

English Language Teaching Research Partnerships (ELTReP) Award programme 2012–2016

Explorations: Teaching and Learning English in India
**Issue 10: Using inclusive practices
and multilingual approaches (2)**

Edited by Brian Tomlinson and Andy Keedwell

Produced by:
British Council
L&T Chambers First Floor
16 Camac Street
Kolkata 700017
India

www.britishcouncil.in

© British Council India 2018

ISBN 978-0-86355-872-6 : Issue 10

Contents

Issue 10: Overview	
Using inclusive practices and multilingual approaches (2)	4

An exploration into English language teaching in multilingual contexts	
<i>Ramanujam Meganathan</i>	6

English for beginners in multiple mother tongue classroom contexts in primary schools	
<i>Mizo Prova Borah</i>	23

Using CEFR-based bilingual rubrics to improve the writing ability of ESL learners: A multiple case study	
<i>Santosh Kumar Mahapatra</i>	38

Explorations: Teaching and Learning English in India

Issue 10: Overview

Using inclusive practices and multilingual approaches (2)

The papers in this issue of *Explorations: Teaching and Learning English in India* investigate the two professional practices of using inclusive practices and using multilingual approaches. The first professional practice involves recognising and valuing diversity among learners and encouraging inclusive education within a supportive learning environment. Through this professional practice, teachers treat all learners equitably and with respect. The second professional practice includes recognising and valuing the multilingual nature of societies, schools and classrooms and using appropriate strategies for the multilingual classroom. Through this professional practice, teachers take learners' linguistic backgrounds into account and capitalise on its diversity.

Each of the papers in this issue examines learners' perceptions in bilingual or multilingual contexts. **Ramanujam Meganathan** reports and comments on the perceptions of both students and teachers of the value of the learning experience provided at a number of English medium high schools in Delhi. **Mizo Prova Borah** investigates the perceptions of students, teachers and parents on the learning experience of lower primary school students in ten schools in Assam. **Santosh Mahapatra** analyses learner responses to the use of bilingual rubrics and the impact on learner performance and present positive findings on the advantages of using rubrics of this type.

About the authors

Ramanujam Meganathan is an Associate Professor of English Language Education at the Department of Education in Languages, NCERT, New Delhi. He specialises in language curriculum development, English language education, materials development, teacher development, language policy and classroom research.

Dr Mizo Prova Borah is Deputy Director, SCERT, Assam, India. She conducts and monitors research in multilingual education, early reading, curriculum, textbooks, online resources, MOOC, training and teacher education.

Santosh Mahapatra teaches at BITS Pilani Hyderabad Campus. He has a PhD in language assessment and his research interests lie in language assessment, teacher education, ESP, critical pedagogy and use of web 2.0 tools in English language education.

About the English Language Teaching Research Partnerships (ELTReP) Award programme

India has a long tradition of educational research but the results of this have not always reached the wider world. Through a range of programmes, British Council India places considerable emphasis on encouraging and supporting inquiry. A key

strand of that work between 2012 and 2016 has been the English Language Teaching Research Partnerships (ELTReP) Award programme. The programme aimed to facilitate high quality, innovative research to benefit the learning and teaching of English in India and to improve the access of ELT policy makers, professionals from India and the United Kingdom and the global ELT community to that research. All writers contributing to the eleven issues of *Explorations: Teaching and Learning English in India* were selected and supported in their research by the ELTReP Award programme.

All three papers in this issue have been written by practitioners in the field, whether teachers, lecturers, educational department personnel or other roles that involve day-to-day contact with the teaching and learning of English. The researchers, many of whom will be seeing their work published for the first time, have designed and implemented their studies and present results which in each case are innovative and thought-provoking. Each paper reflects the creativity, detailed awareness of context and practical suggestions of a wide range of writers, from different backgrounds and working in different situations.

We very much hope you enjoy *Explorations: Teaching and Learning English in India* and that you feel the insights the papers provide into a variety of educational environments are applicable to your own context, wherever you may be working.

Acknowledgements

British Council India would like to acknowledge the support of Dr Richard Smith of Warwick University and Professor Rama Mathew of Delhi University throughout the ELTReP programme and, in particular, the help and encouragement provided to the writers contributing to this volume. The writers would like to acknowledge all professionals, learners and other participants who have helped them to undertake and present their research.

Papers 1 and 2 in this issue were edited by Professor Brian Tomlinson in collaboration with the writers themselves. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Professor Tomlinson. Paper 3 was edited by Andy Keedwell, British Council.

The opinions expressed in the papers in this issue are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent or reflect the views of the British Council.

1

An exploration into English language teaching in multilingual contexts

Ramanujam Meganathan

1. Introduction

This study explores English language teaching in multilingual situations, where learners speak more than two languages. The following issues were investigated in two multilingual schools in New Delhi:

1. the role of English and the English language curriculum
2. English language teaching-learning processes and classroom practices
3. the perceptions of teachers and learners of the existing practices of English language education.

The research attempted to seek answers to the following questions:

1. How do teaching-learning processes and practices in multilingual contexts support English language learning?
2. What role does English play or is perceived to be playing in school contexts?
3. What is the place and role of the languages of children in the learning and teaching of English?

4. How do teachers and learners perceive English language education in schools?

2. Research design

Urban India marks the multilingual character of the country with its migrant population from across the country. New Delhi is one such city where various linguistic communities have schools for their children. The mother tongue or first language of children is the language of the community they belong to, say Tamil, Bengali, Telugu, Punjabi and so on; the language in the social domain is Hindi and the medium of instruction (in quite a number of schools) is English. The classroom processes adopt knowingly or unknowingly multilingualism as a strategy i.e. the languages of children are used as a resource for the teaching of subjects as well as languages, including English (NCERT, 2005; NCERT, 2006). The two linguistic minority schools explored are Tamil and Bengali schools:

1. Delhi Tamil Education Association Senior Secondary School (DTEA), Lodhi Estate, New Delhi
2. Raisina Bengali School, Chittaranjan Park, New Delhi

2.1 Two linguistic minority institutions

2.1.1. Delhi Tamil Education Association School (DTEA)

DTEA schools known as Madarasi were established in 1923. The DTEA schools cater to the educational needs of a cross section of the Tamil population living in Delhi. Tamilians who are employed in various departments of government of India at Delhi and those who migrated to Delhi for other work send their wards to the schools. Today there are eight schools located where the Tamil population is concentrated.

2.1.2. Raisina Bengali School

The Raisina Bengali Schools cater for the educational needs of the Bengali population in Delhi. There are four schools in different locations of Delhi, all of which use English as the medium of instruction and follow the curriculum of the Central Board of Secondary Education.

Both the schools have a minor percentage of learners from other language communities.

2.2. Instruments used for the study

1. Ethnographic observational field notes:

Each school was visited for four weeks by the researcher to observe classrooms, morning assembly, staff meeting(s), and co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

2. Semi-structured and open interviews:

Interview schedules for the three main groups of participants in the research, learners, teachers and administrators were developed to collect their reflection(s).

3. Questionnaire: A questionnaire with twenty two items on the various aspects of English language teaching-learning in schools (with a four-point scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree) was administered to learners of classes 8, 9 and 10 in both the schools.

4. Classroom observation schedule:

A classroom observation schedule consisting of various aspects of classroom activities and teacher-learner interaction was used to record classroom processes along with audio recording.

Secondary data: Policy and curricular documents such as the curriculum framework, the syllabus and the materials for the teaching-learning of English were analysed.

All the instruments were developed in consultation with members of faculty and experts from my department and other departments of NCERT, New Delhi. They underwent piloting in one of the schools and also in another government school and modifications were made to suit the context.

2.3. Participants of the research

Participants for the research were chosen from the two linguistic minority schools mentioned above. In a way, these are case studies of the practices of English language teaching in typical English medium schools where students belonging to linguistic minority communities study. The participants of the research from the two schools were students studying in classes 8, 9 and 10 from both the schools.

Learners: Most of the learners are from the lower socio-economic strata of society. There were 61 boys and 55 girls from DTEA and 57 boys and 52 girls from Raisina Bengali.

Teachers: 12 teachers (6 teachers each from DTEA and Raisina Bengali schools).

Classrooms observed: Twenty classrooms were observed in each of the two schools.

Focus group discussion: Two focus group discussions, one in each school were conducted on various issues, aspects and problems of English language education.

3. Discussion and major findings

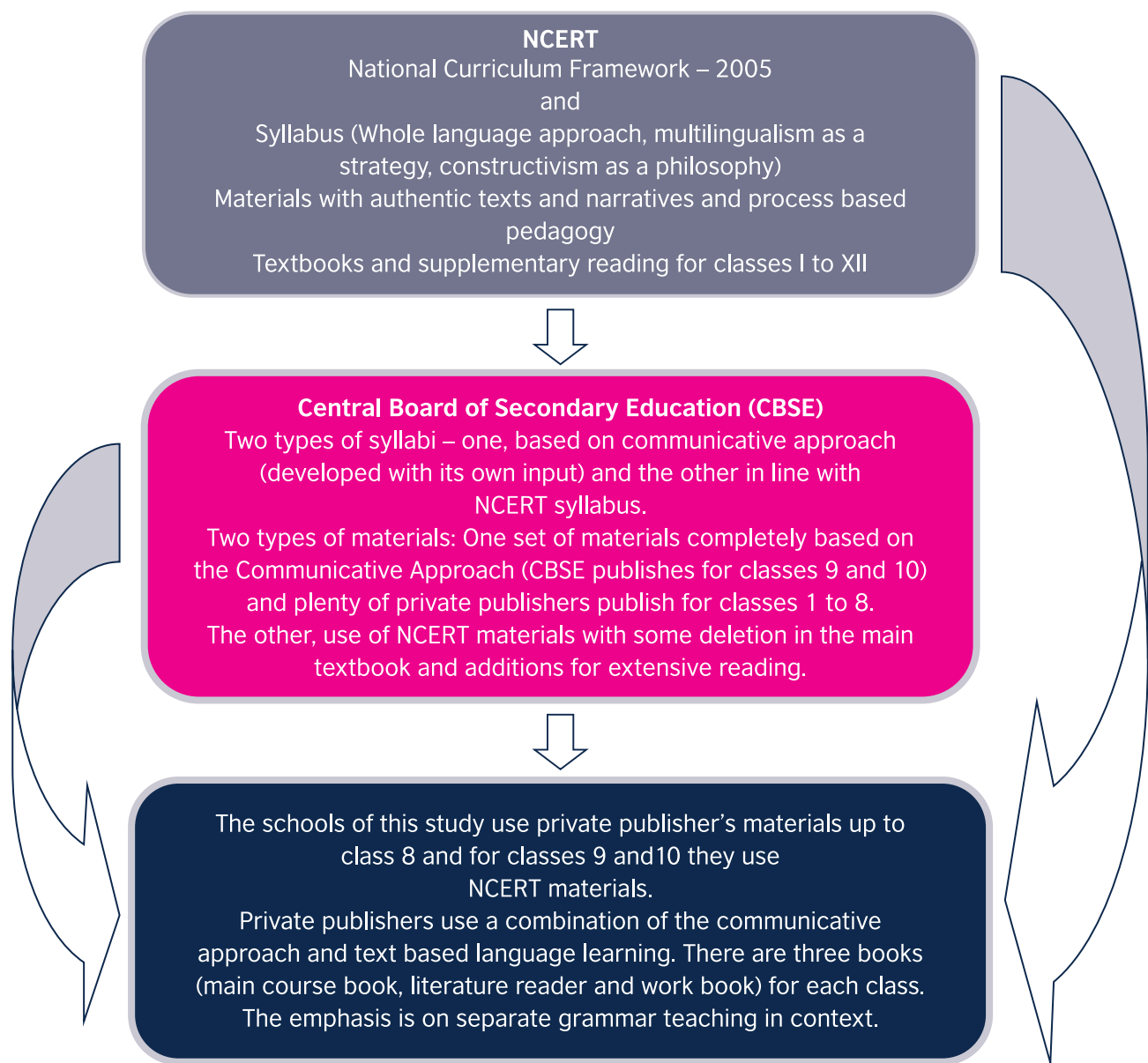


Figure 1: Curriculum implementation / adaptation in the schools

3.1. English language curriculum in the schools

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF, 2005), the syllabus and the materials developed as a follow up to it are either adopted as such or adapted with modifications by different states and school systems. Many states adapt the National Curriculum Framework 2005 with modification. Some states develop their syllabus and textbooks

on their own based on the guidelines of the NCF (Meganathan, 2011; Yadav, 2014). English language education has seen tremendous developments in terms of materials during the last two and half decades since the introduction of the Communicative Approach by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in 1990. There are many materials produced by private publishers based on the communicative approach. Schools,

particularly private and government aided schools such as the ones chosen for this study have freedom to select materials on their own up to class 8. Both DTEA and Rainsina Bengali School have chosen to have textbooks from private publishers. DTEA used the materials developed by the Curriculum Company called *Ez Vidya, My studio-English*. Rainsina Bengali School used the textbooks published by a popular publisher, Ranta Sagar. Both the materials reflect the philosophy of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 and adopt a communicative approach with an eclectic perspective. Curriculum implementation shows that an 'in between' top-down and bottom-up situation, where the school adopts indirectly the national level syllabus developed by NCERT or CBSE and at the materials level they have freedom to select the materials by any private publisher. This leads to a loss of 'curriculum ideas' or 'curriculum shedding' as well as 'curriculum increase' or 'curriculum burden'. Both the materials have three books for each class viz. main course book, workbook and literature reader. The NCERT curriculum has one book only up to class 5 aiming at familiarising learners with the English language through songs, stories and vocabulary and structures in contexts. NCERT's materials integrate grammar with the main textbooks and from class 6 onwards there is a separate extensive reader along with a main textbook.

