



Do Indian Universities Produce Ideal Elt Practitioners?

Dr. Sanjay Kumar Jha

Professor and Director (Amity School of Liberal Arts) Amity University, Manesar, Gurgaon

ABSTRACT

Owing to outnumbering ELT (English Language Teaching) programs worldwide, Indian ELT practitioners are not only overawed by dismal recognition of Indian ELT practitioners in global ELT industry but also worried over the fact that ELT curricula used in Indian universities do not compete with the globally recognized ideal ELT curricula. Hence, this study sets three research objectives: (i) exploring the ideal ELT program(s) in global scenario, (ii) assessing whether at least 20 % of Indian universities impart ideal ELT program(s) or not; (iii) identifying the gap between Indian ELT curricula and internationally acclaimed ELT curricula. As for data collection, the required data were collected through document analysis and the data were analyzed using Pareto analysis (80/20%), and descriptive statistics. The study presents five major findings followed by six remedial measures to upgrade the status of ELT in India.

KEYWORDS

ELT, ELT Practitioner, ELT Program

1. Introduction

Today, every nuance of human life is undergoing the process of globalization be it industrial, economic, social, cultural, or linguistic. As part of globalization and development communication, English, being the sole world lingua franca, has undoubtedly proved to be the best linguistic medium of globalization. Given the fast-paced changes caused by globalization, India is in dire need of producing ideal ELT practitioners. From global perspective, the good news is the number of non-native speakers of English has outnumbered the native speakers of the language (Chen, 2009). More importantly, it has been estimated that currently 80% of English teachers worldwide are non-native speakers of the language (Braine, 2010). To meet the growing demand of ideal ELT practitioners in India and other non-native countries, Indian universities do not seem to be concerned over adequate and appropriate ELT education.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The statement of the problem is why Indian ELT practitioners are not recognized to teach English language in global ELT arena. Given the stated problem, this study poses three pertinent research questions as follows.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What is the ideal ELT program in the eyes of ELT employers and ELT institutions globally?
2. Do at least 20% Indian universities offer the ideal ELT program?
3. Are Indian ELT curricula at par with the ideal (globally recognized) ELT program?

3. Methodology

The study has used mixed (quantitative and qualitative) research design as it has used both measurements (to answer the first and second research questions) and interpretation (to answer the third research question).

Subjects and Sampling of the Study

The subjects of this study comprised 21 randomly selected job adverts for tertiary level ELT, 21 purposively selected overseas universities specialized in ELT education, and 21 conveniently selected Indian universities offering master level ELT programs.

Data Collection

The sole data gathering tool used for this study was Document Analysis (in the form of online archival artifacts).

Data Analysis

The ordinal data were analyzed quantitatively using frequency and arithmetic mean; whereas, the nominal data collected were analyzed qualitatively using narrative analysis.

4. Findings and Discussion

In response to the first research question, the study used two approaches to explore ideal ELT program.

4.1 Ideal ELT Programs in the Eyes of Employers and Institutions

The following table 1 shows firstly the preferences of ideal ELT qualifications through 21 frequently advertised job adverts. Secondly, the study aimed to explore the preference of ideal ELT programs by 21 overseas universities specialized in ELT education as per QS World University Rankings-2015.

Table 1. Ideal ELT Programs in the Eyes of Employers and Top Overseas Institut

Tertiary Level ELT Job Adverts	Premier Universities Offering ELT programs
Arlington, VA, Jeddah (KSA) (EFL) Instructors MA in TESOL and Native English speaker	Anaheim University, USA MA (TESOL)
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (ESL Faculty Member) MA TESOL, TEFL + 300 hours practicum	Columbia University, USA MA (Applied Linguistics and TESOL)
CELCA, Aston University Teaching Associate DELTA and MA in TESOL, Applied Linguistics	Durham University, UK MA (Applied Language Studies for TESOL)
College of Lake County, (Adjunct ESL Faculty) MA in TESOL or Linguistics with TESOL specialization	Lancaster University, UK MA (Applied Linguistics and Language Teaching)
Community College of Philadelphia, (ESL Faculty) MA/MSc. In TESOL or closely related field	Macquarie University, Australia MA (Applied Linguistics and TESOL)
HULT International Business School, London EAP Tutor MA (TESOL/Applied Linguistics)	Newcastle University MA (Applied Linguistics and TESOL)

