NEEDS ANALYSIS REPORT
Madhya Pradesh English Language Teacher Training

April 2013

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Contents

Abbreviations

ALM	Active Learning Methods
BRC	Block Resource Centre
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DIET	District Institute of Education and Training
EFLU	English and Foreign Languages University (Hyderabad)
ELTI	English Language Teaching Institute
GSDP	Gross State Domestic Product
INSET	In-service Education and Training
IT-ITES	Information Technology – Information Technology Enabled Services
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
MT	Master Trainer
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NSDC	National Skill Development Corporation
RSK	Rajya Shiksha Kendra
SCF	State Curriculum Framework
TC	British Council Training Consultant

1. Executive summary

There is a widespread perception amongst both educationists and the general public in Madhya Pradesh that English proficiency is an essential tool for success in a globalised economy

Though the specific uses for English beyond the school for the majority of students are not always clear, the felt need for English to be taught in schools in Madhya Pradesh remains and is ably encapsulated in the words of a student who participated in this needs analysis:

> We would like to learn English as it is a matter of pride. Without English we will be humiliated everywhere. Our country will not get respect if we do not speak English.

This report recognises, then, that English is an aspirational language, associated with advancement both for individuals and for countries as a whole. However, it should be noted too that English is also seen by some as a language of exclusion or as a barrier to advancement for children from poor communities. The Rajya Shiksha Kendra (RSK) acknowledges this by laying great stress on equity in English achievement. The objective articulated in the State Curriculum Framework (SCF) for English (2007, p. 2) is both praiseworthy and important.

> It is our primary objective to reach English to every child of the State and to ensure that the child gains a sufficiently high level of proficiency in it and does not suffer discrimination for lack of it.

For the objective to be fulfilled there must be equitable access to high quality English instruction for all children. Yet this needs analysis has, unfortunately, found that many of the necessary pre-conditions for effective, high quality English instruction do not at present exist in Ujjain Division and, we suspect, across the state as a whole.

Teachers who participated in this needs analysis do not have the English language proficiency which is required to be effective teachers of the language. Nor are they skilled in the activity-based, learner-centred methods which are recommended in the SCF and by language teaching methodologists internationally. Teachers continue to use translation into Hindi as their principal teaching strategy, dominate available talking time in the classroom and provide little to no opportunity for students to engage in meaningful communication in English. There are also shortcomings in generic teaching skills such as giving clear instructions, using a variety of activities appropriate to different stages of a lesson and giving praise to students, amongst others. Further, an environment which might promote English language learning and use amongst students does not exist in the school or local community. In the localities visited for this needs analysis, English is very much a foreign rather than a second language.

We should make it very clear that we do not attribute any blame to teachers for the situation in schools. It is hardly their fault if they have not learnt English themselves yet are still expected to teach it, nor that they work in schools where many of their students receive little encouragement to learn in the home environment. Most teachers want to do better and would welcome any training that helps them. Teachers themselves realise that their lack of English proficiency is a barrier to teaching the language and have expressed needs for training in a wide range of areas related to English language teaching.

The needs analysis thus demonstrates an urgent need and provides clear support for RSK's goal of developing a large-scale in-service teacher training (INSET) programme to address issues of low teacher proficiency and weak classroom teaching skills, both

generic and those specifically related to English teaching. The scale of the intervention required is daunting, even in the pilot division of Ujjain let alone in the state as a whole.

To address the challenges outlined in this report, we recommend that an INSET model be followed which allows teachers to practise what they have learnt on training courses in their own classes, ideally with support from teacher educators trained in the art of mentoring. Teachers need to see that what they learn on a training course has direct relevance to their teaching contexts. Training materials thus need to be written taking account of the local teaching-learning situation, acknowledging local constraints and incorporating references to and examples from existing textbooks and other materials in use in Madhya Pradesh: training cannot be generic if it is to be perceived as relevant.

Another serious issue is 'Who trains the teachers?' Trainers must themselves have experience teaching in the context and be a part of the system. They too will need training, not just in the recommended methodologies which teachers are expected to use but in teacher-training skills: a good teacher of school children is not automatically a good trainer of adult teachers. Whether there are sufficient people in the education system with the potential to become effective 'Master Trainers' (MTs) is a moot point; and one which RSK will need to address prior to finalising the design of the INSET programme.

Finally, we note that for changes in attitudes and in classroom practices to take root and prosper there should be no mixed messages in the education system. We also recommend, therefore, that steps should be taken to ensure harmonization of in-service and pre-service training messages across all providers and at all levels.

2. List of recommendations

The following recommendations have been made based on the needs analysis but these are not meant to be exhaustive or prescriptive. They are intended to form the basis of discussions and to help to clarify ways to serve the English language learning needs of teachers and students so that the objectives of the State Curriculum Framework for English (2007) can be realised in all primary schools across the state in the future.

Recommendation 1
In-service teacher training for primary teachers in Madhya Pradesh should have a dual focus on improving English language proficiency and language teaching skills. The teaching skills focus of future INSET courses should be delivered bilingually, in Hindi and English.

Recommendation 2
The language proficiency element of future INSET courses should include the development of skills necessary for teachers to become independent language learners. This should include utilising access wherever possible to freely available on-line resources such as the British Council's Learn English website, available at http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/

Recommendation 3
INSET courses should be run regularly and be seen as a key element in teachers' continuing professional development.

Recommendation 4
In-service training should focus on the development of more learner-centred, activity-based teaching-learning methods for the primary classroom. Teachers should also be trained in the appropriate use of translation as a tool to support learning.

Recommendation 5
In-service training should strengthen awareness of the state syllabus for English and the NCF which provides its foundation.

Recommendation 6
Prior to the commencement of any major revision or replacement of the current textbook, the RSK should commission a consultant to advise on the suitability of the current curriculum and textbooks, as well as on procedures for textbook development to NCF and international standards.

Recommendation 7
In a future training programme there should be attention paid to the role of the teacher as facilitator within ALM (active learning methods) to ensure that this does not lead to an abdication of responsibility for children's learning.

Recommendation 8
RSK and ELTI (English Language Teaching Institute) should develop a programme of e-support for teachers based on sending 'English teaching tips' to their mobile phones. Tips should focus both on teaching methods and on English language content; and be integrated with textbook material and INSET courses wherever appropriate.

Recommendation 9
The RSK should consider ways in which floor mats can be provided for all schools so as to improve the study environment for children.

Recommendation 10
The RSK should convene a task force to develop creative ways to combat student absenteeism and to maximise regular educational participation by children from rural, farming communities.

Recommendation 11
Any INSET programme which is developed should have a core module on creating a supportive environment for English within schools and/or use this as a theme across various modules.

Recommendation 12
To enhance the prospect of impact at the classroom level, it is recommended that the INSET programme for teachers follows a day-release model, with teachers attending the course for one day of their teaching week and applying the knowledge and skills learned in the other days. The length of the course will be determined by the number of course topics, but is likely to run for 10-12 weeks.

Recommendation 13
Training courses should be experiential and reflective rather than transmissive. Training strategies should model the methods that teachers are expected to use in the classroom with their students.

Recommendation 14
Training courses should have a dual focus on English language improvement and appropriate methodology for the primary classroom in Madhya Pradesh schools. They should be conducted in Hindi and English. The precise topics for training courses will need to be formulated in discussions between the RSK, the ELTI and the British Council but, as strands running through the course as a whole, all topics will need to incorporate a focus on multigrade teaching and ALM as well as making reference to textbooks currently in use.