3.2. The English language classroom

English language classrooms in both schools operate like any other typical 'low resourced' (Meganathan, 2014) English language classroom situations in India with lots of constraints. Teachers in the classes reported below adopt whatever methods and strategies they believe work in their classrooms. Lack of pedagogical understanding on the part of teachers and knowledge of recent or emerging approaches (for example the constructivist/progressive pedagogies as advocated by the NCF 2005 or communicative/task based approaches) was noticed. Teachers resort to reading aloud and explanation while teaching reading and teach explicit grammar instead of letting learners discover the rules on their own or drawing the attention of learners to form from meaning.

Classroom 1, DTEA School, Class 5 Section C:
number of students present: 35 (boys 22 girls 13)

The classroom was spacious with six rows of three desks each. There were some charts displayed on the class notice board and the teacher was already there when I entered the class. She made all the children settle down and started her class.

Teacher: [She shows a book and says:] 'This is a book.' The book is on the table. [She places it in her hand bag].

Then she asked the whole class: 'Where do you live?'

Students replied: 'I live in Delhi.'

T: Last summer vacation I went Mysore. I went to Mysore by flight. How did you come to school?

Students: By bus/bus

T wrote on the black board

This is a book.

The book is in the bag.

I live in Delhi.

I went to Mysore.

Yesterday I went to market with my mother.

[she asked the students to read

She marked the words 'on' 'in' 'to'.

Then she marked the naming words, 'book', 'table' 'Mysore'].

T: Words which link naming words and other words are called prepositions. Let us now see what a preposition is. Prepositions are words used before the naming words, nouns.

T: 'The book is on the table.' [T kept asking the whole class through examples.]

T: I come to school by bus. What is the preposition here?

All students: to

T: Now tell me, what is a preposition?

S: Prepositions are words which appear before the nouns.

T: I am going to teach prepositions 'below' and 'under' in different ways. Under. What is the meaning of under?

There was silence. Then T said:

T: One thing lower than the other thing.

[T demonstrated with action.]

This ball is under the handkerchief.

[T keeps the ball under the table.]

The ball is below the table.

The duster is below the table.

'Under' denotes things covered by it.

The duster is below the table.

[T then asked students to make sentences using *under* and *below*.]

[Now T spoke in Hindi: *abhi hum banayinge sentences with 'below' and 'under'*.]

Student 1: The rat under the table.

Student 2: The dog is below the table.

Student 3: The dog is under the table.

The teacher wrote the following sentences

1. Most of the Indian temples are _____ the hill.
2. The flowers are _____ the basket.
3. I placed a pen _____ file.
4. I saw a golden palace _____ the hill top.
5. Rat is _____ the chair.
6. I went _____ market yesterday.

7. She asked learners to fill in the blanks taking turns. She read each sentence many times.

Then the bell rang. She said: 'We will continue in our next period tomorrow. All of you should take a look at what we have done today when you go home.'

Classroom Two Raisina Bengali School Class 9 B Writing

Number of students: 54

Teacher entered the class and asked the students about their term examinations.

T: When is your term examination?

Ss: Next week, madam

T: Let us do one thing today. Let's do writing, letter writing today so that you can do well in the exam the writing part OK.

Ss: Yes, madam.

T: I can't shout any more. Please keep quiet. We will do a complaint letter. That is a complaint on the damaged good you bought or to replace the gadget you bought. This is one type of complaint. Other type of complaint you make it to Municipal Commissioner about the conditions of roads and other civic facilities, to Jal Board about water problem, monkey menace on road. Now let's do the first type of complaint to the agent who supplied you the refrigerator. Here is the question. Please write down. [She wrote it on the board].

You are Manu of 125, MB Road, Kolkata, You have brought a 265 litre frost free refrigerator from Life style, CR Dash Market, Kolkatta. After using it for a month you found the refrigerator is not working well. Write a letter to the sales manager of the company to replace it as it under guarantee period.

[All students wrote down the question.]

T: Is it a formal letter? Or an informal one?

S: It formal letter, business letter.

T: Good. Now let me tell you how you are going to write it. How do you start?

[She explained the business letter step by step. She wrote the format of a business letter on the black board. She completely dictated the letter including the matter for the body of the letter. She said:]

I have bought a refrigerator on

[All the students wrote whatever she dictated.

She then recapitulated whatever has been taught. She then gave another letter for homework.]

You are Parvin of 175, Gandhi Road, New Delhi. Write a letter to the dealer of Television sets at 140, Gole Market, New Delhi from where you have bought a TV week and found it not working well. Add necessary details.

Both lessons reveal a kind of uninformed eclecticism. The training given to them by the textbook publishers familiarises them how to deal with the books in their classroom and most teachers feel that they are not able to adopt the ideas and strategies presented in the training programmes. Here is what two teachers feel about the methods of teaching in their classroom and in the school:

There is not room for using all the methods with these children (sic.). We need to complete the lessons and do lot of copy checking and CCE work. So we follow whatever works well. Our children learn English and when they reach class 9 or 10, they are good and may not be able to speak, but otherwise their language is good. (Class 5 English teacher)

Another teacher says:

We need to explain everything and write on the blackboard so that they can get something. It is not possible to use all the techniques given by the trainers.

Teachers ‘teach the way they were taught’ because most of them are not professionally trained as English language teachers. This phenomenon, as described by Lorte (1975), is an apprenticeship of observation. They are other subject teachers and have studied English as a language in their school and in the university. They attempt to teach recalling their school experience as learners. So they adapt ‘reading out and explain’ the reading text and teach grammar explicitly.

3.3. Perception of learners

A four-point scale questionnaire with twenty two items on the various aspects of English language teaching-learning in schools was administered to learners of classes 8, 9 and 10 in both the schools. This section reports and reflects on the perceptions of learners on 1: classroom activities, 2: teacher interaction, 3: textbooks, 4: activities in school, 5: assessment and 6: language preferences.

An overall score was created for assessing the perceptions of learners on the twenty two items under the five aspects mentioned above. The mean perception scores of learners reveals that the learners have a positive perception about the practice of English language teaching in the schools. There is a significant increase in the perceptions of learners from grade to grade. There is no significant difference in terms of gender in the perceptions and there is no difference found in the perception between social categories.

There is no difference between the schools in the perceptions of learners on various aspects of language learning in the school. It can be stated that the schools cater to the urban learners who hail from middle classes or poor households. Category-wise mean perception of the learners also reveals that there is not much difference among the learners in terms of gender.

Students’ perception of each item was also organised in terms of percentages and a summary of the percentages is given below.

Table 1: Learners' perceptions of various aspects of English language education

Descriptives	N	Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum (1)	Maximum
Classroom activities	220	8.5136	.14600	2.16548	3.00	14.00
Teacher interaction	225	19.1333	.21418	3.21270	7.00	27.00
On textbook	225	9.3778	.15905	2.38568	3.00	13.00
Activities in school	211	5.7014	.10147	1.47388	2.00	10.00
Test and assessment	198	5.2020	.10976	1.54447	1.00	11.00
Language preferences	225	9.3422	.14951	2.24270	4.00	15.00

1. Classroom activities

Learners of both the schools said that they like to read in groups and learn English through activities and games. More than 80 percent of learners like such activities and both boys and girls like such activity-based learning of English. A few find it confusing and difficult to do, but the majority agree that project work is effective for learning English.

2. Teacher interaction

Learners from the DTEA school feel that it is not a problem if their teachers ask questions that are not in the textbooks while the Raisina Bengali school learners are not comfortable when their teachers ask questions that are not in the textbook. As a whole, all the learners from both the schools and from both sexes feel that they can approach their teachers when they face problems and their teachers talk to them in a friendly way. However, DTEA learners feel that they are afraid of their teachers as opposed to their counterparts in Raisina Bengali. Learners of both the schools are unanimous in saying that their teachers read out the text line by line and explain. This shows how the English language classroom operates without much understanding of language pedagogy or any strategies for the teaching of English. This is further discussed in the section on teachers' perceptions.

3. Textbooks

Learners feel the textbooks are interesting and the narratives (stories, poems and other texts) in the textbooks relate to their day-to-day life experiences and they can connect with them. The two aspects which reflect the typical conventional practice of ELT in Indian schools are revealed when the majority of the learners say that they learn best by memorising whatever is in the textbooks and that grammar should be taught in detail. More than 80 per cent of learners feel the same on aspects of the textbook.

4. Activities in school

The opinions of learners of both the schools and of both sexes are encouraging as they feel they have fun in school and feel that they learn English in their school. However, the fun and feeling of learning English sees a slight decline as the learners move to class 10.

5. Assessment

Learners report in their perception that the schools conduct regular class tests and learners feel that the tests are useful for the learning of English and the tests are a mixture of both written and oral tests. About 15 per cent of learners in both the schools said that the weekly/monthly tests are not useful and their teachers conduct only written tests.

6. Language preference in the English language classroom

Most of the learners like to speak in English in the language classroom in both the schools. The percentage of girls in class 8 in DTEA wanting to speak in English is higher than the boys. The percentage of boys not liking to speak in English is higher in class 10 of DTEA. At least six to twenty per cent of learners in Raisina Bengali do not like to speak in English in their English language classroom. Overall an average of 15 per cent of learners do not feel like speaking in English in their English language classroom because their language proficiency is very low. Here are the responses of two learners from the interview.

Muje English nahi athahe (English does not come to me) (sic.)

Muje English me bolnekeliye problem hai (I have problem in speaking in English)

Teachers also feel that there is no support from home for learning of the language.

FG1 T1: Mostly no support for our learners' parents, most of them are not proficient in English. They have to earn and work. Most of our parents are not in very good government or private jobs. Mostly daily wagers or contract workers, petty shopkeepers and so on. Many parents don't even bother to know what their wards are doing. They have no time.

Quite a few learners feel that their teachers use their mother tongues (Tamil or Bengali) to explain and some more say that their teachers use Hindi, the dominant language to explain the texts and poems. Teachers use more Hindi than Tamil and Bengali to explain the texts and ideas for better understanding and to create 'sub texts'. However, most learners say that most of the time is spent in English only.

3.4. Perceptions of teachers

3.4.1. On curriculum, syllabus and materials

Teachers were asked to respond to a questionnaire on a four-point scale on various

aspects of English language teaching and on classroom processes and the organisation of activities. The responses of the teachers are in line with the socially desirable responses expected of an ideal teacher. The majority of the teachers (10 out of 12) feel that the new curriculum is effective, they understand the syllabus and the objectives of language teaching are clear to them. The textbooks are of interest to learners and the materials are effective. However some (four out of 12) teachers feel that the language of the textbook is not suitable for the age of the learners.

3.4.2. On teaching and how students learn

All the teachers are bothered about is 'coverage of syllabus'. The confusion in the way reading is dealt with in a typical Indian classroom is also revealed for they adopt conventional methods as well as constructivist methods such as the teacher reading out aloud to the whole class, students' individual reading, pair and group work reading. In their interviews teachers strongly felt that reading out aloud at least once to the whole text in one go or in parts helps learners to understand the text.

Teachers are not willing to discuss social issues in their English language classroom. This shows that the teachers do not want to get into controversy while teaching any texts or narratives or conducting any activities. This has implications for the critical pedagogy the NCF 2005 advocates, leaving no room for reflection or critical thinking on the part of the learners.

Teachers believe that group work, pair work and 'letting students question' during teaching supports learning. The teachers' opinion on continuous comprehensive evaluation (CCE) reveals that the scheme is not popular as learners are made to take many tests which increases teachers' work load in terms of maintaining files and records. Teachers of both schools do not use audio-visual aids and computer technology for teaching in their classroom very much.

3.5. Teachers' perception of the textbooks

Another questionnaire using a five-point scale was administered to ten teachers (five in each

school). The teachers think that the textbooks are effective in terms of comprehensiveness for learning vocabulary, language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing and study skills and grammatical competencies), sensitivity to learners, effectiveness in approach and methodology, guidance for teachers and learners. However, some teachers expressed their reservations on the balanced development of all the language skills, promoting of problem solving skills, doing real life tasks and developing accuracy and fluency. Most of the teachers feel (eight out of ten) that the books are not priced reasonably. This is because the textbooks published by NCERT are very low priced as no textbook up to class 8 is priced beyond fifty rupees. We can notice the contradiction in the statements of teachers for they feel that the books are ideal for teaching-learning of English but their students are not proficient enough to deal with them. Here is what two teachers have to say:

T1 (DTEA): *The books are good but our students find it difficult to understand. We need to read out and explain every word.*

T (Rainsina Bengali): *See our children are like government school children. These textbooks are by private publisher meant for sophisticated English medium schools. We have to face this problem every day.*

3.6. Life in school, language use, multilingual spaces and practices in the schools

It is interesting to note that the learners' language life appears dual. Learners use Tamil or Bengali for their conversations with their peers and outside classroom interaction with teachers and other staff when the interactant happens to be the same mother tongue speaker. They use Hindi, the dominant language of the region to speak to teachers and other staff who do not belong to their language community. Learners' 'other life' in school i.e. social communication, cracking jokes, making fun of the teachers or friends happens in their language and the classroom interactions with the teacher happens in English with a few exceptions where the teachers use Tamil, Bengal or Hindi to explain, complement or supplement

ideas. Here is an extract from my field notes:

I was just standing on the veranda on the second floor waiting for the teacher to enter class 9A. Children moved around and made a lot of noise. One boy approached me and asked me in Tamil:

Student 1: *'Sir neegla Tamila?'* (Are you a Tamilian?)