Lingnan University, Hong Kong, Language Instructor MA (Applied Linguistics/related discipline)	Northumbria University, UK MA (Applied Linguistics for TESOL)
New York University, (Asst. Prof.-TESOL) PhD in TESOL, Applied Linguistics, or a related field	Penn State University (USA) MA (TESL)
Northumbria University, English Language Lecturer RSA DELTA, MA in TESOL or similar qualification	University of Bath MA (TESOL) plus Delta
Oxford Brookes University, EAP Lecturer TEFL Q status (DELTA or equivalent)	University of Brighton, UK MA (TESOL)
QA Business School London, EFL Lecturer MSc/ MA (TEFL/ TESOL) or DELTA	University of Edinburgh, UK MSc (TESOL)
San José State University, California (Asst. Prof.-TESOL) PhD (Applied Linguistics, TESOL, Language Education)	University of Leicester, UK MA (Applied Linguistics and TESOL)
School of Education, Queens, New York, (Prof.- TESOL) PhD in TESOL plus record of TESOL research	SIT, USA MA (TESOL) with internship
SELS Language Center, Point Park University, (ESL Instructor) MA in TESOL or Applied Linguistics	University of London, UK MA (TESOL)
Sohar University, Oman, English Teachers BA/MA (TESL/TEFL/TESOL)	University of Manchester, UK MA (Educational Technology and TESOL)
Syracuse University, NY (Senior Lecturer- ESOL) PhD in TESOL or Applied Linguistics	University of Oxford, UK MSc (Applied Linguistics and SLA)
The British Council, Qatar, ELT Trainer MA (TEFL/Applied Linguistics)	University of Pennsylvania, USA MA Educational Linguistics and TESOL
University of Arizona, Tucson, (Asso. Prof., English) PhD in TESOL/Applied or similar field	University of Sheffield, UK MA (Applied Linguistics with TESOL)
University of Liverpool, University Teacher MA TESOL and Applied Linguistics	University of Sussex, UK MA (English Language Teaching)
University of Tampa, (Assistant Professor of English) Ph.D in English with TESOL experience	University of Ulster, UK MA (TESOL) with internship
Victor Valley College, ASSOCIATE FACULTY, (ESL) MA in TESL, TESOL, or applied linguistics	University of Warwick MA (English Language Teaching)

Assessing the employers’ preference of ELT qualifications, the frequency of desirable qualifications was converted into percentile and the result shows that 51% of employers have asked for MA in TESOL; whereas 49% employers have asked for MA TESOL and MA Applied Linguistics interchangeably. As for the percentile of institutional preference on imparting ideal ELT programs, we find that 38% universities are offering MA (TESOL); whereas, 42% universities impart MA (TESOL & Applied Linguistics). It is desirable to emphasize that though the ELT programs shown in figure.1 look different at face value, they are very much similar to one another in terms of their curricular components according to Carreiro (2010), Bagwell, (2012), Jha (2014), and, many others. However, it is important to decipher the distinction between TESOL and Applied Linguistics in short. TESOL, on the one hand, focuses on pedagogy; whereas, Applied Linguistics usually focuses more on theory and language research (Bagwell, 2012).