Recommendation 15
Training modules need to be written – or adapted – to reflect the realities of the schools and classroom in which teachers in Madhya Pradesh work. It is essential that they incorporate reference to the curriculum, textbooks and ALM materials which teachers currently use.

Recommendation 16
It is recommended that criteria be developed against which potential MTs can be assessed for their suitability to implement experiential and reflective training. RSK/ELTI should manage the initial screening of applications, with interviews conducted by the British Council to determine the final pool of MTs.

Recommendation 17
For the success of the programme, MTs selected will need to be released from other duties to enable them to concentrate full-time on running courses and associated follow-up support activities in schools.

Recommendation 18
Training for MTs should include a strong focus on trainer development as well as on understanding and implementing the teacher-training courses. They should also be equipped with the skills to effectively monitor classroom teaching, in order to be able to follow-up training with the teachers they work with and give ongoing feedback. As with teachers, MTs will need to be supported in their initial training endeavours and arrangements will need to be made for British Council Training Consultants to provide guidance and support.

Recommendation 19
RSK and ELTI should ensure that gender equity is a focus in the process of selecting and training MTs, in particular that women are not discouraged from becoming MTs as a result of decisions made for logistical reasons.

Recommendation 20
A broad-based review of all English language teacher-training programmes in Madhya Pradesh should be conducted to ensure harmonization of in-service and pre-service training messages across all providers and at all levels.

3. Background

A team from British Council Delhi met Rajya Shiksha Kendra (RSK) in Madhya Pradesh to discuss a partnership project to conduct English language training for primary teachers across the state. RSK is the state government's apex academic body for the school education department of Madhya Pradesh.

The state requested the British Council to design and manage an intervention that includes training primary school teachers across the state, as well as to support them in developing a sustainable model for the future. It is intended that the British Council will work with the RSK and the English Language Teaching Institute (ELTI) to design a pilot programme to start in the Ujjain Division with a view to scaling up across the state at a later stage.

It was agreed that the British Council would conduct a comprehensive needs analysis of primary English teachers and learners in the Ujjain Division which will inform the design and planning of this programme.

The needs analysis was conducted in Ujjain District and encompassed meetings held with key stakeholders from RSK and ELTI in Bhopal from 17–23 February 2013. This report is the outcome of that needs analysis.

4. Purpose of the needs analysis

The purpose of the needs analysis was to generate data to enable the British Council to identify the needs and requirements for a large-scale English language teacher-training initiative at the primary level in Madhya Pradesh. With an educational intervention such as the proposed large-scale in-service teacher training (INSET) programme, it is crucial that the engagement of all the affected stakeholders is sought in the design and planning phase as well as the implementation phase. Stakeholder engagement increases a sense of ownership as well as the likelihood that the programme will meet the needs of those directly affected by it.

The needs analysis aimed to:

- assess the current language levels, teaching practices and needs of teachers and students in primary schools (Class I-VIII) in Ujjain Division

- assess the existing curriculum framework and text books in relation to these needs

- explore teachers' and students' beliefs about the English language, its usefulness and how it can best be taught and learnt

- investigate the main areas of English language teaching which future training initiatives might usefully address

- make recommendations as to possible interventions and training models to address identified needs

- recommend a selection process to identify Master Trainers (MTs) to train and support teachers in the division

- ensure that all recommendations are relevant to the educational and socio-cultural contexts in which the teachers and students work and study.

5. Methodology

5.1 Data sources

The needs analysis report is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary sources comprised lesson observations, focus groups, questionnaires, interviews and meetings. The data collection instruments, which contain both quantitative and qualitative data sets, were developed by the British Council and have been piloted and used in other contexts in India. These instruments were revised and extended for Madhya Pradesh and, where necessary, translated into Hindi. The general objectives of each of the instruments is recorded below.

5.1.1. Teacher questionnaire

The questionnaire seeks to:
- uncover existing beliefs and attitudes about teaching and learning in general and English teaching-learning in particular

- provide an opportunity for teachers to assess their own language skills

- find out training needs according to teachers' priorities

- find out what resources are available to teachers in the school and what constraints they may face

- uncover perceptions of the usefulness of previous training experiences and classroom observations

- uncover teachers' perceptions of the current curriculum framework, teaching objectives and textbooks

- obtain teachers input on training models, times and other logistical arrangements.

5.1.2 Teacher focus group meetings

The meetings provide an opportunity for teachers to discuss freely so as to:
- reveal more about existing beliefs and attitudes to teaching and learning in general and English teaching-learning in particular

- uncover teachers' perceptions of the usefulness of English to their students and the environmental factors affecting its teaching and learning

- prioritise their perceived needs

- provide an opportunity to assess their actual language levels through interaction

- discover what resources are available to teachers in the school and what constraints they may face on their use

- reveal more about teachers' perceptions of the current curriculum framework, teaching objectives and textbooks

- obtain teachers' inputs on training models, dates and other logistical arrangements.

5.1.3 Student questionnaire

The questionnaire seeks to:
- understand the learning process in the classroom from the students' point of view

- find out whether students experience learner-centred learning activities in their classrooms

- assess the extent of L1 language use in the English classroom

- assess the degree to which English is used in English lessons

- assess the extent of teacher-talking-time and student-talking-time in the classroom

- find out how students perceive their English classes in general and the teaching-learning activities used by their teachers

- uncover students' perceptions of their role(s) and that of their teacher in the English language classroom

- uncover students' attitudes to English, its importance and its role in their future careers.

5.1.4 Student focus group meetings

The meetings provide an opportunity for students to discuss freely so as to:
- understand the learning process in the classroom from the students' point of view
- provide an opportunity to assess students' actual language levels through a series of interactive speaking activities
- provide an opportunity to assess whether group and pair work, task based activities and team working generate spoken English among the students
- report on English and L1 use in the English class
- provide insights into how students perceive their English classes and the teaching-learning activities used by their teachers
- reveal more about students' attitudes to English, its importance and its role in their future careers.

5.1.5 Lesson observation form

The observation form provides a record of current classroom practice, enabling British Council Training Consultants to:
- observe current teaching methodologies
- record the amount and different types of interaction in the class: teacher/ student, pair work and group work, use of the mother tongue etc.
- understand how resources and materials are currently used in class
- informally assess the language levels of the teachers
- observe general classroom size and number of students in a class.

5.1.6 School information sheet

The information sheet seeks to:
- obtain basic data on school facilities
- obtain basic data on school resources
- obtain basic data on school enrolment
- obtain basic data on school attendance.

Secondary sources comprised data from a review of education policies published by the Government of India and the state of Madhya

Pradesh as well as other reports and papers in the public domain. The curriculum and teaching and learning materials for the state of Madhya Pradesh are also referred to. Whilst they conducted the needs analysis, British Council Training Consultants also collected and analysed samples of training materials, worksheets, lesson plans, assessments and students' work.

5.2 Data collection process

The authors of this report had formal and informal meetings with state and district Level education officers, teachers, educators and students in Bhopal, Ujjain district and Ratlam district where they also made school visits.