Me: *Amappa. 'Nii entha class?'* (Yes. Which class are you in?)

Another student joined him and asked me. *'Sir neenga ethukku vanthirikinga'* (What is purpose of your visit sir?)

Me: *'Summa ungalaiyellam parthupesiti pohalamunna than'* (Just to meet you students and your teachers, and interact with you about your studies)

Then many more joined the group and started giggling and joking in Tamil.

Another incident in the Principal's room:

Today I went to the school at 8.30 a.m. and the man at the gate asked me to show my identity card and let me in. As I sat one teacher (lady) entered the room and said, 'Madam one fellow in class VII Karthik has done some mischief. *Avan eppothume ippadithan.* He always does some mischief or other and disturbs the class.' The Principal said, 'Bring him right now.' I was planning what would I be doing during the day in the school. After a few minutes the teachers brought in the boy and said, 'Here he is.' The Principal took a look at him and asked:

'Why don't you change? What do you want to do in life? Where is the needle?'

The teacher showed and gave it to her.

'See I have given you warning many times. Why are you repeating?' *Bar bar kyun aise karthahai?* (in Hindi). The boy replied in Hindi, *'Mane kuch nahi kya mam.'* (I have not done anything, mam.)

Principal: 'Then what is this?' (showing the needle)

The boy: '*Mane apna pass rekatha.*' (I just kept it with me.)

Principal: 'Why did you bring it to school? What is the use of it? Did any teacher ask you to bring this?'

The boy: 'No mam. I just brought it.'

The Principal said, 'This is the last warning. Don't repeat it. OK.'

I noticed the Principal was speaking to him in English and the boy was replying in Hindi though the mother tongue of both is Tamil.

Blackledge and Creese (2010) call this the 'official' and 'carnival lives' of learners in the classroom. The 'official' conversations take place in English (except in the Tamil and Bengali language classroom) and the 'carnival life' language is Tamil or Bengali, the languages of the community or Hindi, the language of the society. Conversations among the learners mostly take place in their mother tongue.

Language use in the classroom in both language classes demonstrates another phenomenon which Cummins (2005) describes as 'two solitudes', a classroom teaching situation where the languages are taught using the concerned language (say using English only to teach all the content subjects) and the other languages (say Bengali, Tamil or Hindi) are taught using the respective languages only. There is not much code switching or translanguaging of any sort, though teachers use a bit of other languages in their teaching. This is not encouraged. Rather teachers feel a sense of guilt when they use Tamil or Bengali in English or other content subject classes. Natural code switching, code mixing or translanguaging is rare even though it is natural for any Indian to do so as a necessity. Let me quote Cummins (2005:88) to understand why the schools follow or expect the teachers to adopt this practice:

1. *Instruction should be carried out exclusively in the target language without recourse to the students' L1.*

2. *Translation between L1 and L2 has no place in the teaching of language or literacy. Encouragement of translation in L2-teaching is viewed as a reversion to the discredited grammar / translation method.... or concurrent translation method.*
3. *Within L2 immersion and bilingual / dual language programmes, the two languages should be kept rigidly separate; they constitute 'two solitudes'. In these schools it is 'three solitudes' and there are children who know more than three languages - as a subject, a medium of instruction, a language of society and a language of identity and community. School as a whole and teachers do not see the benefits of languages working together, in other words the complementary and supplementary roles of languages.*

3.6. Multilingual spaces

1. Morning assembly

The morning assemblies of both the schools are multilingual where all the three languages are used for prayer, news reading, any special announcements, celebration of days relating to their ethnicity and linguistic aspects, birth anniversaries of poets, political leaders and social reforms from their language/state. Here is a depiction of morning assembly in the DTEA School.

All the commands are given in English. Then *Tamizhthai Vazhthu* (Invocation of Tamil Goddess) is sung, as it is in all schools in Tamil Nadu.

This is followed by New Reading in English and Tamil, then Sanskrit sloga, followed by the Pledge on national integration and patriotism (All Indians are my brothers and sisters and I respect my country.....). Then *Thirukkural*, the famous Sangam Tamil scripture is recited (one couplet from the 1330 kural). This is followed by a speech by principal or a teacher mostly in English and sometimes in Tamil, by a student and then the National Anthem.

2. Special notice boards

Both the schools make efforts to create their

language environment in the school by providing a print-rich environment and opportunities for learners to notice their mother tongue or first language. Here is an example called 'Word Treasure'. One word with its Hindi and Tamil/ Bengali synonym is written every day and the same word is read out in the morning assembly.

3. School competitions on special occasions

Both the schools personalise competitions for students of all stages on special occasions pertaining to their culture and language. The birth anniversaries of the Tamil poet Subramania Bharati and the Bengali Poet Rabindranath Tagore, birth anniversaries of Gandhi, Nehru and eves of Tamil and Bengali New Years are celebrated in school.

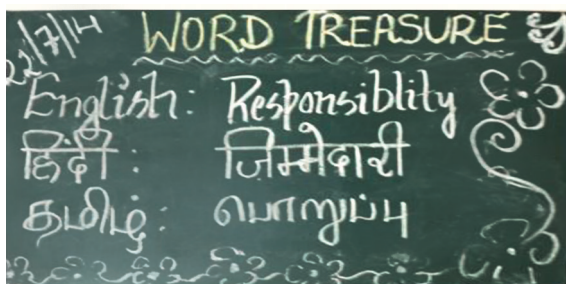


Figure 2: Word Treasure – a trilingual notice board for vocabulary learning

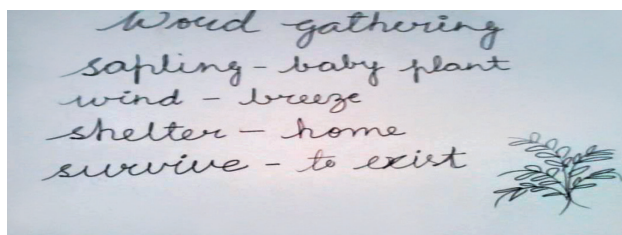


Figure 3: Vocabulary learning through word meaning notice board outside the classrooms

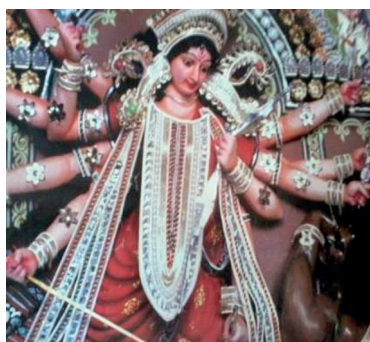


Figure 4: Portrait of Durga drawn by a learner class 9 for a competition. Durga is a household god of the Bengalis



Figure 5: Poster on environmental awareness

4. Findings

Language policy in the school: There is an effective implementation of the *three language formula*, the national language policy-in-school education in the schools. Three languages are offered to and opted for by learners. The home languages of learners, Tamil and Bengali are taught either as second or third languages and Hindi is taught as a second language. One major recent development is the progression of English from a second language to a first language though the language policy does not aim at giving first language status to English. Ideally Hindi or Tamil should be the first or second languages but they are given either second or third language status. This needs further examination for English cannot be the first language for Indians whose mother tongues are Indian languages.

Multilingualism as a strategy: The multilingualism of the learners and the use of the languages of learners in the classroom are not recognised as benefits for language and content learning. Languages are taught as separate entities and there is a watertight compartmental barrier while teaching the languages. Teachers do code switch and code mix languages in their classroom as this is seen as a problem. One major reason seems to be providing long term engagement with the language, particularly English, Tamil and Bengali. English has to be learnt for upward mobility and there is a fear that these children may lose their mother tongues if they do not do well now.

Learners' mother tongue: Learners are losing their home language as their first language/

mother tongue. Many learners are not very proficient in their language, Bengali or Tamil. They can claim Hindi as their mother tongue for their proficiency in the language is as good as or better than their home languages.

The learners belong mostly to the lower socio-economic strata of society. Fifty per cent of learners in both schools belong to Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities. This shows the trend of Indian upper caste children in urban areas who study in well-equipped private schools. This goes with the findings of Kurrien (2005) and Selvam and Geeta (2010) that the nature and type of schooling is reflecting the social and economic disparity that prevails in the society.

Learners feel that they are learning English in school. There is fun in school and learning is interesting. The materials are effective. However, the textbooks are communicative but the teachers follow conventional methods and strategies.

English language classroom: Teachers teach with their own understanding of ELT as most of them have not undergone any training. Most teachers agree that group work, discussion and project work are effective for promoting language learning, but they do not use them in their classroom much for they believe the language proficiency of learners is not good enough for such activities. Teachers believe that lack of home support and parental involvement in the learning of learners affects language learning in and outside school.

Schools make efforts to use the languages of learners by providing a print-rich environment and opportunities for noticing the language. However, there is a fear of learners losing their language as most of the learners living in Delhi are second or third generation whose grandparents or parents migrated to Delhi for jobs or business purposes. Some of them may go back but many are settled in Delhi or will have to settle down here or any other city away from their native home or state.

5. Recommendations

The following are suggestions for action:

- Curriculum adaptation at the school level needs to be carried out with sound understanding of language pedagogy, learner profiles and the languages available in the schools. The selection of materials, particularly textbooks, for use by all learners needs a great deal of thought.
- The professional development of the teacher is not recognised as important for the learning of children in the classroom. There is an urgent need to have a comprehensive training programme in English language education and pedagogy to understand aspects like multilingualism, language across curriculum and language acquisition.
- The schools do not benefit from the multilingual characteristics of the learners. There is a need for advocacy by the schools and institutions such as NCERT and SCERT to enable teachers and learners to understand the importance of language in learning and in society.
- The schools do not have facilities for the promotion of reading and the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The schools should address this problem to support language learning.

6. Conclusions

This research reveals that the schools operate with constraints in terms of teacher resources and materials for supporting or creating an English language environment. There is a need to provide more support to the teachers and learners of English through training in language pedagogy and how to use multilingualism as a resource and a strategy for the learning of languages and content subjects.

References

- Blackledge, A and Creese, A (2010) *Multilingualism: A Critical Perspective*. London: Continuum.
- Cummins, J (2005) A proposal for action: Strategies for recognising heritage language competence as a learning resource within the mainstream classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 89, 585-92.
- Kurrien, J (2006) *Notes for the Meeting of the National Focus Group on Teaching of English, and Notes on Introduction of English as the primary stage*, Ms. NFG. English-Position Paper on Teaching of English (India).
- Lorte, D (1975) *School Teacher: A Sociological Study*. London: University of Chicago.
- Meganathan, R (2014) *A Critical Study of English Language Teaching in Tamil Nadu*. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation. Submitted to IGNOU.
- NCERT (2005) *National Curriculum Framework – 2005*. New Delhi: National Council of Educational Research and Training.
- NCERT (2006). *Teaching of English: Position paper of the National Focus Group*. New Delhi: National Council of Educational Research and Training.
- Selvam, S and Geetha, V (2010). *Textbook Regimes: A Feminist Critique of Nation and Identity*. New Delhi: Nirantar.
- Yadav, SK (2013) *National Study of Ten Year Curriculum Implementation*. New Delhi: NCERT.

English for beginners in multiple mother tongue classroom contexts in primary schools

Mizo Prova Borah

1. Background

With the concern for education in the mother tongue at primary level gaining importance and the learner having to learn as many as three languages at an early age, the position of English in the curriculum and its introduction at various grades has caused serious thinking. Though research has been conducted on the importance of English learning as a second language, the need has been felt for studies to establish the position of English in the primary stage of education with respect to other language learning or Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE). English learning has been sometimes pushed back in the proposals by Multilingual Education research to the fourth or fifth year of learning in school. Does this satisfy the dreams of the policy makers or the aspirations of parents or the demand of the learner? If a learner in the present set-up has to feel detached from his peers just because his/her communication skills in English are weak, will we be doing the learner justice? What then is the attitude regarding this in the case of teachers, parents, policy makers and the learners? Are the materials for English teaching-learning age specific and suitable to be studied simultaneously with the school language i.e. medium of instruction (MOI) or the mother tongue? What are the difficulties for the children, the teachers or both? What kinds of steps are

being taken by the English teacher to facilitate learning English while taking care of a smooth transition of the child from home language to school language? The child has to learn the first language and the second language and there is yet another third language to be learnt. A study was therefore required to understand the problems for future strategies in this part of the country, i.e. Goalpara, which is rich in terms of languages and cultures.

The curriculum for elementary level developed by the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), Assam accommodates a number of home languages as MOI at the primary stage of education right from the first year in school. The coming of the National Curriculum Framework 2005 and the Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009 encouraged developments in certain multilingual education initiatives by SCERT, Assam in the form of research studies and seminars. However, strong decisions are yet to be taken for providing scope for children with languages of the linguistic minority groups to get their primary education through their mother tongues. Attitudes need to be examined, the preparedness of teachers to teach in multilingual situations and readiness of guardians and students to accept such an approach needs to be checked without detriment to the love of English by the people in this part of the state.

