

## Pragmatics Aspects of the Curriculum of Assamese Language and Literature: It's Limitations and Future

AnanditaPhukan<sup>1</sup>UtpalKakati<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>PhD. Scholar, Department of Assamese, Cotton University, Guwahati, Assam,

<sup>2</sup>PostGraduate, Department of Assamese, Cotton University, Guwahati, Assam, E-mail:

utpalkakati0593@gmail.com

### Abstract:

The reluctance shown by Assamese speakers towards their mother tongue in the present context in the future are honestly pushing the language to the brink of death. Today we live in a society where there is no lacking of parents who are proud to say that their children do not know how to speak their mother tongue. However, there is no shortage of students in the same society who have a keen interest in understanding their mother tongue well. As a result of such mentality, a large number of students have chosen the Assamese subject as their Major paper. This paper attempts on discussing how the present curriculum has helped students pursuing Assamese as a Major subject and what additions to the present curriculum would prove to be beneficial.

This paper would be carried forward in analytical method and in doing so, the Assamese Language and Literature curriculum of some colleges and universities in Assam has been used in the preparation of the dissertation.

**Key Word:** Curriculum, Pragmatics, Assamese, Language

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### 1. Introduction

Looking at the lexical meaning of education, it is seen that education is the acquisition of knowledge and skills in any subject. The English word for Assamese 'Sikshya' is 'Education'. The word 'education' is derived from the original Latin word 'Educare' which means 'to bring up' or 'to nourish' meaning to raise or nature. According tiAristotole, 'Education is the creation of a sound mind asound body'. And, Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan has defined the definition of education in this way, 'Education means the training of intellect, refinement of heart and discipline of the spirit.'

After a close towards the views on education given by different scholars, it is safe to say that the definition of education cannot be determined by a few words. Education has been playing a special role in the survival of human beings since time immemorial. In a more true sense, human beings are different from other living beings only because of education. Education is a way of life without which human life is unimaginable. And it has been playing a major role in the development of human

beings in all aspects including physical, mental, moral, intellectual, social, spiritual, political, economic and cultural. In the old system of society, the elders verbally taught the younger the essentials of life. As education became more formal with the passage of time, so did the birth of educational institutions. The curriculum was prepared as soon as formal education began. In simple terms we call the lists of subjects as 'Curriculum'. Different academicians and scholars have come up with different definitions about the curriculum. The English word 'Curriculum' is derived from the Latin word 'Currere' which means 'run way' or 'race course'.

Assamese, which is actually known as Asamiya is a state language spoken in the state of Assam. Assamese is a branch of the Indo-Aryan language which evolved in the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD having its roots from the Sanskrit Language.

Since the main topic of discussion is directly related to higher education, the stages from undergraduate and higher education are included here. The paper tries to discuss the pragmatics aspects of the curriculum of Assamese Language and Literature and its limitations and future. It is commonly said that the main purpose of education is to acquire knowledge but at the same time everyone is involved in occupational aspect of it. But it seems that the institutions of higher education have failed to set their curriculum in a more practical way or has given less importance to the practical aspects of the subject while setting the curriculum. Therefore, an attempt has been made to discuss the current conventional practical aspects in the Assamese language-literature curriculum and its future as the main subject of this paper.

## **2. Methodology and Data Collection**

This paper has taken help from different sources. As primary sources, Dibrugarh University's Assamese (major course) undergraduate and postgraduate course, Gauhati University's Assamese Department's postgraduate course, Cotton University's Assamese Department's postgraduate course etc. are taken

Analytical method has been adopted for the preparation of the paper "Pragmatics Aspects of the Curriculum of Assamese Language and Literature: Its Limitation and Future".

## **3. Aims and Objectives of The Study**

In the department of literature such as Assamese, English, Hindi, Bengali etc. Some monotonous symptoms are observed in the higher education curriculum. The curriculum is limited to the history of literature, literary criticism, some stories, poems, plays, novel, essays etc. Which aren't help us to self-establishment in contemporary world. Therefore, this discussion paper has been prepared with an emphasis on how students can be equally successful in practical terms by adding topics for the benefit of all students. Also, attempts have been made to point out mistakes of the conventional curriculum system. The discussion paper focuses on the Assamese Language and Literature curriculum.

This discussion paper includes the shortcomings of the conventional curriculum, its pragmatics aspects, future and limitation

## **4. Discussion of the Topic:**

## Pragmatics Aspects of the Curriculum of Assamese Language and Literature: It's Limitations and Future

The present age is an age of Information and Technology and the present generation seem to be highly attracted to such education. However, there are students who have shown keen interest in learning the various aspects of language and literature and to be deeply aware of the same. As a result, they choose Assamese as their honours or Major subject for their higher studies and become students of literature. Assamese is our mother tongue and the state language of Assam. Therefore, in order to learn their language properly, many students become part of the Assamese department at the college and university level. A language acts as a carrier of recognition to a nation. Therefore, there is an immediate need for such students who use this language properly and can also motivate 10 other students each in the right path. In addition to the mental structure, subjectivity, etc., the issue of establishment is also involved from time to time, which is why it is seen that there is no special importance attached to the integration of necessary subjects in the conventional curriculum. At present, the pragmatics aspects of curriculum development have been emphasized by some universities.