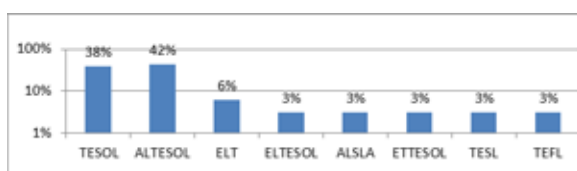


Figure 1: The Graded Prominence of the ELT Programs

4.2 The Ideal ELT Programs in Indian Universities

This section responds to the second research question by exploring whether at least 20% of Indian universities offer ideal ELT programs or not. The reason of pinpointing on 20% finds its base in Pareto Analysis which believes that 80% of success can be fetched even by 20% of quality efforts in any field of life. In other words, it is 20% quality that matters in producing 80% of desirable results. In the present context, the rationale is to see the availability of at least 20% of quality ELT course providers (universities) to cater to the needs of prospective Indian ELT practitioners.

Of 736 Indian universities, only 21 universities were selected for this study in which 10 universities were purposively selected due to their reputation in language education and 11 universities were randomly selected to see whether they offer any of the ideal ELT programs or not. To see the face value of taxonomic nomenclature, one can readily say that none of the Indian universities impart internationally acclaimed ideal ELT program (MA TESOL/ALTESOL). However, 4% universities (see figure 2) were found to be offering three similar programs namely MA (TESL) M.Phil ELT, and MA ELT by EFLU, Hyderabad, Vanasthali Vidyapeeth, and University of Kerala respec-

tively.



Figure 2: The Ideal ELT Programs in Indian Universities

What Indian universities normally offer is MA (English) which is a blend of both English language and English literature. The credibility of this program (as an ELT program) is under question for the reason that it gives least concern to ELT and the most to English literature. Another baffling fact concerns MA (Linguistics/Applied Linguistics). Although, MA (Linguistics/Applied Linguistics) are deemed equivalent to an ideal ELT program; out of 736, only 1.75% Indian universities were found to be offering MA (Linguistics/Applied Linguistics).

4.3 An Insight into Ideal ELT curricula and Indian ELT Curricula

This section responds to the third research question. The following are the key findings as to major shortcomings in Indian ELT curricula.

1. Indian ELT curricula cover mainly vital components of English literature rather than English language.
2. Only 4% of Indian ELT curricula are relevant to the ideal ELT program.
3. The six vital components (deemed as the backbone) of an ideal ELT curriculum namely curriculum development and syllabus design, theories of second language acquisition, teaching four macro skills using authentic materials, second language research methodology, and teaching practicum followed by a dissertation were not found in India curricula.
4. Teaching Practicum (internship), a key component of an ELT curriculum, was not found in Indian curricula.
5. The curricula of three ELT programs namely MA (TESL/ELT) and M. Phil (ELT) were not compared with the ideal ELT curricula because they do not represent even 1% of 736 Indian universities.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, three important facts deserve mentioning. Firstly, MA TESOL and Applied Linguistics was found to be the most preferred ELT program in the eyes of employers and premier universities. Secondly, out of 736, only three Indian universities offer ideal ELT program(s). Thirdly, Indian MA (English) cannot

be deemed as an equivalent to ideal ELT program as it lacks vital components for an ideal ELT curriculum. From remedial perspective, the paper forwards six remedial measures as follows.

Recommendations:

1. Given the dearth of ideal ELT programs, the UGC should introduce the ideal ELT program in Indian universities so that Indian ELT practitioners could be eligible for global ELT workforce.
2. There should be a global forum to update all the stakeholders, (i.e. ELT course providers, ELT practitioners, global ELT employers) of ongoing developments in ELT and to ensure the credibility of any ELT program.
3. Given the importance of teaching practicum (internship), Indian universities must provide at least 100+ hours teaching practicum in their concerned ELT related programs.
4. As all the UK based ideal ELT programs are of one year, Indian MA (English) can be restructured by allocating one year to cover ELT and one year to cover literature components.
5. As time, distance, and fees become hurdles in availing foreign ELT programs for the Indians, Indian universities need to launch them on their own or in collaboration with the foreign universities.
6. Frequent branding of ELT program should be stopped and a global harmonized ELT curriculum needs to be introduced.

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