i>Name of Subject</i>	<i>Credit Hr. (Th. + Pr.)</i>		<i>Marks</i>
1	Novel 18th to 19th Century	3	0	100	1	Drama-I (Classical and Renaissance)	3	0	100
2	Semantics	3	3	100	2	Poetry-II (Romantic and Victorian)	3	0	100
3	Literary Criticism-I	3	3	100	3	Literary Criticism-II	3	0	100
4	Psycholinguistics	3	3	100	4	Pragmatics	3	0	100
5	Women Writers	3	3	100	5	English for Specific Purposes (ESP)	3	0	100
6	Intercultural Communication	2	0	50	6	Research Methodology-I	3	0	100
<i>Total</i>		<i>18</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>600</i>	<i>Total</i>		<i>18</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>600</i>

Table 3, displays fifth and sixth semester course schema of Department of English, Quaid-e-Awam University of Engineering Science & Technology.

Table 4. Final Year [Seventh and Eighth] Semester Course Schema

<i>Final Year</i>									
<i>Seventh Semester</i>					<i>Eighth Semester</i>				
<i>S#</i>	<i>Name of Subject</i>	<i>Credit Hr. (Th. + Pr.)</i>		<i>Marks</i>	<i>S#</i>	<i>Name of Subject</i>	<i>Credit Hr. (Th. + Pr.)</i>		<i>Marks</i>
1	Drama-II (Modern)	3	0	100	1	Modern Novel	3	0	100
2	Postcolonial Literature	3	0	100	2	Pakistani Literature in English	3	0	100
3	Translation Studies	3	0	100	3	Stylistics	3	0	100
4	Critical	3	0	100	4	Syllabus and	3	0	100

	Discourse Analysis					Materials Designing			
5	Research Methodology-II	3	0	100	5	Research Thesis + Viva Voce	3	0	100
	<i>Total</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>500</i>		<i>Total</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>500</i>

Table 4, illustrates seventh and eighth semester course schema of Department of English, Quaid-e-Awam University of Engineering Science & Technology.

4.2. Begum Nusrat Bhutto Women University BS English Curriculum

4.2.1 Vision of the Department

“...the Department of Linguistics and Human Sciences envisioned to provide transformative academic, research, and outreach programs that promote the evolution of modern languages, preservation of history, culture and well-being of people, their environments, and communities in which they live”.

4.2.2 Mission of the Department

“...the scientific enquiry of modern languages and human sciences as an experience in its chronological, psychological, and social aspects through...pedagogical approaches, a research-oriented learning with interdisciplinary approach to respond with full skill set required for all fronts of Linguistics and Human Sciences”.

4.2.3 Introduction of the Department

“... Linguistics and Human Sciences is currently offering a 4-year BS program in English with majors in Linguistics and English Literature... qualified and highly motivated faculty to ensure quality of education in the region...pedagogical approach is aligned with the vision and mission that is a blended approach of classroom teaching, research, hand-on practices of complex concepts and theories... committed to the concept that languages are taught in a communicative and practical manner... appropriate pedagogies - including class size - and environment (classrooms, equipment, resources, and technology) that will precede to student retention and attainment as well as a rise in the number of majors and minors. Teaching and learning material recommended by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan shall be available to students and teachers ...”

4.2.4 Course Design

The course description of Begum Nusrat Bhutto Women University (BNB) is provided in Table 5-8 as under:

Table 5. First Year [First and Second] Semester Course Schema

<i>First Year</i>					
<i>First Semester</i>			<i>Second Semester</i>		
<i>Course Code</i>	<i>Title of Subject</i>	<i>Credit Hr.</i>	<i>Course Code</i>	<i>Title of Subject</i>	<i>Credit Hr.</i>
1	Study Skills	3	1	Islamic Studies	2
2	Introduction to Geography	3	2	Elementary Mathematics & Stats	3
3	Pakistan Studies	2	3	Introduction to Philosophy	3
4	English I: Reading and Writing skills	3	4	English II: Composition Writing	3
5	Introduction to Literary Studies	3	5	Introduction to Philosophy	3

6	Introduction to Language Studies	3	6	Literary Forms and Movements	3
	<i>Total</i>	<i>17</i>		<i>Total</i>	<i>17</i>

Table 5, shows first and second semester course schema of Department of Linguistics and Human Sciences, Begum Nusrat Bhutto Women University Sukkur.

Table 6. Second Year [Third and Fourth] Semester Course Scheme

<i>Second Year</i>					
<i>Third Semester</i>			<i>Fourth Semester</i>		
<i>Course Code</i>	<i>Title of Subject</i>	<i>Credit Hr.</i>	<i>Course Code</i>	<i>Title of Subject</i>	<i>Credit Hr.</i>
1	Introduction to Information & Communication Technology (ICT) Skills	3	1	Human Rights and Citizenship	3
2	Islamic History & Culture	3	2	English IV: Academic Reading & Writing	3
3	Global Poetry	3	3	Classical & Renaissance Drama	3
4	English III: Communication and Presentation Skills	3	4	Classical Poetry	3
5	Short Fictional Narratives	3	5	Semantics	3
6	Introduction to Morphology	3	6	Rise of the Novel (18th to 19th century)	3
	<i>Total</i>	<i>18</i>		<i>Total</i>	<i>18</i>

Table 6, displays third and fourth semester course schema of Department of Linguistics and Human Sciences, Begum Nusrat Bhutto Women University Sukkur.