British Council Training Consultants in three teams of two conducted the needs analysis in the six districts of Ujjain Division. The data collection and visits to schools took place from 19 – 22 February 2013. On 18 February there was a preliminary meeting of the British Council team with senior officials from RSK and ELTI. The meeting helped set the foundation for the subsequent visits to the districts. A final meeting with the Commissioner RSK and other senior officials on 23 February concluded the needs analysis (see schedule in Appendix 1).

The Training Consultants worked in teams as follows:

- Team 1 worked in Ujjain and Ratlam
- Team 2 worked in Shajapur and Dewas
- Team 3 worked in Mandsaur and Neemuch

During the visits to schools the teams observed teachers, conducted focus group meetings with students and teachers and administered the questionnaires.

Total data collected was as follows:

Instrument	No. of respondents
Student questionnaires	314
Teacher questionnaires	65
Student focus groups	27 involving 255 students
Teacher focus groups	13 involving 62 teachers
Lesson observations	27
Schools visited	24

Table 1: Data collected

Selection criteria for the schools chosen were that they should cover a geographical spread across the division and districts and include a cross-section of rural schools, as 88% of primary schools in the state are in rural areas. The teams of British Council Training Consultants were accompanied by district education officials who identified the specific schools. The schools visited represented a cross section of semi-urban and rural schools as well as schools in the tribal belts.

As can be seen from the schedule, it was originally intended to visit four schools per day in each district. This proved to be wildly optimistic for two principal reasons: the time taken to travel to schools and from one school to another and the time taken to observe classes, administer questionnaires and conduct focus group meetings in each school. A conscious decision was also taken not to conduct focus group meetings with parents for reasons of time. These could not be fitted in to a crowded schedule and it was thought – as this was essentially a training needs analysis – to be essential to concentrate efforts on obtaining as much data as possible from teachers and students to inform any future training programme.

5.3 Limitations of data collected

There were some limitations to the data collection process.

1. The number of schools visited represents a small sample of the schools in six districts of just one division. If the intervention in this trial district proves successful, it would be advisable to conduct a more comprehensive baseline survey of the entire state to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of any future interventions.

2. Since observations were dependent on the classes that were taking place at the time of the visit, the number of classes that was observed at each level could not be pre-planned.

3. In questionnaires, some respondents left some questions blank. Where necessary, this data has been categorised as 'not filled'. In addition, a small proportion of the student questionnaires contained similar qualitative responses. Although, in most cases, British Council Training Consultants or teachers supervised the completion of questionnaires, this suggests that some copying may have taken place.

4. Although all the instruments were adapted to the state context, the class observation tool would benefit from some modification. It would have been better to have designed this instrument following pre-needs analysis visit to schools so that consultants could familiarise themselves better with the classroom context. This was not possible, but for any future needs analysis some school visits should precede design of the lesson observation instrument.

5. On a few occasions British Council Training Consultants felt that lessons they had observed may have been repeat lessons. However, since the purpose of these observations was to gain a snapshot of current pedagogical practices, this is unlikely to have affected the findings. Also some of the classes observed followed the ALM pattern and here the teachers really could not be observed. In these lessons, students tended to work on their own and the teacher's role in such classes could not be clearly defined.

6. Context

This section provides brief contextual information relevant to the teaching and learning of English in primary schools in Madhya Pradesh.

6.1 Demographics

Located in the centre of the country, Madhya Pradesh is the second largest state in India in terms of geographical size and the sixth largest in terms of population.[1]

Description	2011	2001
Actual population	72,597,565	60,348,023
Male	37,612,920	31,443,652
Female	34,984,645	28,904,371
Population growth	20.30%	24.34%
Literacy	70.63 %	63.74 %
Male literacy	80.53 %	75.35 %
Female literacy	60.02 %	54.61 %

Table 2: Madhya Pradesh demographic information

While population growth has slowed in the past decade, it is still above the national average of about 17%. Literacy has also risen considerably and is now close to the national average, but there remains a significant disparity between male and female literacy. As can be seen from Table 3, the population in Madhya Pradesh remains predominantly rural though the urban population has increased by 25.63% in the past 10 years. The disparity between male and female literacy is also much greater in rural than in urban areas. The child population (0-6 years) is 15.48% in rural areas and 12.04% in urban areas.

Overall population growth, the percentage of the state population who are children and disparities between male-female literacy rates present significant challenges for educational provision in the state in the years to come.

1. Source for all demographic information: http://www.census2011.co.in/census/state/madhya+pradesh.html

Description	Rural	Urban
Population (%)	72.37 %	27.63 %
Total population	52,537,899	20,059,666
Male population	27,142,409	10,470,511
Female population	25,395,490	9,589,155
Population growth	18.38 %	25.63 %
Child population (0-6)	8,132,745	2,415,550
Child percentage (0-6)	15.48 %	12.04 %
Literates	28,991,005	14,836,188
Average literacy	65.29 %	84.09 %
Male literacy	76.64 %	90.24 %
Female literacy	53.20 %	77.39 %

Table 3: Rural-urban demographic information

The official and major language of the state is Hindi, though a number of other languages are also spoken. In Ujjain division, the site of the needs analysis, Malwi is the first language of children in some districts.

6.2 Ujjain education statistics

Education in Madhya Pradesh is provided at three levels: primary, middle and high school. Primary schools cover Class I to Class V and middle schools cover Class VI to Class VIII.

Information on schools and students in the six districts of Ujjain division, the site of the needs analysis, is given in Table 4a and 4b below.

6.3 The economy and employment opportunities

The Madhya Pradesh economy is predominantly agrarian. 72% of the working population are engaged in agriculture and allied activities (much higher than the national average of 58% employment dependency on agriculture). Agriculture has contributed to the recent expansion in the state's economy, with a growth rate of 18% in 2011–12. However, over the past decade there has been a shift in the

proportion of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) derived from agriculture – the primary sector – to the secondary (industrial) and tertiary (service) sectors. The tertiary sector contributed 46.96% to GSDP in 2011–12.[2] Figure 1 illustrates this trend.

In the 2013 report by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), knowledge of English was seen as essential only for employment in the organised retail sector and the Information Technology and Information Technology Enabled Sectors. We observe that English is also generally considered to be essential in the tourism sector but, at present, most tourism in Madhya Pradesh is domestic and, as the NSDC note (2013, p. 43) 'pilgrim Tourism has been the main driver for tourists in the state'. Whether the state government's decision to short-list for comprehensive development 18 major sites which attract both domestic and foreign tourists will change the nature of tourism in the state – and the demand for English as a skill for employment in this sector – remains to be seen. It is noteworthy too that the emerging tertiary sectors identified in the NSDC report as having the potential for
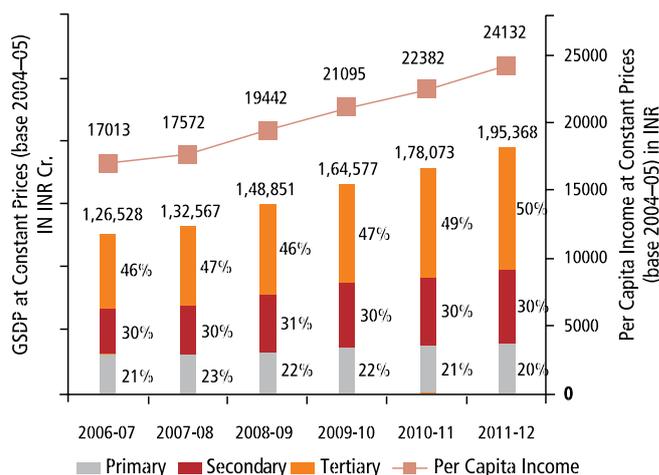

Figure 1: Madhya Pradesh Economic Performance[3]

high economic growth – IT-ITES, renewable energy, wellness tourism and logistics – are all those requiring a high skills base which is most likely to include proficiency in English. In economic terms, proficiency in English is likely to remain a highly desirable skill for students aspiring to work in well-paid jobs in the tertiary sector.