This study aims to explore the existing practices in the English classroom with the focus on classes 1 and 2, to examine classroom application of training inputs received from different organisations so far and identify problems in multiple mother tongue classroom contexts in order to propose workable strategies for ensuring English language learning in such situations. The major findings should identify problems of both learners and teachers, reveal attitudes of teachers and others towards the teaching of English and suggest strategies for establishing a favourable environment for teaching English. The study was conducted in ten schools of a block in only one district in the state of Assam. Therefore, no generalisations can be made.

The initial survey and a few classroom observations with classroom observation tools and questionnaires brought to light the fact that the students had not acquired the required skills as stated in objectives in the curriculum, both in English and in their school language. The method used to teach English was not helping children acquire language skills. The big question was therefore to find out the kind of teaching that was going on and to identify problems related to the method being used.

- Does the curriculum for elementary level provide guidance to the kind of method to be used and steps to be followed in classes 1 and 2 with multiple mother tongue classroom contexts?
- Does the teacher's use of the school language facilitate learning of English in class 1?
- Does a lack of teacher training related to the process of reading in the early grades and the handling of multilingual classrooms pose problems for children's learning of English, especially in the case of early reading with fluency and comprehension?
- Does the attitude of parents towards English prevent children from achieving learning outcomes in class 1?

These are some of the questions with which I stepped into ten schools in search of answers.

2. Research methodology

The study was conducted with the cooperation of teachers, students, community members involved in the process of teaching-learning of English in classes 1 and 2, parents and educationists.

The method used qualitative and quantitative research techniques along with ten in-depth case studies of schools in one block in the district of Goalpara. The sample covered all students of Classes 1 and 2 and language teachers of sample schools with at least 30 per cent of learners with their home language different from the school language.

The workshops for development, trying out in the field, refinement and administration of tools and analysis of data from the tests conducted for MOI had participants from Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs), teachers, subject experts from different linguistic groups, the faculty of SCERT, Assam and writers. Field level investigators and a few teachers were trained. The final workshop for designing workable strategies for English learning in multiple mother tongue classroom contexts was conducted where Resource Persons shared their research findings and experience from visits to a few similar schools in the district of Kamrup. Comments from three subject experts on the existing English textbooks were analysed too.

Tools such as a classroom observation schedule, interview schedules for teachers, questionnaires for teachers, parents and students and focus group discussion (FGDs) were administered. Child-friendly interaction with students provided excellent descriptive data compiled on the same day before leaving the school. Teacher talk was observed to find out how much local language besides the school language was used in the English classroom and whether the teacher knew or applied English language teaching pedagogy in the classroom keeping the prescribed syllabus in mind. Comparisons were attempted during analysis only to summarise and come up with a clear picture of certain implications because the study was basically exploratory in nature.

3. Findings

The study was a significant step towards understanding the existing method of teaching English in the schools. Teachers:

- feel that there is no problem because of the difference in first language (L1) and the school language.
- feel that they need training in specific skills to teach English in classes 1 and 2 and to help students acquire reading skills early.
- conduct assessment mostly for checking content and aim less at clarity of concepts and use of skills.
- employ 'Teacher Talk' much more than student interaction. Thus there was very little scope for students to ask questions, say something on their own or talk with peers. This resulted in children spending a great deal of time in the class doing other things that did not contribute towards application of their skills.

3.1 Attitudes and beliefs of teachers

I worked with the belief that having an understanding of the attitude and beliefs of teachers would help in understanding the teacher's behaviour as it could be related to the teacher's past and present and also help analyse his or her future plans. As direct questions might not have helped, a five point rating scale similar to the Likert scale was developed. Because the teachers were not very comfortable responding to this and were confused, it was replaced by a questionnaire with a three point scale that would facilitate getting some idea of the cognitive, affective and behavioural components of teachers' attitudes. A list of attitude statements under the following areas was compiled:

- methods of teaching and general classroom practices for English in class 1
- existing English textbook and its content
- children's knowledge of languages, family and socio-economic background
- English as a subject in class 1
- professional training for teaching English

- methods of teaching English in multiple mother tongue classroom contexts
- role of the student in learning English
- role of the teacher in assessment of English.

It was interesting to find that almost all teachers believed that L1 should be introduced first in class 1 alone followed by the second language (L2) in subsequent classes.

Other observations:

- All teachers said that learning English is no less interesting than learning other subjects and English has scope for making teaching-learning interesting. However, 10 per cent said that it is not possible for each child to learn English.
- Ninety per cent said that English can be taught effectively at the early stage through MOI with the support of the mother tongue.
- However, Mrs. Kalita, who had a number of Rabha students in her classroom, said 'My students do not speak Rabha at home. They understand Assamese and speak Assamese at home. I don't need to do this.'
- Mr. Nath, Ms.Sarmah and others did not receive training at all but Mrs. Kalita did participate in training from the British Council once. The rest said that the recent training would not help them teach the existing textbook.
- All teachers said that activity based teaching-learning does help and appreciation does motivate children towards learning English.
- All teachers said that English learning becomes interesting in multiple mother tongue classroom contexts and English should be taught by using words of different mother tongues.
- Seventy per cent of teachers wanted reading and writing in English in class 1 instead of introducing this earlier.
- All teachers said that English teachers should have the relevant professional qualification and training to handle multilingual situations.

- Seventy per cent believed that English should be spoken in the English classroom but all teachers used more than 90 per cent Assamese because they found it difficult to use English throughout and learners found it difficult to understand when only English was used. There was a gap in what teachers believed and what they actually did.
- All teachers believed that learners should be taught the alphabet first before going to words or sentences for early and easy acquisition of language skills.
- Seventy per cent of teachers said that only learning the alphabet in class 1 will help master skills of English and transaction of the textbook should start directly from there.
- Ninety per cent of teachers said that more time was necessary for writing cursive letters.
- No teacher knew how to use questions for concept checking, understanding instructions and encouraging learners to speak.
- Ninety per cent of teachers were not aware whether a student is weak in English if he or she is weak in L1 but all believed that the foundation of L1 should be built first.
- No teacher knew whether the content of the curriculum was a factor that made English learning difficult because 60 per cent had not seen the curriculum. Mr. Nath said that he had seen a curriculum many years ago but he has not seen the existing curriculum.

3.2 Views on the existing textbook

The teachers were divided in their opinion on whether the content of the existing textbook is a hindrance to learning and 90 per cent said it was not age specific.

- No teacher agreed that English can best be taught without a textbook.
- All teachers believed that they would teach best with a textbook, a teachers' handbook and training.
- Eighty per cent of teachers did not agree that a bilingual textbook is a good choice.

3.3 Thoughts of parents on teaching English from class I

What parents believed or thought of English is described below.

- All parents wanted their wards to learn English from class 1 for their child's education in future.
- All parents were happy with the teaching of English in schools.
- No parent had observed the English teacher teaching in class.
- Parents knew that their children liked the subject because the children would read the textbooks on their own and never complained that English is difficult.
- Thirty per cent of parents helped children with their homework sometimes.
- No parent tried helping children learn new words in English or encouraged them to speak English.
- Twenty per cent of parents discussed what the English teacher taught in school but none asked teachers about their wards' ability to learn English at the expected level and time.

3.4 Interaction with 50 students

- Students believed that they could use the school language, Assamese, for speaking in the classroom.
- Teachers talked to them quite often in class.
- Students said that they had no problem in understanding the school language though many spoke a different language at home.
- No students said that they were prompted to ask questions.
- Thirty students said that they were assigned reading and writing tasks by their teachers.
- Three students from three different schools said that their teachers spoke in other languages namely Garo, Rabha and Bengali if they did not understand words in English. Most of them liked Assamese as a subject but could not give reasons for liking it.

3.5 Classroom environment and assessment

The schools had children with home languages including Assamese, Bodo, Garo, Rabha, Bengali and Hindi in the same classroom. The teachers were not empowered yet to adopt, if necessary, strategies specific to handling such situations and the teaching method was the same everywhere with the textbook as the main tool for teaching. The children were used to watching the teacher reading from a textbook while they waited for the Assamese translation of the text. The only variation was a few drills in which children shouted loudly repeating words after their teacher without taking the trouble of finding out what these words meant. There was hardly any attempt to understand the child's need and hence no teaching or continuous assessment was actually taking place in any school.

There were rare visits for academic monitoring. For others who visited the children, teachers asked children to sing rhymes to convince them that children were learning English well. In one of the schools, the teacher tried to convince us about using the local languages and asked the children to sing for us a song in a local language.

Thirty per cent of the teachers said that the economic background and illiteracy of parents were factors that hampered learning. However, in reality, children from such backgrounds showed immense potential to learn when guided.

All schools except one did not have sufficient classrooms for group work and children sat back to back in the same classroom. Two schools had very dark classrooms and one used classrooms as storerooms.

3.6 Different cases, FGDs and important views

An interesting incident took place when a group of students were asked to write their names and only one could write. When she was told to write the names of her friends on the tool we administered, she promptly said that she could write only her own name and not the names of her friends.

During the FGD with teachers, none could discuss the question on curriculum content and say things confidently. Five out of ten teachers had not seen the curriculum and the others did not comment. They were also not aware that their schools were a little different from other schools. This implies that they required not only special attention for students with different home backgrounds but also seriously planned need-based strategies for the whole class.

4. Discussion and reflections

What needs discussion from the findings can best be stated with a few questions for me and others similarly worried before finally reflecting whether I got answers to these and the questions I had in mind at the beginning of the study. The more time one devotes at the grassroots level, the better is the understanding. Why can we not go and take a few classes in schools then? Have we equipped the teacher well enough? The curriculum has no details of the kind of method that is to be used in case of teaching English in these schools. But does this matter? Interviews with teachers and the FGD reflected that they were not clear about the objectives of the curriculum for English. They could not recall seeing the existing curriculum. It should be ensured that each teacher has and reads a copy of the curriculum.

For children whose L1 is different from their home language, there are concerns as to whether the school language facilitates learning of English. Such children are at a double disadvantage. They struggle to comprehend not only the school language but also English taught through that language. The teachers emphasised that students understood L1 very well. But our interaction with children showed that children did take time to understand and answer the questions asked in Assamese. In such circumstances, will not intensive training in theoretical concepts followed by training in methods be necessary? Will not more in-depth classroom-based research by teachers lead to understanding their learners better and help in devising different strategies to assess students from diverse backgrounds? The question of whether use of the school language posed problems could not be addressed completely due to lack of time.

A teacher thought that English was not at all necessary up to class 5. He confidently said that it was difficult to teach English to children at the tender age of six. This again implies that not all need L1 input so much. So, a common package for schools which have children from different language backgrounds does not merely decide what is going to work and what is not. But it would not be ambitious to develop a very simple package for English learning in classes 1 and 2 that would nearly suit each kind of classroom. This is to be designed by subject experts backed by recent small research and field reality and tried out in a few schools. However, if English was taught in simple English, none of the students would have an unfair advantage and students would probably acquire English more effectively. A small team of teacher educators could be deputed as mentors for the respective districts where they work. They could be supported by a strong monitoring team to constantly work with teachers of these government schools to demonstrate that things can happen with a little extra effort and genuine interest.

Almost all the teachers seemed a little unhappy about their proficiency in English as they expressed their need for training in teaching the content of the book. Can we not try a package or textbook with less content with specific objectives or indicators or milestones in mind? This would decrease the pressure of work on our teachers who are trying their best to read out and explain lengthy texts spending much of their energy and school time. Can we not focus on teaching teachers to help students learn to read English early and develop their own teaching material engaging children?

4.1 A few observations on the kind of English teaching going on in the classrooms

- Teachers use the school language, Assamese, most of the time and use English only in case of word meanings and drilling exercises. Ninety per cent were untrained in methods of teaching English and assessment and, therefore, showed no signs of assessment to help bridge learning gaps in a learner. There has been hardly any academic

supervision and support from outside the school in the last four years. Can we not have a mobile academic support group to visit schools at regular intervals to monitor and provide support? This initiative of 'Back to School' for reaching out to nurture can bring changes to many schools where teachers might like to do things differently.

- The teachers mostly taught rhymes and action songs because children enjoyed these most but this activity along with content explanation and word-to-word translation took up most of the teaching time. Children knew stories and word meanings but did not know how to read. Eighty per cent of the teachers did not show much expertise in planning lessons for a systematic process to facilitate reading.
- Most children were unable to decode or comprehend. Hence, they had no fluency in reading even small words. Lack of training and careful outcome based planning was evident for the classroom or for outside. The teacher felt that it was most important for the child in class 1 to learn the letters of the alphabet thoroughly and so a great deal of time was spent on this. Children knew neither the alphabet nor the techniques of reading.
- Thinking of workable strategies was a faraway thought. The FGDs revealed that teachers were not aware of preparing themselves to teach children with different mother tongues in the same classroom. No one in the workshop for workable strategies wanted to take the risk of suggesting one specific way to make situations better. They however, did suggest that English should be taught from class 1 but the textbooks should be rewritten to incorporate simpler texts accompanied by a teachers' handbook and intensive training programmes.
- Their belief that L1 should be introduced first in class 1 alone followed by L2 in subsequent classes, shows some understanding they have regarding the child's need in the first few years for adapting to the school environment.

However, parents' love for English as a subject for their wards to learn from class 1 might imply that the policy makers would need to decide carefully the place of English in the curriculum and in policy documents for the state in order to retain children in government schools.