Table 7. Third Year [Fifth and Sixth] Semester Course Scheme

<i>Third Year</i>					
<i>Fifth Semester</i>			<i>Sixth Semester</i>		
<i>Course Code</i>	<i>Title of Subject</i>	<i>Credit Hr.</i>	<i>Course Code</i>	<i>Title of Subject</i>	<i>Credit Hr.</i>
1	Introduction to International Relations	3	1	Modern Poetry	3
2	Introduction to Environmental Studies	3	2	Modern Drama	3
3	Romantic & Victorian Poetry	3	3	Modern Novel	3
4	Foundations of Literary Theory & Criticism	3	4	Grammar & Syntax	3
5	Sociolinguistics	3	5	Discourse Studies	3
6	Popular Fiction	3	6	Creative Nonfiction	3
	<i>Total</i>	<i>18</i>		<i>Total</i>	<i>18</i>

Table 7, displays fifth and sixth semester course schema of Department of Linguistics and Human Sciences, Begum Nusrat Bhutto Women University Sukkur.

Table 8. Final Year [Seventh and Eighth Semester Course Scheme

<i>Final Year</i>					
<i>Seventh Semester</i>			<i>Eighth Semester</i>		
Course Code	Title of Subject	Credit Hr	Course Code	Title of Subject	Credit Hr
1	Research Methods & Term Paper Writing	3	1	Postcolonial Literature	3
2	Introduction to Applied Linguistics	3	2	American Literature	3
3	Introduction to Stylistics	3	3	Introduction to Translation Studies	3
4	Literary Theory & Practice	3	4	Introduction to Women's Writing	3
5	Pakistani Literature in English	3	5	World Englishes	3
	Total	15		Total	15

Table 8, illustrates seventh and eighth semester course schema of Department of Linguistics and Human Sciences, Begum Nusrat Bhutto Women University Sukkur.

5. Discussion

The Department of English Quaid-e-Awam University of Engineering, Science & Technology (QUEST) does not provide information about 'Vision and Mission' of the department neither on university website nor Prospectus (2020). Generally, vision and mission of the department attract student and parent attention and increase student enrollment in the University. It largely impacts on financial health of universities since all universities of the province face financial crunch due to shortage of funds. The Government of Sindh and Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) emphasizes on universities for generating their own financial resources through various training and establishing linkages with industry providing them technical support. However, introduction of the department provides fuzzy, irrelevant and exaggerated information that needs major revision to make it reader oriented. Interestingly, introduction part of the department carries certain mistakes which can never be expected from department at university level since PhD Professors are working in the department. There is strict check and balance in the university and different quarters academic forums check performance of departments in the university. In the context of universities, 'Academic Council' is major forum where academic programs and their performance is discussed at length. On the other hand, the word 'NSRS' does not form any meaning in any context and this word exists in the Prospectus of 2019-2020 of QUEST. In fact, the correct word is NCRC that forms the meaning [National Curriculum Review Committee]. The Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan has formed this committee and its fundamental job role is to review BS & MS curriculum for Public and Private Sector Universities of Pakistan. The course schema needs a proper revision by academic experts since they present scattered status and are not in harmony with each other. There is a good number of PhD faculty at the department of English QUEST but their contribution is not visible. The department is headed by an Associate Professor whereas; Professors are available in the department.

The Department of Linguistics and Human Sciences, Begum Nusrat Bhutto Women University (BNB) Sukkur displays vision, mission, introduction, course design schema and faculty profile in a very befitting manner. These features can attract students and parents to get their children enrolled in this newly established esteemed university of the province. It is pertinent to mention; the department falls short in required number of PhD faculty. However, the role of the Management is visible therefore everything goes in an organized way and the reflection comes while looking at different academic activities displayed on the portal of the department. It is an established fact in academic arena that visionary leadership plays a paramount role in uplifting image of organizations at national and global level within short span of time.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The academic institutions should display appropriate information on university websites regarding academic programs for proper guidance of students and parents. It shall assist them to select the subject of their own choice. The study recommends the following recommendations:

1. The Department of English Quaid-e- Awam University of Engineering, Science & Technology should design and display Vision & Mission of the department on university website as well as Prospectus.
2. The course schema of Quaid-e- Awam University of Engineering, Science & Technology should be aligned with Vision and Mission of the department.
3. Senior Professor should be appointed as Head of the Department at QUEST. It is a statutory requirement. The Competent Authority i.e. Chancellor Universities of Sindh should take notice of this statutory irregularity.
4. The department of Begum Nusrat Bhutto Women University Sukkur should hire PhD qualified faculty to impart quality education to students.
5. The Competent Authority should provide visionary leadership to Universities as Head of Universities.

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