2. Source: NSDC: National Skill Development Corporation (2013). District wise skill gap study for the state of Madhya Pradesh. January 2013. New Delhi: NSDC.
3. Source: NSDC, 2013, p. 26.

S. No.	District	No. of Schools			No. of Blocks	No. of Clusters	No. of Teachers		No. of Students PS		No. of Students MS	
		PS	MS	Total			PS	MS	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1.	Ujjain	1466	691	2157	07	136	4071	1757	57628	68288	29781	33219
2.	Dewas	1578	619	2197	06	62	3715	1623	55196	64718	25263	32456
3.	Shajapur	1540	726	2266	08	68	3774	1782	53308	67266	27888	33670
4.	Mandsaur	1298	520	1818	05	80	3057	1179	41460	49904	23828	26682
5.	Neemuch	881	367	1248	03	35	2228	936	26392	30545	14422	15949
6.	Ratlam	1668	546	2214	06	143	4114	1408	64077	67381	26516	26978
	Total	8431	3469	11900	35	524	20959	8685	298061	348102	147788	168954

Structure of a District: *Collector » CEO » DPC » DEO » GCE » DIET » BRCC » HM » BAC » JANSHIKSHAK » TEACHER*

Table 4a: Educational information on Ujjain Division

S. No.	District	Name of DIETs	Name of Government Colleges of Education
1.	Ujjain	DIET Ujjain	GCE Ujjain
2.	Dewas	DIET Dewas	GCE Dewas
3.	Shajapur	DIET Shajapur	No
4.	Mandsaur	DIET Mandsaur	No
5.	Neemuch	DIET Neemuch	No
6.	Ratlam	DIET Ratlam	No

Table 4b: DIETs and Government Colleges of Education, Ujjain Division

7. Findings

In this section we present and discuss the findings thematically, drawing on primary and secondary sources to support the points made. Recommendations for consideration by RSK are also made based on these findings.

7.1 Perspectives on English

The State Curriculum Framework for English (2007, p. 2) is very clear regarding the objectives for teaching English in Madhya Pradesh.

> *It is our primary objective to reach English to every child of the State and to ensure that the child gains a sufficiently high level of proficiency in it and does not suffer discrimination for lack of it.*

This view was reinforced in a striking way in one of the student focus group meetings where students said:

> *We would like to learn English as it is a matter of pride. Without English we will be humiliated everywhere. Our country will not get respect if we do not speak English.*

Students clearly feel that it is important to learn English. Responses to our student questionnaire were strongly in favour of English, with 253 (87%) of those who answered saying 'Yes' and only 39 (13%) saying 'No' in response to the statement 'I think it's important to learn English'.

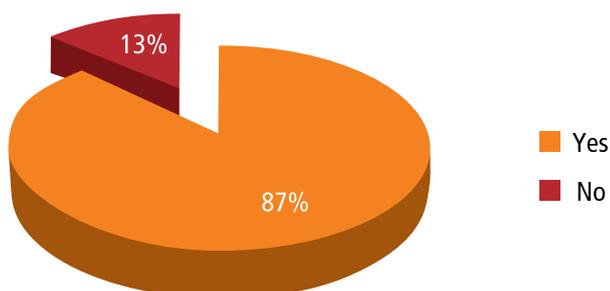**I think it's important to learn English.**

Figure 2: Students' attitudes towards the importance of learning English

As one would expect from children of this age, they were not always clear about what they wanted to do in the future after completing their education; however, it was notable that the overwhelming majority felt that they would need English in whatever career they foresaw for themselves, with 244 (78%) saying 'Yes', only 27 (8%) saying 'No' and a further 43 (14%) not responding – perhaps indicating that they could not make any judgement – to the question 'Do you think you will need to speak English in your work in the future?'.

Do you think you will need to speak English in your work in the future?
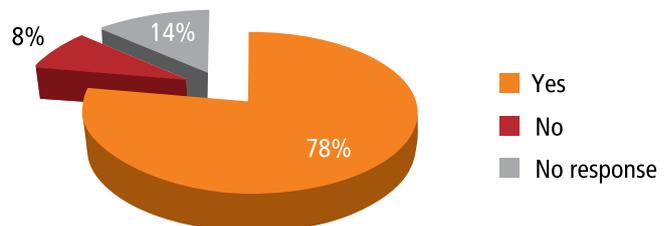
Figure 3: Students' perceptions of whether they will need English in their future careers

There is little doubt then, that many students associate English with aspirations for a better future. The key question remains, though, how one may best fulfil these aspirations. The NCERT 'National Study on Ten Year School Curriculum Implementation' (2011, p. 119) reiterates the 2005 NCF statement that:

> *The level of introduction of English is now a matter of political response to people's aspirations rather than an academic or feasibility issue and people's choice about the level of its introduction in the curriculum will have to be respected, with the proviso that we do not extend downwards the very system that has failed to deliver.*

As will become clear in the following sections of this report, at present there are a number of serious constraints on achieving the SCF objectives of equity in the possession of English

throughout the state. The flight to private schools which are perceived to offer higher quality English teaching, amongst other things, is indicative of a lack of confidence in school outcomes in the government sector and it would be hard not to draw the conclusion that the teaching of English from Class I has indeed 'extend[ed] downwards the very system that has failed to deliver'. Given the serious issues identified in the remainder of this report with current language teaching methods and with teachers' language competence, we also think that we would be neglectful if we did not mention that the NCERT report also states (2011, p. 119):

> *This issue needs to be further studied from which class English language should be introduced as a second language.*

Research in first and second language teaching internationally confirms that, in contexts where a language such as English is a foreign language in the environment, young children will learn the new language best if they have already acquired literacy in their L1.[4] This argues for a later introduction of English than Class I. Critics of such a position tend to argue that there are instances where early English language instruction does work. That may well be true, but there are certain conditions that need to be fulfilled, as Marinova-Todd et al. (2000, pp. 28-29) comment:[5]

> *Investment in elementary foreign language instruction may well be worth it, but only if the teachers are themselves native or native-like speakers and well trained in the needs of younger learners; if the early learning opportunities are built upon with consistent, well-planned, ongoing instruction in the higher grades; and if the learners are given some opportunities for authentic communicative experiences in the target language.*

These conditions have not been observed in any of the schools visited in Ujjain Division during this needs analysis. Our conclusion is

that, in this environment, students in primary schools might actually achieve more if the starting level for English was delayed until Class IV or V. By this time children's literacy in Hindi should have been established and they should be in a better position to begin the task of learning English. Further, a delayed starting level would make in-service training needs much less daunting as only the 8,685 teachers in upper primary schools in Ujjain Division would need to be trained, and not the 20,959 teachers in the lower primary schools. However, we also recognise that such a decision has considerable implications – political as much as educational.