- There is an alarming use of teacher talk with only one mother tongue in a classroom of multiple mother tongue speaking children. Tests conducted in classes 1 and 2 on L1 showed that the children were not able to achieve the learning objectives fixed for these classes. This is a major finding which has implications related to the need for a strong foundation of L1 for L2 learning if teachers are using L1 to teach L2.

4.2 Some changes that will be needed in the instructional design for Class 1

- Exposure to a wide range of print, rhymes and action songs in mother tongue/school language and English, oral communicative activities that motivate students to speak and ask questions, storytelling, reading aloud, shared reading, etc.
- Introduction of words, selected sentences, instructions in a systematic manner and sometimes sequentially as planned.
- Use of a multilingual dictionary developed during the learning process with the help of learners as partners.
- Extensive use of the blackboard/wall to attract attention of learners to words and written input.
- Mapping and use of textbook activities for achievement of specific objectives of the curriculum especially for fluency and comprehension development and assessment for learning.
- Encouraging writing right from the beginning.
- Development of picture dictionaries by students initially by using any language they like to understand letter-sound association.
- Oral and written assessments that are

formative in nature to keep track of the learner's achievement according to milestones/indicators/objectives marked for the year. These could be grouped into term objectives or indicators. Activities from the textbook could be adjusted to get the best outcomes.

- Self-reflection activities both for the teacher and the learner to help plan further.

Parents want their children to learn English from class 1 and they assume their wards are doing well. They were also confident that the teachers taught English well and their wards learned with great interest. Hence, the question of parental attitude towards English posing problems for children to acquire learning objectives does not arise.

Views of experts were analysed to understand their feelings towards the existing scenario of English teaching and how best the existing textbook could be used by teachers. One said that teachers can adapt or modify or simplify the content to match the level of their learners. They can also supplement the contents by bringing in materials from real life that complement the contents. Policy makers can commission a study to collect feedback from teachers from different parts of the country, set up a review and revision committee to incorporate the necessary amendments to the content and commission research into classrooms. Baseline surveys and needs analyses before a textbook is written should be made mandatory.

5. What I learnt from the process of the study

'Catch them young' should be the key to quality English teaching-learning. For students, the earlier they learn the skills of language learning in a systematic manner, the better. For teachers, knowing the learning indicators and adapting them according to the need of their students is important.

I learned that a true researcher takes the stand of the teacher and the student to find ways of doing things differently in order to get positive

results. Teachers as researchers come up with surprisingly new strategies that they would like to share with others. It is high time for policy makers to provide a forum for this to help teachers and Teacher Educators reverse their roles. This would bring to both academic empowerment and motivation to work fruitfully. Teachers should come to the TEIs for a course on English language teaching pedagogy and knowledge of principles and theories of reading in addition to practice teaching or mock classroom transaction during the training period. For Teacher Educators, it would definitely be of benefit to have such 'Back To School' programmes when they would be attached to schools for at least three months a year to come up with innovative and workable strategies to enhance English learning instead of acquiring expertise in delivering age old theories in lecture mode to batches of teacher trainees year after year. The content of the curriculum for teacher education needs to be tailored to suit the requirements of the young teachers with dreams of doing things on their own. Some sort of assessment of Teacher Educators in action can be initiated for their professional development. Nurturing at least a few schools by Teacher Educators is a must if any teaching is to take place as desired because the problems and situations of each school are different. The schools which I visualised were far simpler than the ones I visited.

I grew as a researcher during the process of the study. There was a great challenge in having to change tools and make modifications based on classroom reality with each school unique in terms of the things I was searching for, making teachers believe that what they were doing was not teaching English to students as expected. The students did not understand clearly what was being taught or the language in which they were being taught. The question I kept asking each teacher was 'What was your target when you entered the classroom today? Did you have any objective of the curriculum in mind?' None could answer confidently. What does this imply? We have a long way to go.

On the whole, there has to be a multipronged strategy where teacher empowerment and textbook writing to meet actual needs have

to be planned simultaneously to suggest strategies to help the children read English early. Otherwise, children will continue to read without understanding and never acquire the skill of summarising what is read.

Success stories should be made public and the strategies should be simple ones, cost effective and covering six to nine months at the most. Community members should be involved in helping the school with English learning. Teachers might sometimes, because of their obsession with the conducting of activities or exercises in the textbook in sequence, lose track of the objectives of the curriculum. It would be good to have a mobile monitoring and support group with members for other subjects too to give on-the-spot academic support. This concerted effort will not only save costs but also remove the complacency and routine sort of culture that seemed to have crept into some of the schools.

6. My own learning as a researcher

My role was like any other genuinely motivated researcher enjoying every bit of the process of this work as I realised my needs as a researcher to be able to convince policy makers for changes. For example, when teachers said confidently that their students could understand the school language and the textbook but found the English textbook difficult, I decided to check the status with respect to the school language though this activity was not included in the original project proposal. Surprisingly, the results of the test administered for L1 showed that the students were equally poor in the school language. This might imply that students did not understand the school language because it was not the mother tongue for some. Others perhaps did not understand because of the way or tone in which the school language was spoken. A package with a great deal of oral work in home language and school language in the first few months could help to some extent.

Again, I thought that the rhymes in the textbook were easy for children. But when I personally tried doing activities with these, the children found it quite difficult to pronounce many words

and this spoilt the flow and rhythm of the rhyme. I had to stop in the middle of singing a rhyme with children. This has implications for textbook writers who need to choose rhymes carefully. It was pretty obvious that even teachers did not like certain rhymes because they demonstrated only one particular rhyme namely 'Brush, brush, brush...' every time we asked them to demonstrate an activity they did with children. The questions they asked were not concept checking ones. There was hardly any attempt to wait and see how much the children learnt.

The study also aimed at identifying problems of teachers and learners that might point to the need for development of age-friendly, mother tongue-friendly graded material in English for different minority languages besides materials in English for the dominant language groups of learners. Steps were taken to make policy makers aware of the need for a concrete language education policy for the state on the basis of language mapping, the need for training on the pedagogical perspectives of early reading and also research studies that can enhance English teaching-learning. The interim findings were also shared in various forums.

A clear language policy in school education for the state is a must to minimise issues related to language which will help teachers concentrate on the languages to be taught in school and

empower themselves accordingly. This will minimise debates related to the time at which English is to be introduced in school and how much of it and other languages is to be learnt and when. It would also guide textbook writing exercises and use of the textbook in class 1.

A language mapping exercise should be thought of simultaneously to reduce the load of developing textbooks in too many languages which might become unmanageable for the state in the near future.

Attaching academic faculty of TEIs to schools for a short period of one to three months could also help teachers in changing the school environment in the case of English learning.

This study is intended to have an impact on the education system in Assam and in other places and to inform thinking regarding the feasibility of MTB-MLE in certain areas. It has implications for policy makers, for teacher trainers, for teacher researchers, for curriculum developers and for textbook writers in relation to teaching English to disadvantaged linguistic groups. What it calls for is innovation in methods and materials for region and school specific classroom situations which will help learners of English from linguistic minority groups and meet the aspirations of their parents and teachers.

Appendix

Questionnaire for teachers

Sl. No.	Attitude	Yes	No	Don't know
I.	Method of teaching English in Class 1 / general classroom practices for teaching English in class 1.			
	1. Students are poor in English because it is not taught in context or related to the mother tongue of the learner.			
	2. L1 should be introduced first in class 1 alone and only then should L2 be introduced in later classes.			
	3. Students can learn English from peers.			
	4. Use of Teaching Learning Methods facilitates learning of English.			
	5. Both reading and writing should be introduced in classes 1 and 2.			
	6. Only English should be spoken in the English classroom.			
	7. English can be taught by punishing children who are weak in English.			
	8. Only textbook content should be dealt in the English classroom. There is no need to give local specific examples.			
	9. Appreciation can motivate children towards learning English.			
	10. Students should be corrected in case of pronunciation from the early stage of learning English to facilitate learning of English.			
	11. Activity-based teaching learning does not help so much in the teaching-learning of English.			
	12. English learning is difficult for students without tuition.			
	13. Readiness for learning English is necessary for transaction of English (class 1 and 2 <i>Marigold</i> textbook).			
	14. The alphabet should be taught first at the beginning of the academic session. (The transaction of the textbook <i>Marigold</i> should start directly from letters of the alphabet).			
	15. It is necessary to create an environment by speaking familiar words in English before formal introduction of letters.			
	16. Learners should be taught letters of the alphabet first before going to words or sentences for early and easy acquisition of the four skills relevant to English learning.			
	17. English learning will be easier if English is introduced from <i>Ka-shreni</i> .			
	18. Translation of words and sentences (Translation method is best for English learning).			

	19. The classroom practice in the English classroom should have sufficient scope for writing cursive letters in words or sentence context.			
	20. English can be taught effectively at the early stage only through English.			
	21. English can be taught effectively at the early stage through MOI.			
	22. Only learning to read and write the letters of the alphabet in class 1 will help master skills of English.			
	23. Use of concept checking questions (CCQ) help learn speaking in English			
	24. Use of instruction checking questions (ICQs) helps learning of English.			
	25. English learning can be made effective with the support community members.			
	26. English learning is difficult because the curriculum is not suitable for class 1.			
	27. Only reading in classes 1 and 2 can make English learning easy or possible.			
II.	Existing English textbook – <i>Marigold Book 1/ Content of English in Class 1.</i>			
	28. The content of existing textbook is a hindrance to learning.			
	29. The existing English textbooks are not age specific.			
	30. The note for teachers in the textbooks helps in learning of English.			
	31. English can best be taught without a textbook.			
	32. A bilingual textbook is a good choice.			
	33. Only a teacher's handbook is enough. There is no need of any textbook.			
	34. A teacher's handbook and a textbook is best to teach children.			
III.	Background of child (knowledge of languages/ socio-economic/ family background)			
	35. Students are weak in English because they are weak in L1.			
	36. Student from poor socio-economic background can't learn English.			
	37. Students of parents without literacy in English find it difficult to learn English.			

IV.	English as a subject in class 1.			
	38. English learning is less interesting than learning of other subjects like Math, EVS, etc.			
	39. English is a subject which has no scope for making teaching- learning interesting.			
	40. It is not possible for each child to learn English.			
V.	Professional training for teaching English in class 1.			
	41. Students are not learning English as decided or at expected level because teachers are not sufficiently trained.			
	42. Training inputs received so far are not helpful for teaching English.			
	43. English should be taught by professionally qualified teachers.			
VI.	Method of teaching English in multiple mother tongue contexts.			
	44. English teaching-learning is difficult because of the existence of different language speaking students in the same classroom.			
	45. English learning becomes interesting in multiple mother tongue classroom contexts.			
	46. English is best learnt by students if it is taught with the help of mother tongue at the initial stages.			
	47. English should be taught by using words of different mother tongues in case of difficult words.			
	48. Teachers should be taught in handling multilingual situations in case of teaching English too.			
	49. Teachers should be able to develop special Teaching Learning Materials to help different language speaking learners learn English.			
	50. English can be taught effectively at the early stage through MOI with the support of mother tongue.			
	51. English is best learnt when taught later after the foundation of L1 has been built.			
	52. Bridge material for bridging Home Language and MOI help in learning of English.			
	53. English learning varies in case of different language speaking learners.			
	54. English can be learnt more effectively in class 1 if teachers of English are trained in MLE too.			
	55. English is best learnt in classes 1 & 2 if it is taught through Mother Tongue in case of difficult words only.			

VII.	Role of the student in learning English in class 1.			
	56. Children should be motivated to learn and have own responsibility to assess themselves.			
	57. Children should be taught to form the habit of thinking/reflecting about what they don't know.			
VIII.	Role of teacher in assessment of English learning in class 1			
	58. The teacher should assess learners continuously in class and the child should know that assessment is taking place.			
	59. The teacher should assess learners continuously in class without the child knowing that he or she is being assessed.			
	60. The teacher should assess children in such a manner that the child enjoys the process of being assessed.			

3

Using CEFR-based bilingual rubrics to improve the writing ability of ESL learners: A multiple case study

Santosh Kumar Mahapatra

1. Introduction

In rural ESL contexts, teachers have to deal with large classes and it is difficult for them to offer feedback to every learner, especially in writing classes. Since it is widely accepted that judicious use of L1 enhances learning (Wang and Wen, 2002), bilingual rubrics can be expected to be useful in these contexts. This report presents a multiple case study carried out in Odisha (India) to find out how the use of CEFR-based bilingual rubrics shapes the writing skills of high-school learners. It captures how teachers use the rubrics and learners respond to them. The report is divided into major sections comprising a review of relevant literature, methodology adopted for collecting and analysing data, findings of the study and conclusion, which incorporates a discussion of findings.

2. Research questions

The study addressed the following research questions:

- How do high-school ESL teachers make use of the bilingual rubrics in their classroom?
- What impact does the teacher's use of a set of CEFR-based bilingual rubrics for offering feedback have on learners' writing skills?
- What do ESL learners feel about the use of bilingual rubrics as a feedback tool?