### **4.1 Curriculum of Assamese Language and Literature:**

It is seen that most of the curriculum of Assam Language and Literature is subject-centric and static. The courses are limited to the history of literature and language, literary criticism, some stories, novels, plays, poems, essays, etc. Although they play a significant role in mental structure, life skills, personality formation, etc., such courses do not seem to play a significant role in the practical aspects as well as in the direction of self-establishment. In addition, such courses are not found to be particularly helpful in assisting in individual or government selection examinations. However, in various competitive examinations, Assamese language and literature have been given priority as official recognized languages. In order to attract the younger generation to subjects like Assamese Language and Literature, it has become necessary to create an interesting curriculum and to emphasize the need to revise the above mentioned issues.

### **4.2 Practical Aspects of Assamese Language and Literature's Curriculum:**

The change of time has changed the social, cultural and other aspects of the society. Education is no exception. It is noticed that in order to be self-reliant to match with the present times, the departments of language and literature have started to break down the previous limitations and focus on its practical aspects.

If we take a look at the Assamese Honours (Major) syllabus of the University of Dibrugarh, we will see that there has been a collection of paper on mass media, book editing and literary sociology for the graduating sixth semester. The paper covers various types of media, art of news presentation, art of news writing, Assamese language in advertisements, manuscript editing, etc. Through which students can take up the field of journalism as their field of work. This paper is especially important in imparting basic knowledge to the students on Advertising Writing, News Writing and Performing Arts.

Similarly, the editing of the manuscript has been covered by the said paper which has provided a career option in book editing, textual criticism etc. Thus, if we look at the undergraduate courses of Dibrugarh University today, we can see that the paper of 'Functional Assamese' is working towards

the practical aspects of language and literature. Communication Circle, Formal and Informal Communication, Fundamentals of Good Writing, News Presentation Style, Interviews, Discussion Cycles, Research Methodology, Right Pronunciation of the Assamese language and other such practical aspects have been given special importance by this paper. The students of Dibrugarh University have ample resources to build their careers as translators through the paper of 'Translation Arts'. In addition to these, another beautiful subject added to the curriculum by Dibrugarh University for the convenience of students is Creative Writing. By creative writing, we mean poetry, plays, novels, essays, stories, etc. Experienced students play such a special role in bringing their stories to life in a pure, interesting and engaging way, with the help of their tender, sensitive minds. Although many people says that in places like Assam, people cannot survive through writing but there are many such ideals in the Assamese society who have established themselves through their writings and powerful words. Therefore, it can be said that such a course can give special impetus to the students in the field of self-establishment as writers.

Looking at the curriculum prepared for the postgraduate classes of Cotton University , it can be seen that the curriculum here has given importance in the field of translation studies as a pragmatic aspect of the curriculum. Likewise in the Assamese major classes curriculum of Cotton University added Film Studies paper. The topics covered by the paper are; history of world cinema, history of Indian cinema Special reference to Assamese cinema, film language, film and literature etc. The subject of film language has given an opportunity to study basic of plot, film script writing, direction, editing, stage of film making etc; which are helpful for students in the field of self-establishment as a successful script writer, a editor and as a good director of film .As well as, another paper vocational Assamese has very useful for student in the field of pragmatic aspects. Formal and informal communication, fundamentals of good writing and good speech, technical communication: interview, group discussion, public relation, copy writing/editing, writing for radio and television are subjects included the paper vocational Assamese.

On the curriculum prepared for the postgraduate classes of Guwahati University, it can be seen that the curriculum here has given importance in the field of creative writing as a practical aspect of the curriculum.

In this way, the universities of Assam have taken a new approach for the convenience of the students as opposed to the traditional curriculum.

## **5. Result**

In addition to the practical aspects discussed above, we have a number of scopes to facilitate the establishment of students. One of which can be keeping in touch with the Assamese culture like ornaments and jewellerys, method of preparation of Assamese traditional attires and education of which can be added in the curriculum of Assamese Language Literature, hereby giving them more options of career development.

In the same way, it is seen that the subject concerned with Textile and material production to be increasing exponentially. Students can also build their own careers through production of traditional attire of North East India, including Assam. This can help the students to develop their career in

## Pragmatics Aspects of the Curriculum of Assamese Language and Literature: It's Limitations and Future

entrepreneurship and also play an important role to introduce the traditional attires of Assam and North-East India to the outer world.

In addition to this, if the course of production and preparation of musical instruments associated with the Assamese culture gets a place in the curriculum, the rich cultural heritage of Assam would be richer than ever and the upcoming generation would have another option in their career building.

Moreover, the subject of Performing Arts can also be made common. Dibrugarh University has been instrumental in opening the Department of Performing Arts and leading the way for aspiring students. It would be a blessing for the interested students if the universities would add such subjects in the Language and Literature curriculum and impart their basic knowledge and point out such directions. In the present undergraduate courses, Performing Arts has been included in the curriculum, although that knowledge has been limited to the theoretical aspects. The course developer and the university authorities should also focus on the practical aspects of it because it could be very beneficial for the future of the students.

### 6. Conclusion:

It is normally seen that the those students who choose literature as their Major subject in their Undergraduate and Post-Graduate education have no other option than to take the long way and pursue B. Ed, M. Phil, PhD in the future. And in doing so, they are faced with many roadblocks and obstacles stopping them from reaching their goal. As a result, they go astray and become depressed as they get older. In order to solve such problems, it has become necessary to focus on the practical aspects of the college and university level curriculum. It is hoped that the students will be able to establish themselves if they are nurtured with practical knowledge. This will enable the financially weak to engage themselves in costly education such as research if they can find a way to earn a living and voluntarily complete future education. Students who are educated in such a practical way will be able to provide services to ten more and help them solve complex problems. Also, in the current crisis of Assamese language and literary culture, it is thought that such a practical curriculum will attract the younger generation to study literature in Assamese.

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