While it is beyond the scope of this current project, it is recommended that RSK consider convening a task force to study the question of the starting class for the introduction of English in government primary schools in Madhya Pradesh. The task force would ideally contain representation from a wide variety of stakeholders, including specialists in L1 literacy and L2 acquisition as well as parents and political and business representatives.

7.2 Teachers' language levels and use of English

In order for students in schools to learn English, it is self-evident that their teachers should themselves have a sufficient degree of English language proficiency and that they should use the language as much as possible in their lessons: if students do not hear the language, how can they be expected to learn it? The question arises, of course, as to what is a 'sufficient' level of proficiency. We were unable to find any mandated requirements for primary school teachers in Madhya Pradesh but in other contexts where English is a foreign language a B2 level on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is considered the minimum,[6] with B2 representing an 'independent user: upper intermediate' (see CEFR descriptors in Appendix 2).

No formal evaluation of teachers' English

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4. See, for example: Trudell, B. (2005). Language choice, education and community identity. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 25, 237-251.
5. Source: Marinova-Todd, S.H., Marshall, D.B. and Snow, C.E. (2000). Three misconceptions about age and L2 learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34, 9-34.
6. B2 has been mandated for all teachers of English in Vietnam, including those in primary school. Source: *The Guardian Weekly*, 8 November 2011. http:// www.guardian. co.uk/education/2011/nov/08/vietnam-unrealistic-englishteaching- goals?INTCMP=ILCNETTXT3487

language levels was undertaken during this needs analysis, though British Council Training Consultants made informal assessments both during class observations and in informal discussions with teachers. In the summary report of the teacher focus group meetings, the conclusion was reached that:

> *It was very difficult to identify the language levels of teachers as most of them insisted on responding in Hindi. However, during lesson observation and informal conversation it was seen that most of the teachers' language levels were between A2 and B1.*

On the CEFR, A2 describes a 'basic user: elementary' and B1 an 'independent user: intermediate'. Estimates of the time required to move from one level of the CEFR to the next vary widely, though it is generally accepted that faster progress is achieved at the lower levels. Thus, while it may take up to 500 learning hours to pass through A1 and A2 to reach B1 level, it could take another 500 learning hours to reach B2.[7] The number of hours will inevitably vary from context to context, as well as from individual to individual, and will depend on factors such as aptitude for learning, memory, the instructor, the instructional context, support for the language outside the class and so on.

Nevertheless, we can conclude in general terms that if primary teachers in Madhya Pradesh were required to attain B2 as a prerequisite for teaching English it would be a very considerable task for most of them.

Yet, lack of English language competence amongst teachers is a serious drawback to improving the quality of English teaching for students. Teachers themselves are very aware of the problem. The assessment of language levels by British Council Training Consultants is reinforced by teachers' self-assessment of their ability to use English for various purposes. We can see in the figure below that few teachers rate themselves as having 'good ability', while only one or two consider that they have 'high ability' and even then in less than half the areas.
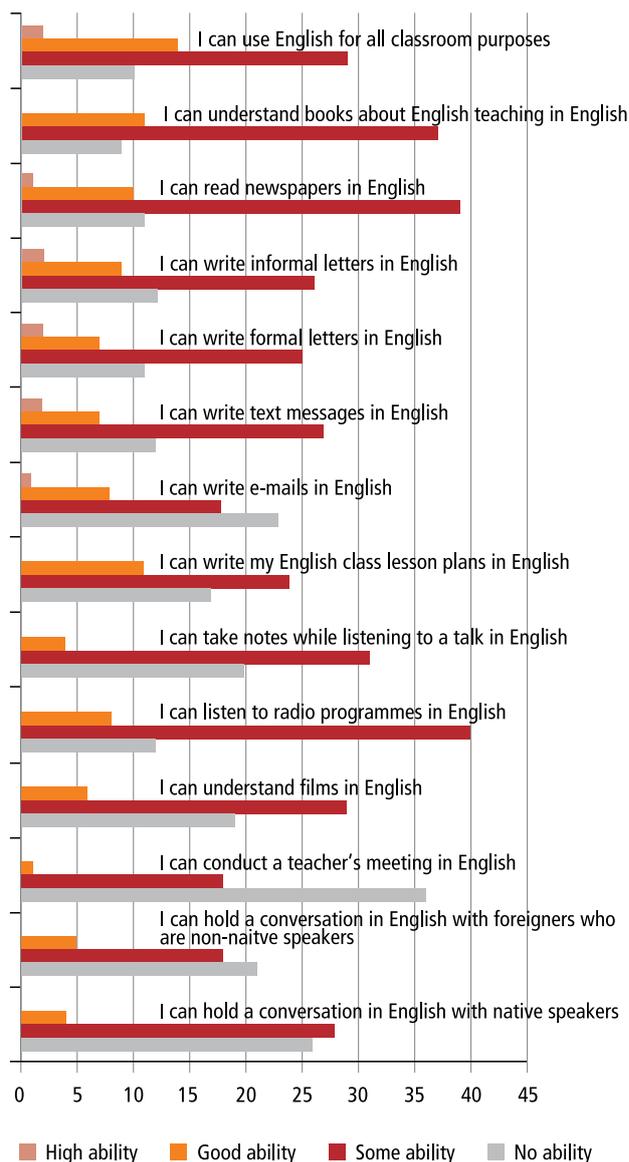

Figure 4: Teachers' self-assessment of their ability to use English

With such low levels of competence, it is scarcely surprising that during the lesson observations British Council Training Consultants observed that there was little use of English in English lessons by teachers as we can see in Figure 5 below. The 92% of teachers using English for 'less than half of the time' also needs some qualification as, in several lessons, Training Consultants who made this observation noted 'not at all' against their check mark. If the observation form had had a box for 'not at all' we wonder what the percentages would have been for this category.

7. Source: Mader, J. and Urkun, Z. (Eds.) (2010). Putting the CEFR to good use. Canterbury, UK: IATEFL. Downloaded from: http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/kpg/texts/IATEFL%20TEA%20SIG-EALTA%20Barcelona%20Conference%20Proceedings.pdf

How much does the teacher use English during the English Lesson?

- All of the time
- Most of the time
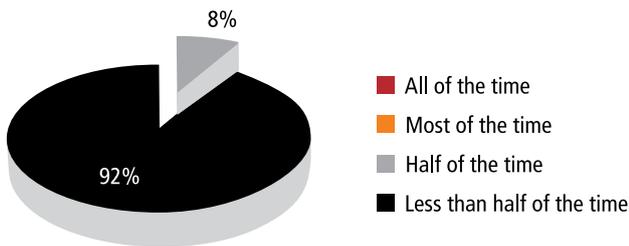- Half of the time
- Less than half of the time

Figure 5: Teachers' observed use of English in English classes

Teachers' self-assessment of their English abilities correlates with their expressed needs for language improvement in all skill areas, as we can see in the figure below.
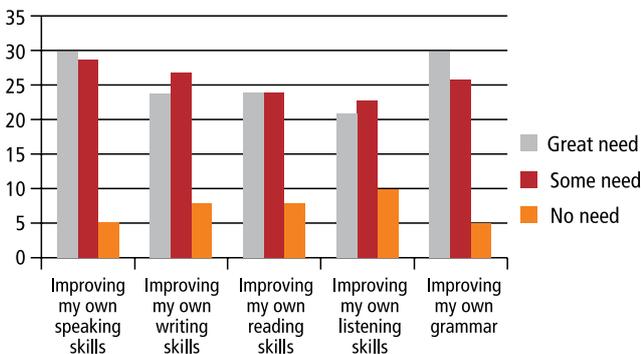

- Great need
- Some need
- No need

Figure 6: Teachers' expressed needs for English language improvement

The implications from this data are very direct. Teachers in primary schools are in urgent need of language improvement if they are to be expected to teach English effectively and they are very aware of their own needs in this respect. Any in-service training programme must, then, have a direct focus on English language improvement alongside a focus on the development of teaching skills. Given teachers' current levels of English and the time needed to attain a CEFR B2 or upper intermediate level, which is desirable as a long-term goal for English teachers, it is unlikely that a sufficient level of proficiency can be achieved in a single training course of a typical 10-15 days duration, even if this were to be devoted solely to language teaching – in itself undesirable given other needs discussed later in this report. English language improvement must, then, run alongside teaching skills development, for which training will need to be at least bilingual

in Hindi and English given teachers' current low English proficiency level.