3. Review of literature

3.1. Rubrics for feedback and their impact on writing

According to Brookhart (2013), a rubric refers to 'a coherent set of criteria for learners' work that includes descriptions of levels of performance quality on the criteria' (p4). Rubrics are descriptive in nature and thus, are expected to inform learners about their performance. Also, as pointed out by Al-Mahrooqi (2014), rubrics provide 'informative feedback' on learners' 'strengths and areas in need of improvement' (p216). Since feedback plays an important role in second language writing (Hyland and Hyland, 2006) and rubrics make an effective feedback tool (Wollenschläger, Hattie, Machts, Möller and Harms, 2016), rubrics are widely used as feedback tools in writing classrooms (Matsumura, Patthey-Chavez, Valdés and Garnier, 2002; Andrade, Wang, Du and Akawi, 2009; Wang, 2014). The positive impact of instructional rubrics on writing is documented in research literature (Andrade, 2001; Andrade, Du and Wang, 2008; Bradford, Newland, Rule and Montgomery, 2016).

3.2. CEFR-based rubrics

Though rubrics can be used for promoting learning in the classroom, they need to be valid to

be effective. They are therefore generally based on standardised performance descriptors such as the CEFR. The existing research focusing on adaptation of CEFR scales for local contexts and classroom assessment purposes (Hasselgreen, Kaledaite, Pizorn and Martin, 2011; Hasselgreen, 2013) suggests that, if carefully executed, such a practice can yield productive results. However, it may be a challenging task to adapt the scales for non-European contexts without violating the original principles behind them (Alanen, Huhta, Martin, Tarnanen, Mäntylä, Kalaja and Palviainen, 2012). There is research evidence to support the affirmation about the effectiveness of adapted versions of CEFR in promoting learning (Wicking, 2014) and writing in classroom contexts (Ware, Robertson and Paydon, 2011). Little (2011) points out that CEFR emphasises the use of L1 along with L2 or the target language (p383). However, few studies focus on the adaptation and use of scales using two languages simultaneously.

3.3. Teachers' use of rubrics

The impact of rubrics depends greatly on how they are used by the teacher in the classroom. Panadero and Jonsson (2013) emphasise that rubrics are effective when they are used 'in combination with different meta-cognitive activities (such as self-regulation, self- or peer assessment)' (p130). This implies that the teacher has to take responsibility and engage learners in self- and peer-correction activities. Rubrics help teachers spell out their expectations and make their instruction focused (Andrade, 2005), and keep track of learners' progress and the dimensions of their improvement (Stevens and Levi, 2005). Shehab (2011) points out positive response on the part of teachers to using rubrics in the writing classroom. However, Parr and Timperley (2010) note that the demand on teachers' expertise is high in formative or learning-focused classroom contexts. Thus, their use of rubrics for facilitating learning of writing skills requires them to have expertise and experience in using them.

3.4. Learners' response to use of rubrics

The existing research suggests that learners respond positively to the use of rubrics. They

become 'self-regulated writers' (Saddler and Andrade, 2004: 48), which means 'goal setting, planning, self-monitoring, self-assessment, self-instruction, and self-reinforcement' (Graham and Harris, 1996, as cited by Saddler and Andrade, 2004: 48). Gradually, learners start using them naturally and they become part of their self-assessment process (Piscitello, 2001). Since it has been established that self-assessment increases learners' ability to write effectively (Cohen, Lotan, Abram, Scarloss and Schultz, 2002), using rubrics for promoting self-assessment of writing skills can be considered as a productive tool (Andrade, Du and Wang, 2008; Lipnevich, McCallen, Miles and Smith, 2014). Moreover, it has been suggested that effective feedback helps learners find direction in terms of the direction they need to move and what they need to do to reach a certain goal (Zellermayer, 1989; Hattie and Timperley, 2007).

4. Methodology

The selection of a case study approach was based on the assumption that it would allow study of the problem in a natural setting and provide better understanding of the context. Multiple cases were taken for improving the generalisability of findings to contexts of a similar kind.

4.1. Participants

The study was carried out in Odisha with three English language teachers working in three different regional-medium schools for various reasons. First, the mother tongue of the researcher is Odia and he is familiar with the pedagogic context. Second, he had access to teachers who were motivated to participate in the study. Third, it was important to work with teachers who handled large classrooms. It must be noted that the school managements did not agree with any proposal to carry out intervention studies at standard 10.

Information about the three teachers is presented in the Table 1.

4.2. Methods of data collection

The following methods were employed for collecting required data.

Table 1: Teacher profiles

	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Qualifications	MA (History), BEd (English teaching methodology)	MA (History), BEd (English teaching methodology)	MA (History), BEd (English teaching methodology)
Experience	21 years	25 years	31 years
Current workplace and teaching load	State government-run boys' rural high school in Banpur Teaches learners in standards 9 and 10 Four hours every day	Block-grant (local government council) dependent co-education rural high school near Balugaon Teaches learners in standards 9 and 10 Around four hours every day	State government-run co-education rural high school near Banpur Teaches learners in standards 9 and 10 Around four hours a day
Assumed level of English	B2 (somehow manages to write and speak in English)	B2+ (speaks and writes English without any major problem)	B2+ (speaks and writes English without any major problem)
Learners	Learners in standard 9, mostly from the lowest socio-economic class, no exposure to English outside the classroom, quite irregular in attending classes	Learners in standard 9, from middle- and lower-middle-class backgrounds, inadequate exposure to English outside the classroom, irregular in attending classes	Learners in standard 9, from middle- and lower-middle-class backgrounds, inadequate exposure to English outside the classroom, irregular in attending classes

4.2a Semi-structured informal interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used to obtain information from the teachers and learners. The semi-structured format, in which some of the questions are pre-decided and others are posed on the basis of respondents' responses, helped in keeping the interview flexible and posing additional questions to the respondents based on their responses.

4.2b Field jottings

During interviews and training sessions, important points were jotted down. Field jottings (Tavakoli, 2012: 227) provided access to the extra information which was not obvious and the video recording could not have captured.

4.2c Writing portfolio

The teachers used CEFR-based rubrics to guide students, who, in turn, maintained individual

portfolios comprising samples of their writing collected periodically over six months.

4.2d CEFR-based bilingual rubrics

Based on 'can do' statements in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), these rubrics were specifically designed to be used as feedback tools. Intra-sentential switching between Odia and English was used for constructing the sentences. While the first version of the rubrics was written entirely in English and validated through reviews by two experts, the second version used intra-sentential switching and was validated with the help of inputs from learners, teachers and experts who knew both English and Odia. During the second stage of validation, a few Odia words and sentences in the rubrics were rephrased after a few common inconsistencies were found in the way they had used rubrics. The final draft comprised statements for four levels. While A- was equivalent to a level

below the standard A1 level of CEFR, B1 was the highest level in the rubrics (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2).

4.2e Classroom observation protocol

A classroom observation protocol (see Appendix 5) was used for collecting focused information about teachers' and learners' activities in relation to the use of rubrics.

4.3. Procedure of data collection

Data was collected for study in several stages. First, information was collected from the teachers about their education, training in ELT, how many working hours they have in a week, how they teach language skills and offer feedback to learners, especially in the writing classroom, what problems they face while teaching writing to a large group of learners, how they cope with challenges in large-size classrooms and their awareness of rubrics and CEFR scales. Information related to teaching of writing and use of feedback was also obtained from three learners from each class the teachers teach.

In the second stage, the teachers were asked to collect samples of writing from every learner they teach. Then the researcher prepared worksheets to introduce the teachers to rubrics and CEFR, and also a few graded writing tasks that can be used in a multi-level classroom.

In the third stage, the researcher conducted a two-day workshop in which the teachers were introduced to CEFR and rubrics, and trained in how to use rubrics for offering feedback, prepare graded writing tasks for their learners, enable learners to maintain a portfolio and observe another teacher's class and report how the teacher uses the tasks and the rubrics. The first draft of the bilingual rubrics was developed jointly by the researcher and teachers. Most of the writing tasks which the teachers were required to use in their writing classes were prepared during those two days. A set of tasks (see Appendix 6) was prepared for each component in writing (paragraph, essay, application, letter and summary writing), which was a part of their prescribed syllabus. Each set included tasks of various levels of difficulty.

The bilingual rubrics were validated and made ready for use during the fourth stage of the study.

In the fifth stage, the researcher demonstrated to all three teachers how the rubrics should be used in the classroom. The teachers then introduced their learners to the rubrics and trained them in using them. Each learner was given a copy of the rubrics. They were sensitised about self-assessment and monitoring their own progress. The teachers assigned levels to learners' writing once a month and asked the learners to maintain a portfolio of their writing. Each teacher observed three classes of other teachers over a five-month period using the observation protocol. The classes were video recorded. Three to five learners from each class were interviewed about the use of rubrics.

4.4. Data analysis

4.4a Analysis of learners' writing portfolios

In the first stage of analysis, only the portfolios of learners who attended more than 90 per cent of the writing classes during the period under scrutiny were considered. Accordingly, the performance of only 30, 37 and 28 learners from the classes taught by the first, second and third teacher respectively was included in the analysis. Their performance in sample writings was classified under three categories: 'task achievement and organisation', 'sentence formation and vocabulary' and 'mechanics', and considered under three levels:

- 'visible', which indicates clear signs of progress of a learner who has moved from a lower level of performance to a higher level (coded as A)
- 'some', which represents minor progress in one aspect of writing but may not necessarily mean progress to a higher level of performance as indicated in the rubrics (coded as B)
- 'insignificant', which refers to absence of any observable change or progress in the aspects of writing considered in the rubrics (coded as C).

4.4b Analysis of interview with teachers at the last part of the study

Interviews with the teachers were transcribed and relevant points were noted in tabular form (see Appendix 3).

4.4c Analysis of classroom observation reports and video recordings

The classroom observation reports submitted by the teachers were analysed under three categories based on their frequency of occurrence: regularly, sometimes and rarely. The categories were assigned to the teachers only when reports by two different teachers mentioned the same thing and the video recordings confirmed the claims. The video recordings were used to corroborate the teachers' reports.

4.4d Analysis of interviews with learners

Responses were translated into English and transcribed for analysis. Relevant and relatively similar responses (across sessions and learners under each case) were classified under six pre-determined questions in the semi-structured informal interviews (see Appendix 4).

5. Findings

5.1. What impact does the teacher's use of a set of CEFR-based bilingual rubrics for offering feedback have on learners' writing skills?

The use of CEFR-based bilingual rubrics has led to different levels of progress in the three focused aspects of writing as summarised in the cross-case analysis presented in Table 2.

While 'visible' progress was noted among nearly two-thirds of the learners in the first category, in the second category, 'sentence formation', more than half of the learners demonstrated 'some' progress. In the 'mechanics' category, once again, findings were consistent across cases. While nearly two-thirds of the learners exhibited 'some' progress, the second largest group of learners was found in the 'insignificant' category. Overall, very few learners were found with an 'insignificant' amount of progress in the first and second categories and 'observable' progress in the 'mechanics' category.

5.2. How do high-school ESL teachers make use of the bilingual rubrics in their classroom?

The first teacher made use of the rubrics for engaging learners in self- and peer-assessment. Though he confessed to not having much idea about how to adapt and use them effectively, he did manage to draw the learners' attention to their weaknesses in writing. However, he did not emphasise what they are able to do well. He used Odia for instructing learners to use the rubrics and discussing some common errors related to sentence formation, pluralisation and spelling. The teacher also spent more time helping slow learners with using rubrics for self-assessment.

The second teacher tried to enable learners to monitor their own writing by engaging them in a variety of analysis-oriented activities. He asked them to work individually, in pairs and in groups, and to do self- and peer-assessment. He was enthusiastic about the rubrics and focused on

Table 2: Cross-case analysis of learners' progress

Case	Total number of learners	Task achievement and organisation	Sentence formation and vocabulary	Mechanics
1	30	A=17, B=13, C=0	A=12, B=16, C=2	A=2, B=18, C=10
2	37	A=24, B=13	A=17, B=20	A=1, B=27, C=9
3	28	A=18, B=9, C=1	A=8, B=18, C=2	A=2, B=16, C=10
Total number of As, Bs and Cs in each category		A=59, B=35, C=1	A=37, B=54, C=4	A=5, B=61, C=29

each of the three categories while grading his learners. He informed the researcher that he would think more about improvising his strategies of using the rubrics. The teacher also used the mother tongue whenever he wanted to explain something to his learners. After the fourth month, he started offering group feedback on some common problems he found in most learners' writings. However, he did not adapt the rubrics in any way and adopt different strategies for training slow and fast learners. Moreover, he was a little intolerant when they missed any of his instructions. It seemed classroom observation led to some of his actions.

The third teacher encouraged his learners to do self- and peer-correction with the help of the rubrics and often instructed them to compare their ratings with his own. He regularly organised group work based analysis of writing and group presentations on the analyses. His focus was more on completing tasks rather than on grammar and the mechanics of writing. The teacher discussed what his learners could do before talking about what they could not and made a few changes to accommodate minor changes in task-completion abilities. However, he mainly used English while offering feedback to the class and did not use separate strategies for supporting slow learners.

5.3. What do ESL learners feel about the use of bilingual rubrics as a feedback tool?

The responses of learners to the rubrics were captured with the help of interviews with them and video recordings of classrooms. Though learners across the cases responded positively to the use of rubrics, they reported different kinds of benefits.

In the first case, learners claimed that they could understand the teacher's feedback better after the rubrics were introduced. They reported having more peer-interaction and being confident about and self-aware in relation to writing. They mentioned self-assessing their progress and learning the mechanics of writing. They seemed happy with the use of Odia for obtaining and giving feedback.