Recommendation 1

In-service teacher training for primary teachers in Madhya Pradesh should have a dual focus on improving English language proficiency and language teaching skills. The teaching skills focus of future INSET courses should be delivered bilingually, in Hindi and English.

As a single course, in whatever format it is delivered (see section 7.6.2 below), will not be able to raise proficiency to an acceptable level, the INSET course must also include an element to develop teachers as independent language learners.

Recommendation 2

The language proficiency element of future INSET courses should include the development of skills necessary for teachers to become independent language learners. This should include utilising access wherever possible to freely available on-line resources such as the British Council's Learn English website, available at http://learnenglish. britishcouncil.org/en/

In addition, to deal with the many challenges faced by primary teachers who are required to teach English, in-service courses focused on English language learning and teaching must become a regular feature of the educational scene in Madhya Pradesh, leading to a culture where continuing professional development (CPD) is accepted as the norm for teachers.

Recommendation 3

INSET courses should be run regularly and be seen as a key element in CPD for teachers.

7.3 Students' language levels and use of English

As with the teachers, no formal evaluation of students' English language levels was undertaken during the needs analysis, though British Council Training Consultants made informal assessments both during class observations and student focus group meetings where students participated in a range of

interactive activities prior to the discussion. The general conclusion was that the language level of students hovered from A0 (no competence)[8] to A1 (basic user: beginner) on the CEFR. For example, assessing a group as A0 a British Council Training Consultants wrote that students were:

> *Not able to respond to 'What is your name? What is your age? Where do you live? And simple commands like 'stand up', 'sit down' etc.*

For an assessment of A1, a Training Consultant wrote that students:

> *Knew some high frequency words and basic phrases e.g. 'elephant', 'Hello, how are you?' 'I'm fine'.*

Most students could only repeat their names and just a few could use simple expressions like 'Hello' or 'I am fine' and could identify common animals, foods or classroom objects in English. The summary report of the student focus group meetings concluded that in all of the focus groups the students said that they hardly ever use English in their English classes but generally speak in Hindi or the local language. They use English only while reading and this too when they repeat after their teacher or one of the more proficient students. The common refrain was that students spoke to their English teacher in Hindi because 'we don't know much English'. Students also reported that they did not watch English programmes on TV at home, but in those schools with electricity students said that they enjoyed the Edusat programmes whenever they could see them. However, for the majority of students, their exposure to oral English was minimal. The student focus group reports thus call into question students' responses in the student questionnaire where 70% claim to spend half or more of their class time speaking English and only 30% claimed to spend less than half the time speaking English.

It is not uncommon – even amongst adults – for respondents to questionnaires to want to please by telling the researcher what they think they want to hear, and this may have happened here. The students' self-reports are

How much English do you speak during your English lessons? I speak English …
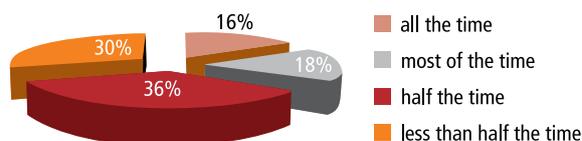

Figure 7: Students' self-reported class time spent using English

not confirmed by discussions in the student focus group meetings where British Council Training Consultants had the opportunity to talk to students in more depth and where these same students generally opined that they spoke 'Hindi – we only know Hindi'. Certainly, the questionnaire results are not supported by evidence from the lesson observations in any of the districts. As we have seen in section 7.2, 92% of teachers use English for less than half the class time – or not at all. Classes are also dominated by teacher talk with 75% of teachers talking either all or most of the time (see section 7.4.1 below). Consequently, there is little time for students to speak English and neither is speaking in English modelled by the teacher – the only source of language input.

What is particularly worrying in this general assessment of students' language levels and use of English is that the student focus group meetings were conducted with children in upper primary Classes IV–V who – supposedly – have had four or five years' experience of being taught English in school. Sadly, we conclude that by the end of primary school most children will have learnt little or no English at all.

7.4 Classroom methods, materials and teachers' roles

7.4.1 Observed classroom English teaching methods
The SCF (2007, p. 5) has the following guidelines for 'Methods and Techniques' for teaching English in primary schools.

> *Methods and Techniques*
> *Oral-aural, learner-centred, activity-based approach is to be followed. Activities may*

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8. A0 is not a formal descriptor within the CEFR but used here by British Council Training Consultants to indicate virtually zero competence in English.

include project work, activities that promote reading with comprehension, quiz, role-play, skits, dialogue, dramatization, discussion, debate, language games, simulating real-life situations, using newspaper clippings, riddles and puzzles, pair-work and group-work.

In contrast to SCF guidelines, in their lesson observations, British Council Training Consultants recorded that the most commonly observed teaching activities were:

1. Teacher reads the text aloud
2. Students read the text aloud
3. Students repeat after the teacher
4. Students copy from the board

Training Consultants were asked if 'Students engage in tasks which focus on meaningful use of language' but only on a single occasion was this observed, where a teacher asked questions based on students' drawings. English lessons were predominantly 'chalk and talk', teacher-centred and conducted in Hindi. Any English which featured in the class was translated into Hindi and/or the local language. Comments made in the student focus group meetings indicated that what Training Consultants had seen was the normal pattern for English classes in these schools. As part of these focus groups, Training Consultants conducted some short interactive language games to gauge students' reactions to more student-centred activities and found that students were universally positive towards them. However, they also said that their own teachers did not use any activities of this type. Only in one school, did a teacher come close to interactive learning with students saying that s/he used Total Physical Response (TPR) occasionally.

Training Consultants observed that most teachers were operating at minimal competence in most areas of general classroom skills (see Figure 8). It was only in terms of 'providing a positive learning environment' that 10 of the 27 teachers observed had even 'satisfactory' competence. For some of the categories we should also note that for many of the teachers the skills were not observed at all, e.g. 'using pair work at some point in the lesson', where only 11 teachers used pair work

(10 not at all well; one minimally) and 16 did not use it at all.

There was a similar pattern with observed language teaching skills, with for example only one out of the 27 teachers seen to 'use language games appropriately during the lesson' doing so even minimally and nine not at all well. The remaining 17 were not seen to use display this skill at all during the lessons observed (see Figure 9).