In the second case, learners reported that they could self-assess and set realistic targets for improvement. They experienced less pressure and enjoyed rating their classmates' writing. They mentioned that while their teacher's feedback often focused on only their errors, the rubrics provided them with the information about their achievements. They were both unsure and at the same time excited about the use of Odia in the rubrics. Most of the learners reported experiencing a decrease in errors related to spelling, capitalisation and tense forms.

In the third case, learners were happy to have a target and a direction. They were excited about comparing their own ratings with those of the teacher and peers. They reported setting goals for writing and thought that they could move from one level to the next. For them, feedback 'written' in Odia was humorous, and the combination of Odia and English was interesting. Also, they mentioned that they could focus on one aspect at a time due to the use of rubrics.

6. Conclusions

The conclusions of the study are presented below under three sub-headings, which are followed by a brief section on the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

6.1. Positive impact of CEFR-based bilingual rubrics

The findings of the study indicate that there was improvement in learners' writing skills, especially in their ability to complete tasks and, to an extent, organise ideas and information. While these findings support findings by Wicking (2014) which are specific to their effectiveness for classroom purposes, it is impossible to establish any cause-effect relationship between the rubrics and the improvement in writing skills with the help of the available data because of two main reasons. First, the rubrics were not the only operational factor in the classroom. Second, learners' improvement can be shaped by factors such as the teacher's approach to teaching and tasks used in the classroom. Therefore, it can be inferred from the findings of the study that the use of CEFR-based bilingual rubrics as a feedback

tool in the classroom can be effective when the teacher is properly trained to use them along with appropriate tasks.

6.2. Expertise and experience determine teachers' use of rubrics

The study found that the teachers used a variety of self- and peer-assessment activities involving learners and there was improvement in some aspects of learners' writing (Panadero and Jonsson, 2013). The use of rubrics did not result in teachers spelling out their expectations to learners (Andrade, 2001). It could be due to the teachers' lack of expertise in using the rubrics. It can also be assumed that they will gradually learn to utilise the full potential of rubrics in the classroom.

6.3. Positive response from learners

The findings show that learners found the bilingual rubrics interesting to use and it improved their participation in the classroom activities and helped them keep track of their progress (Saddler and Andrade, 2004). Their awareness of their existing skills and progress can be considered as indications of self-regulation. It can also be emphasised that effective feedback

helps learners decide the direction in which they need to move to achieve their goal (Hattie and Timperley, 2007). Learners reported using the rubrics for setting goals and finding directions to reach them. However, there was little evidence of internalisation or natural use of rubrics, which could take more time to become an observable behaviour.

6.4. Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research

Since the study did not use an experimental design, it is not possible to generalise the findings of it for a larger population and a variety of ESL contexts. Future research can look into the cause-effect relationship between the use of CEFR-based bilingual rubrics and improvement in learners' writing skills. Also, longitudinal studies can be undertaken to trace to what extent expertise and experience determine the effectiveness of teachers' use of rubrics and whether learners internalise the rubrics and start using them naturally. Finally, it will be interesting to see what the use of CEFR-based bilingual rubrics leads to in classrooms focusing on oral skills and in different types of ESL classroom contexts.

References

Al-Mahrooqi, R (ed) (2014) *Methodologies for Effective Writing Instruction in EFL and ESL Classrooms*. Hershey, USA: IGI Global.

Alanen, R, Huhta, A, Martin, M, Tarnanen, M, Mäntylä, K, Kalaja, P and Palviainen, Å (2012) Designing and assessing L2 writing tasks across CEFR proficiency levels. *Learning to write effectively: Current trends in European Research* 25/221.

Andrade, HG (2001) The effects of instructional rubrics on learning to write. *Current issues in Education* 4.

Andrade, HG (2005) Teaching with rubrics: The good, the bad, and the ugly. *College teaching* 53/1: 27–31.

Andrade, HL, Du, Y and Wang, X (2008) Putting rubrics to the test: The effect of a model, criteria generation, and rubric referenced self assessment on elementary school students' writing. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice* 27/2: 3–13.

Andrade, H and Valtcheva, A (2009) Promoting learning and achievement through self-assessment. *Theory into Practice*, 48/1: 12–19.

Andrade, HL, Wang, X, Du, Y and Akawi, RL (2009) Rubric-referenced self-assessment and self-efficacy for writing. *The Journal of Educational Research* 102/4: 287–302.

- Bradford, KL, Newland, AC, Rule, AC and Montgomery, SE (2016) Rubrics as a Tool in Writing Instruction: Effects on the Opinion Essays of First and Second Graders. *Early Childhood Education Journal* 44/5: 463–72.
- Brookhart, SM (2013) *How to create and use rubrics for formative assessment and grading*. Alexandria, Canada: ASCD.
- Cohen, EG, Lotan, RA, Abram, PL, Scarloss, BA and Schultz, SE (2002) Can groups learn? *Teachers College Record* 104/6: 1045–68.
- Hasselgreen, A (2013) Adapting the CEFR for the classroom assessment of young learners' writing. *Canadian Modern Language Review* 69/4: 415–35.
- Hasselgreen, A, Kaledaite, V, Pizorn, K and Martin, NM (2011) *AYLLIT – Assessment of young learner literacy linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. Graz, Austria: ECML Publications.
- Hattie, J and Timperley, H (2007) The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research* 77/1: 81–112.
- Hyland, K and Hyland, F (2006) Feedback on second language students' writing. *Language Teaching* 39/02: 83–101.
- Lipnevich, AA, McCallen, LN, Miles, KP and Smith, JK (2014) Mind the gap! Students' use of exemplars and detailed rubrics as formative assessment. *Instructional Science* 42/4: 539–59.
- Little, D (2011) The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: A research agenda. *Language Teaching* 44/03: 381–93.
- Matsumura, LC, Patthey-Chavez, GG, Valdés, R and Garnier, H (2002) Teacher feedback, writing assignment quality, and third-grade students' revision in lower- and higher-achieving urban schools. *The Elementary School Journal* 103/1: 3–25.
- Panadero, E and Jonsson, A (2013) The use of scoring rubrics for formative assessment purposes revisited: A review. *Educational Research Review* 9: 129–44.
- Parr, JM and Timperley, HS (2010) Feedback to writing, assessment for teaching and learning and student progress. *Assessing writing* 15/2: 68–85.
- Piscitello, ME (2001) Using Rubrics for Assessment and Evaluation in Art. Available at: <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED453145.pdf>
- Saddler, B and Andrade, H (2004) The writing rubric. *Educational Leadership* 62/2: 48–52.
- Shehab, M (2011). Teachers' and students' perspectives on using rubrics in the writing classroom. Unpublished Master's dissertation, Lebanese American University, Lebanon.
- Stevens, DD and Levi, A (2005) Leveling the field: Using Rubrics to achieve greater equity in teaching and grading. *Essays on Teaching Excellence*.
- Tavakoli, H (2012) *A Dictionary of Research Methodology and Statistics in Applied Linguistics*. Tehran: Rahnama Press.
- Wang, W (2014) Students' perceptions of rubric-referenced peer feedback on EFL writing: A longitudinal inquiry. *Assessing Writing* 19: 80–96.
- Wang, W and Wen, Q (2002) L1 use in the L2 composing process: An exploratory study of 16 Chinese EFL writers. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 11/3: 225–46.
- Ware, JL, Robertson, C and Paydon, S (2011) An implementation of a CEFR-based writing Can-Do curriculum in A Stewart (ed), *JALT2010 Conference Proceedings*. Tokyo: JALT.
- Wicking, P (2014). Adapting the European Language Portfolio to a Local Context. *ACTA*. Available at: http://tesol.org.au/files/files/431_ACTA_2014_Wicking.pdf
- Wollenschläger, M, Hattie, J, Machts, N, Möller, J, and Harms, U (2016) What makes rubrics effective in teacher-feedback? Transparency of learning goals is not enough. *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 44: 1–11.
- Zellermayer, M (1989) The study of teachers' written feedback to students' writing: Changes in theoretical considerations and the expansion of research contexts. *Instructional Science* 18/2: 145–65.

Appendix 1

Levels	Task Achievement and Organization (ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶାବଳୀପାଠ୍ୟ କୌଣସି ବିଆୟାୟିକା topic ଉପରେ ପଠିତ ଭାବରେ ଲେଖା ପୂରା କରିବାର କ୍ଷମତା)	Sentence Formation and Vocabulary (ବାକ୍ୟ ଏବଂ ଶବ୍ଦ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରିବାର କ୍ଷମତା)	Mechanics (ability to spell correctly, use capitalization and dictionary) (ସ୍ପେଲିଙ୍ଗ୍, ବ୍ୟାପିଟାଲ ଲେଟର, ଡିକ୍ଟନାରୀ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରିବାର କ୍ଷମତା)
B1 (Good)	<p>He/she can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ applications, formal letters, post cards, short news reports, etc. ଲେଖିବା ବେଳେ କୁହାଯାଇଥିବା format follow କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ କିଛି ବି ଲେଖିବାକୁ ଦେଲେ teacherଙ୍କର ଅତି ବେଶୀ support ବିନା complete କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଜଣାଶୁଣା ବିଷୟ ଉପରେ paragraphs ଲେଖିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ post cards, very short news reports and letters ଲେଖିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ କେତେ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ information and ideas ଠିକ ଭାବରେ ସଜାଡି ବା organized manner ରେ present କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଯଦି teacherଙ୍କ ସହ ନିଜର writing discuss karanti and ତାଙ୍କର advice follow karanti, ତାହେଲେ ଭଲ ଲେଖି ପାରନ୍ତି 	<p>He/she can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ past, present and futureର ଘଟଣା ଉପରେ simple and short sentences ଲେଖି ପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଲେଖିବା ବେଳେ singular and plural forms ଭିତରେ difference କୁ sentenceରେ ଠିକ ଭାବରେ use କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ 'and' and 'but' ଭଳି words କୁ ଆଗାମରେ use କରିପାରନ୍ତି sentenceରେ ➤ ଲେଖିବା ବେଳେ ଲେଖିବା ବେଳେ proper vocabulary use କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ 'on', 'in', 'over', 'under', 'outside', 'inside', etc. ଭଳି prepositions କୁ sentenceରେ use କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଯଦି ଯଦି books and newspapersରେ ବ୍ୟବହାର ହେଉଥିବା sentences କୁ closely ନିରୀକ୍ଷଣ କରନ୍ତି, ତାହେଲେ writing improve କରିପାରିବେ 	<p>He/she can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ପ୍ରାୟ simple wordsର correct spelling ଜାଣନ୍ତି ➤ capital letter ଯୋଗ ଜାଗାରେ necessary, ସେଇଠି ବିନା problemରେ use କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ proper ଜାଗାରେ full stop କୁ confidently use କରିପାରନ୍ତି and comma କୁ କିଛି ଭାବରେ properly use କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଦରକାର ବେଳେ support ପାଇଁ dictionary use କରିବା ଜାଣନ୍ତି ➤ ନିଜର spelling or capital letter related mistakes କୁ ବୁଝି ପାରନ୍ତି
A2 (Average)	<p>He/she can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ applications, formal letters, post cards, short news reports, etc. ଲେଖିବା ବେଳେ କୁହାଯାଇଥିବା format follow କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ କିଛି ବି ଲେଖିବାକୁ ଦେଲେ teacher and classmateଙ୍କର ଅତ୍ୟଧିକ support ବିନା complete କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଜଣାଶୁଣା topics ଉପରେ teacherଙ୍କ ସାମାନ୍ୟ support ନେଇ paragraphs ଲେଖି ପାରନ୍ତି ➤ teacher and classmateଙ୍କର support ମିଳିଲେ post cards, very short news reports and letters ଲେଖି ପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଜଣାଶୁଣା topics ଉପରେ information and ideasକୁ ବେଳେବେଳେ ସଜେଇ ଲେଖି ପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଲେଖିବା ପରେ classmates and the teacherଙ୍କ ସହ discuss କଲେ writing improve କରିପାରିବେ 	<p>He/she can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ teacher and classmateଙ୍କର support ମିଳିଲେ present, past and future ଘଟଣା ଉପରେ simple and short sentences ଲେଖି ପାରନ୍ତି ➤ sentencesରେ use କଲାବେଳେ singular and plural ଭିତରେ difference ବେଳେବେଳେ ଜାଣିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ 'and' and 'but' ଭଳି words କୁ ସାମାନ୍ୟ support ମିଳିଲେ use କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ 'on', 'in', 'over', 'under', etc. . ଭଳି prepositions କୁ sentenceରେ use କରିପାରନ୍ତି ଯଦିଓ କିଛି problems face କରନ୍ତି ➤ ଯଦି ସେ regularly teacherଙ୍କ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ନେଇ practice କରନ୍ତି better sentences ଲେଖି ପାରିବେ 	<p>He/she can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ କିଛି wordsର spelling ଠିକରେ କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ କିଛି ଜାଗାରେ capital letters ଠିକରେ use କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଯଦି teacher and classmatesଙ୍କୁ ଉପଯୁକ୍ତ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ମିଳେ, ତାହେଲେ dictionary use କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ teacher ବେଳେବେଳେ ସେ ନିଜର spelling କିମ୍ବା capital letter ସମ୍ବନ୍ଧୀୟ ଭୁଲକୁ ବୁଝିପାରନ୍ତି