Classroom time was also dominated by teacher talk, as we can see from Figure 10.
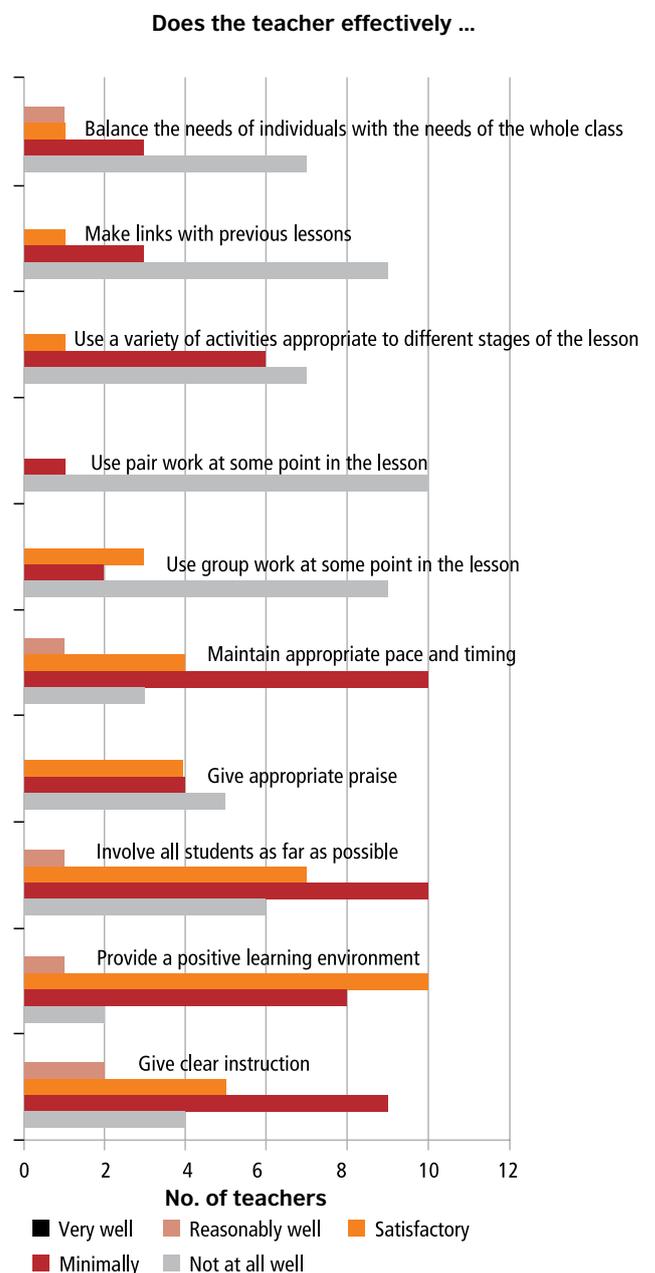
Does the teacher effectively …

Figure 8: Observed competence in general classroom skills

We saw too that this teacher talk is in Hindi for the most part (see section 7.2 above). What is striking is that, contrary to observed practice, many teachers seem to believe that they can actually use English well to manage their classes, as we see in the questionnaire responses below.

It is also interesting that teachers express beliefs which are at odds with observed classroom practice, as we see in Table 5. For example, 42 teachers totally disagreed that 'The teacher should talk the most in lessons' and a 12 further 'disagreed', but observations by British Council Training Consultants found that 75% of teachers spoke all or most of the time during classes, leaving little or no time for students to contribute or practice English in the class.
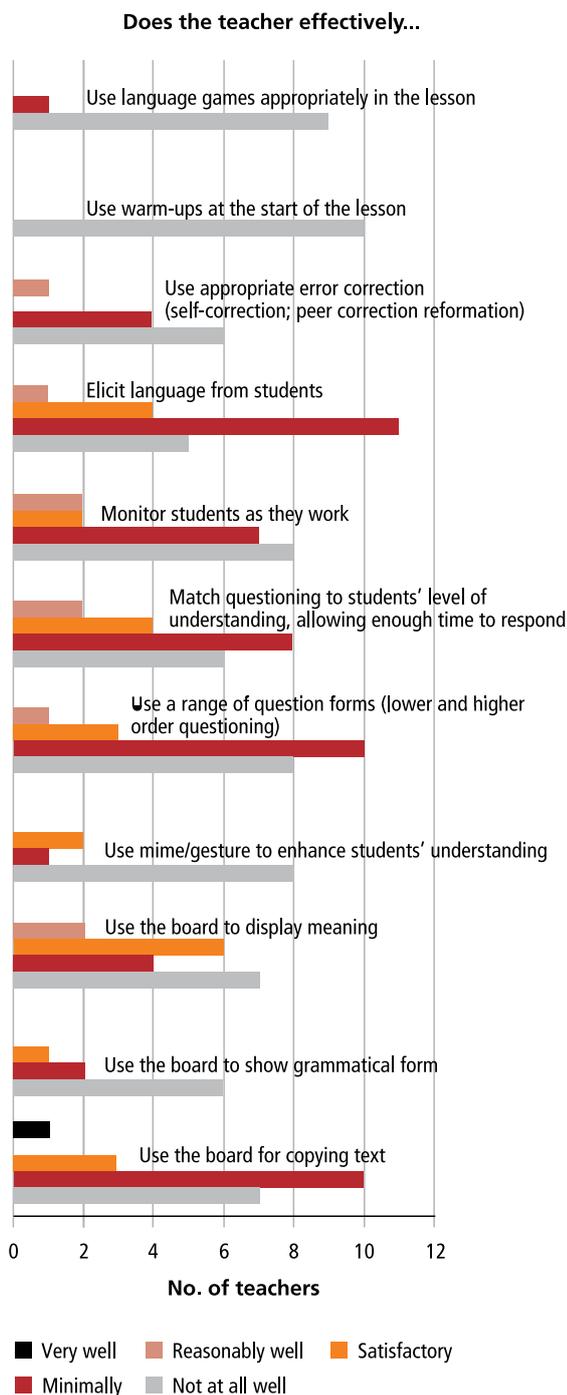
Does the teacher effectively...

Figure 9: Observed competence in teaching skills

How much does the teacher talk during the lesson?
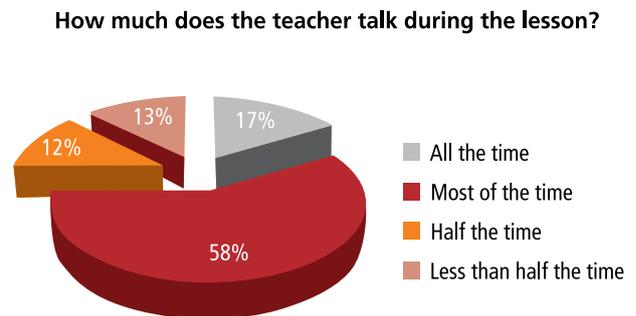