A1 (Barely Manageable)	<p>ସେ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ଗୋଟିଏ applicationର ଆରମ୍ଭ ଏବଂ ଶେଷକୁ ଚିହ୍ନି ପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଜଣାଶୁଣା ବିଷୟ ଉପରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ବିରାଟ sentence ଲେଖି ପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଯଦିଓ ତାଙ୍କର ବିଆଯାଇଥିବା topic ଉପରେ ଜ୍ଞାନ ଆଏ, କିନ୍ତୁ ସେ ସହଜରେ ଲେଖିବା ପାଇଁ ଶିକ୍ଷକଙ୍କ ନିରନ୍ତର ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ଲୋଡ଼ି ଆସନ୍ତି ➤ ଭଲ ଲେଖିବା ପାଇଁ ବହୁତ practice ଦରକାର 	<p>ସେ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ଗୋଟିଏ ବିରାଟ ଛୋଟ simple ବାକ୍ୟ ନିଜ ନାଁ, ବାପାଙ୍କ ନାଁ ଏବଂ ସ୍କୁଲର ନାଁକୁ ନେଇ ଲେଖି ପାରନ୍ତି ➤ 'family' ଏବଂ 'friends' ଭଳି ଜଣାଶୁଣା ବିଷୟ ଉପରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ବିରାଟ ବାକ୍ୟ ଲେଖି ପାରନ୍ତି ➤ 'I', 'we', 'he', 'she' and 'they' ବାକ୍ୟରେ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଏକ ପୁରା ବାକ୍ୟ ଲେଖିବା ପାଇଁ teacherଙ୍କର ନିରନ୍ତର ସାହାଯ୍ୟ ଲୋଡ଼ି ଆସନ୍ତି ➤ ସେ ଭଲ ବାକ୍ୟ ଲେଖିପାରିବେ ଯଦି ସେ tense form ଏବଂ ନୂଆ ଶବ୍ଦ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରିବା ଶିଖିଯାଆନ୍ତି 	<p>ସେ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ କେତେକ wordର ଉଚ୍ଚାରଣ spelling ଜାଣନ୍ତି ➤ କେବଳ କିଛି ବାକ୍ୟରେ capital letterକୁ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରିବା ଜାଣନ୍ତି ➤ ଉଚ୍ଚାରଣ spelling ଏବଂ capital letter ବ୍ୟବହାର କରିବା ଶିଖିପାରିବେ ଯଦି ସେ ନିଜ classmate ମାନଙ୍କର ଲେଖାକୁ ଧ୍ୟାନ ଦେଇ ନିରୀକ୍ଷଣ କରନ୍ତି
A- (Beginner)	<p>ସେ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ଆପ୍ଟିକେସନର ପର୍ଯ୍ୟାୟ copy କରି ପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଜଣାଶୁଣା ବିଷୟ ଉପରେ କିଛି words ଲେଖିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଶିକ୍ଷକ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କଲେ ଜଣାଶୁଣା ବିଷୟ ଉପରେ କିଛି ideas ସଂଗ୍ରହ କରି ପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ସେ ଲେଖିବା ଆରମ୍ଭ କରିପାରିବେ ଯଦି ସେ କିଛି ନୂଆ ଶବ୍ଦ ଏବଂ ideas ସଂଗ୍ରହ କରିବା ଶିଖିଯାଆନ୍ତି 	<p>ସେ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ପରିଚାଳନା ଏବଂ ପ୍ରେସ୍ ଭଳି କିଛି ଜଣାଶୁଣା ବିଷୟ ଉପରେ ଅଳ୍ପ କେତେକ words ଲେଖିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଗୋଟିଏ ବାକ୍ୟ ଲେଖିବା ପାଇଁ ଶିକ୍ଷକଙ୍କର ନିରନ୍ତର help ଦରକାର କରିଥାଆନ୍ତି ➤ 'I', 'he' and 'she' ବ୍ୟବହାର କରିବା ଜାଣନ୍ତି ➤ ଜଣାଶୁଣା ବିଷୟ ଉପରେ କିଛି words ଶିଖିଲେ ସେ ପୁରା ବାକ୍ୟ ଲେଖିପାରିବେ 	<p>ସେ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ booksରୁ ଶବ୍ଦ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଧାରଣ କରିପାରନ୍ତି ➤ ଠିକ ଭାବରେ ଡେଲିଙ୍ଗ କରିବା ଏବଂ ବ୍ୟାପିଟାଲ ଲେଖନ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରିବା ଶିଖି ପାରିବେ ଯଦି ସେ ନିଜର classmateମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଏକତ୍ରରେ ଆଲୋଚନା କରନ୍ତି ଏବଂ ଶିଖିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରନ୍ତି

Appendix 2

Levels	Task achievement and organisation	Sentence formation and vocabulary	Mechanics
B1 (Good)	He/she can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow required or given format for writing applications, formal letters, post cards, short news reports, etc. Complete a writing task without much support from the teacher Write paragraphs on familiar topics Write post cards, very short news reports and letters Present information and ideas in an organised manner on some occasions Write better if he/she discusses his/her writing with the teacher and follows the teacher's advice 	He/she can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write simple and short sentences on past, present and future happenings Differentiate between the use of singular and plural forms in sentences Use simple connectives such as 'and' and 'but' Use appropriate vocabulary on some occasions Use prepositions such as 'on', 'in', 'over', 'under', 'outside', 'inside', etc. in sentences Write without much problem if he/she looks closely at how sentences are used in books and newspapers 	He/she can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spell most words correctly Use capitalisation without any major difficulty Use the full stop and comma on some occasions Use a dictionary for support Understand if he/she makes any spelling or capitalisation related mistake
A2 (Average)	He/she can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow a required or given format for writing applications, formal letters and postcards. Complete a writing task with some amount of outside support from the teacher and classmates Write paragraphs on familiar topics with some support from the teacher Write post cards, very short news reports and letters if supported by the teacher and classmates Present information and ideas related to familiar topics in an organised manner on very few occasions Write better if he/she discusses his/her writing with classmates and the teacher 	He/she can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write simple and short sentences on past happenings and past and future events if supported by the teacher and classmates Differentiate between the use of singular and plural forms in sentences on some occasions Use simple connectives such as "and" and 'but' when prompted Use prepositions such as 'on', 'in', 'over', 'under', etc. with some minor problems Write better sentences and use more appropriate words if he/she practises with the help of the teacher 	He/she can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spell some words correctly Use capitalisation correctly on some occasions Use a dictionary for support if guided Understand spelling or capitalisation related mistakes only when guided by the teacher

A1 (Barely Manageable)	<p>He/she can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the beginning and ending format of an application Write a few sentences related to some very familiar topics Gather information and ideas about a few familiar topics, but needs constant support of the teacher to organise them Write better if he/she practices writing a lot more 	<p>He/she can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write very few simple and short sentences to convey his/her name, father's name, the name of his/her school, etc. Use a few words on a few very familiar topics like family, friends, etc. Use 'I', 'we', 'he', 'she' and 'they' Write a complete sentence when supported constantly by the teacher Write a few sentences if he/she learns using tense forms and prepositions and words related to familiar topics 	<p>He/she can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spell a few words correctly Use capitalisation on very few occasions Spell words correctly and use capitalisation if he/she talks to the classmates and looks at how they write
A (Beginner)	<p>He/she can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow a required or given format on a few occasions Write only a few words on a few familiar topics Gather some information and ideas about familiar topics if guided constantly by the teacher Start writing if he/she teams some more words and how to gather information 	<p>He/she can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a few words on a few very familiar topics like family, friends, etc. Write a complete sentence when supported constantly by the teacher Use T, 'he' and 'she' Write a few sentences only if he/she learns more words related to familiar topics 	<p>He/she can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy words from a book Spell words correctly and use capitalisation if he/she tries to improve his/her English and talks to the classmates and looks at how they write

Appendix 3: Teacher responses

Question	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
How do you use them for providing feedback?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • indicate levels on the rubrics and show learners how to use them • some support during initial stages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teach learners how they can use the rubrics for monitoring their progress in writing • guide them to see how they are performing in different aspects of writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage self- and peer-correction in the classroom • sometimes through comparing my feedback with that of theirs
Tell me about your experience of using them and what you like and don't like about them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the burden of offering feedback has been less than what I used to have • more practice required to use them more effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learners like them and so I like them • need to be patient when it comes to training learners in using them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more time required to master the use of them • must learn to use them with the prescribed syllabus
Do you make changes in them in some way?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no • not much idea about it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no • will take time to think about it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tried and will continue doing that • will try for other skills
Do you follow different strategies for slow and fast learners when it comes to using the rubrics?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • yes • more time with slow learners discussing them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no • same approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not really but slow learners need more support

Appendix 4: Interview responses

Interview questions	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
Has the use of rubrics changed anything in your classroom?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding the teacher's suggestions easier • more interactions among learners during classroom • feeling of confidence about writing in English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • easier to know one's own problems in writing • less pressure in the classroom • fun to rate each other's writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good to know what one can do in English • knowing the direction in which one is moving • comparing our evaluation with that of the teacher
Tell me how you use them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as instructed by the teacher • for motivating myself to move to the next level of writing in all the given aspects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for telling classmates how they write • knowing my own level of writing • knowing my problem areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for planning what to do next • comparing my writing with that of my classmates
How is using rubrics for feedback different from getting feedback from your teacher in your notebook?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feedback from the teacher is for the class, not for everyone • rubrics are for everyone • motivation required to use rubrics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rubrics are easier to understand • teacher feedback focuses on errors • fast and slow learners can use rubrics equally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teacher feedback only for fast learners • one has to be active to use rubrics • rubrics indicate where one is doing well
Tell me if you find any difference between your ratings and the teacher's ratings for the same piece of writing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not much difference • the teacher is strict and learners are liberal with ratings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not always • the teacher carefully assigns levels, learners take it easy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sometimes because learners are generally biased towards their own writing • the teacher knows the appropriate rubrics
Tell me how you feel about the use of Odia for feedback on your writing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • easy to understand what we can do and what we can't • sometimes a little surprising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • something new but exciting • unsure if it should be used in the English classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the teacher used orally but funny to see it in writing • combination with English words is interesting
Tell me a few improvements you feel you can make in your writing with the help of the rubrics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • systematically learning spelling, punctuation, etc. • reminding ourselves where improvement is necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decreasing errors in spelling, use of capital letter, tense forms, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • easier making progress from one level to the next higher level

<p>You have been using the rubrics for the last five months. Now, tell me if the rubrics have had any impact on your writing skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the teacher can tell accurately • most of our classmates know where they were five months ago and where they are now 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • made us aware of our own writing • helped us set targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learned what to do to make writing better • change one small thing, for example, using capitalisation, at a time
--	---	---	---

Appendix 5: Classroom observation protocol

<p>Student activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in pair or group for analysing writing • Self-analysis of writing using the rubrics • Presentation on their own and classmates' writing performance 	
<p>Teacher activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating student activities • Drawing attention of students to their strengths and weaknesses in writing through the rubrics • Supporting slow learners • Using mother tongue whenever necessary • Guiding individual students using the rubrics • Offering group feedback using the rubrics 	

Appendix 6: Sample test questions

Task 1

ଦିଆଯାଇଥିବା ଆପ୍ଲିକେସନକୁ copy କରି ଲେଖ।

To the Headmaster
Godabarish Bidyapitha, Banpur
October 28, 2016

Sub: Application for leave

Dear sir,
Since I have to participate in the wedding ceremony of my sister, kindly grant me leave from 1-11-2016 to 4-11-2016. Thank you.
Sincerely

Sarita Sahoo
Roll No. 5
Section: A
Class IX

Task 2

ଦିଆଯାଇଥିବା ଦୁଇଟି ଚପିକ ଉପରେ ଯେତେ words ଜାଣିଛ ଲେଖ।

Topic 1
Friends

Topic 2
My Family

Task 3

ତଳେ ଦିଆଯାଇଥିବା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଶବ୍ଦମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଇଂରାଜୀ ଅନୁବାଦକୁ match କର।

Column A

Column B

i) ମୁଁ

a) We

ii) ଆମେମାନେ

b) They

iii) ସେ

c) I

iv) ସେମାନେ

d) He/she

Task 4

ନିମ୍ନ ଲିଖିତ ବାକ୍ୟମାନଙ୍କରେ capital letterର ସଠିକ use ଉପରେ ଠିକ ଚିହ୍ନ (P) ଲଗାଅ.

- i) salman / Salman is a good boy / boy.
- ii) I visited Puri / puri yesterday.
- iii) I have read / Read today's newspaper / Newspaper.
- iv) Have / have you been to Nandankanan / nandankanan?

Task 5

ନିମ୍ନ ଲିଖିତ topics ଉପରେ 2-5 ଟି ବାକ୍ୟ ଲେଖ.

My School or India

Task 6

Use each of the following words in sentences.

- i) in –
- ii) on –
- iii) under –
- iv) over –
- v) but –

Task 7

Write a short paragraph on how you spent a festival at home this year.

- Hints:
- 1. Write important words related to the festival
 - 2. Write the points you want to include
 - 3. Arrange the ideas and write them

Task 8

Write a short paragraph on what you plan to do during the Christmas holidays.

British Council
L&T Chambers First Floor
16 Camac Street
Kolkata 700017
India

© British Council 2018

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities.

www.britishcouncil.in/englishpartnerships

ISBN 978-0-86355-872-6 : Issue 10