Figure 10: Observed teacher-talking time
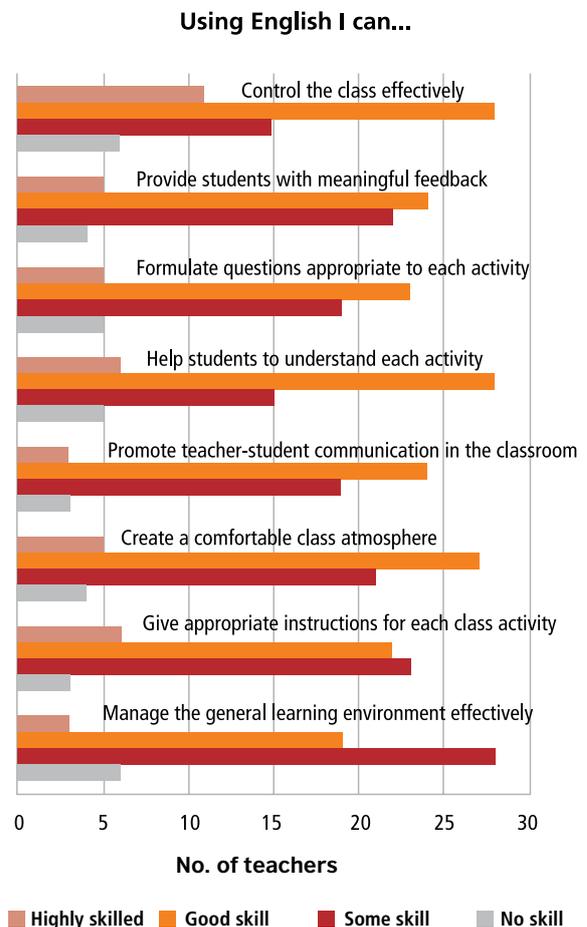
Using English I can...

Figure 11: Teachers' perceptions of their skill at using English to manage their classes

The general picture that emerges of primary English classes is that:

- they are teacher-centred
- the teacher dominates classroom talk
- Hindi is the principal means of communication
- where English is used it is also translated into Hindi

- students use of English is confined to repeating after the teacher, reading aloud after the teacher and copying from the board
- students do not engage in meaningful communication through the medium of English
- only in ALM classes do students work together.

	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Totally Disagree
1	If you are a strict teacher, you will get the students' respect.		7	6	19	33
2	An excellent teacher has perfect pronunciation and never makes a mistake.	10	9	21	17	7
3	The teacher should try to use as much English as s/he can in a lesson.	13	9	33	12	1
4	Teachers should follow the course book at all times.	11	8	18	22	6
5	Group work and pair work waste a lot of time in class.	4	3	11	20	29
6	A teacher is there to correct all the students' errors.	32	5	25	4	2
7	A good teacher makes sure that the students have fun in lessons.	36	3	27	1	
8	The teacher should talk the most in lessons.		8	4	12	42
9	It is important to concentrate only on the language that the students need for the exams.	24	5	24	5	5
10	Experienced teachers do not need to plan their lessons any more.	1	9	11	13	29
11	Students respect teachers who make their lessons lively and interesting.	28	6	24	7	
12	It is a good idea to let the students have responsibility for part of the lessons.	16	10	33	7	2
13	A good teacher asks students for their opinions in class.	31	8	25	3	1
14	It is a good idea to let students correct their own work or each other's work.	19	14	29	3	1
15	Visuals like flashcards, real objects and mime can help understanding.	32	12	18	3	
16	A good teacher writes everything on the board.	3	6	14	26	17

Table 5: Teachers' beliefs about classroom practice

From this evidence, we believe there is a clear need for teachers to be trained in more student-centred, activity-based learning methods which are appropriate to the primary school level. These methods will need to balance the use of English as the target language with the use of Hindi to enhance students' understanding. We recognise that translation can, on occasion, be an effective tool to support the learning of English, but it should not be used as a substitute for all other methods.

Recommendation 4
In-service training should focus on the development of more learner-centred, activity-based teaching-learning methods for the primary classroom. Teachers should also be trained in the appropriate use of translation as a tool to support learning.

7.4.2 The curriculum and textbooks for English

As is common in many educational systems worldwide, teachers seem to be unfamiliar with curriculum frameworks and the English syllabus and rely on prescribed materials as the source of all information on teaching-learning in the classroom. The summary report of the teachers' focus group meetings noted that:

> *Most of the teachers said that they were aware of the objectives and competencies in the syllabus only through the ALM activity sheets. In the schools where ALM has not been introduced, most teachers are not aware of the objectives of teaching English to different classes.*

Teachers in non-ALM schools will thus use the textbook as the curriculum framework and syllabus, which is not necessarily a negative factor provided that the textbook itself adequately incorporates the required objectives and competencies. This factor notwithstanding, teachers would clearly benefit from having direct knowledge of these objectives and competencies to shape their classroom practice appropriately: hence the following recommendation.

Recommendation 5
In-service training should strengthen awareness of the state syllabus for English and the NCF which provides its foundation.

The textbook itself has been written by ELTI with input from EFLU to align with the 2005 NCF and the 2007 state curriculum framework. The textbook incorporates a workbook, meaning that students need to write in the book and thus are allowed to keep it. The textbook is a basic resource for teachers and students and appears to be universally distributed. The textbook itself is subject to a cyclical revision process. At present it is undergoing minor revision with a major revision likely to happen in 2015. These are all very positive factors, indicating that RSK and ELTI recognise the need to update materials continually to make them relevant to constantly changing socio-educational conditions and the needs of teachers and learners.

As part of the needs analysis, we sought views on the textbooks from teachers and students. In the questionnaire, teachers' responses were inconsistent. They reported that they were generally satisfied with the textbook, as follows.

Are you satisfied with the current English textbooks for the classes you teach?
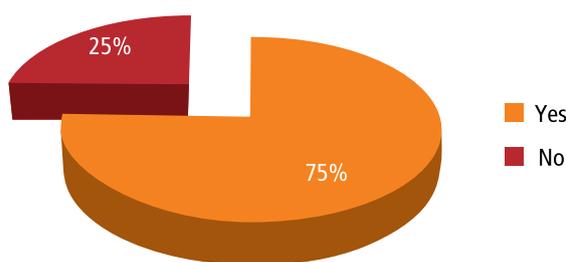

Figure 12: Teachers' satisfaction with current textbooks

When asked a further question about how well the textbook met the needs of learners, the positive picture remained largely intact with only 9% of respondents saying it did not meet their needs very well (none selected 'not at all well').

How well does the textbook meet the needs of learners?
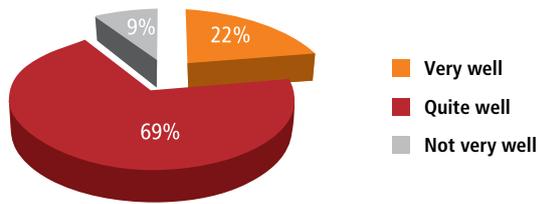

- Very well
- Quite well
- Not very well

Figure 13: Teachers' perceptions of how well textbooks meets learners' needs

It was only in teacher focus group discussions that a less positive, perhaps more nuanced picture emerged. The summary report of these discussions noted that:

The curriculum seemed adequate though most of the teachers said that the syllabus was not graded well. There was a sudden increase in complexity from Classes four to Class five and then Class six seems easier than Class five. The lower primary books seemed more difficult than the upper primary ones.

From the students' perspective, there may be an issue with cultural appropriacy too. The summary report of the student focus group meetings concluded:

Many students said that the text books were all right but they would have preferred more stories about Indian children.

We do not feel we can make any meaningful conclusions about the textbook based on our own superficial examination of them. However, because the textbook is a key – often the only – resource for teachers and students we feel that it should be systematically evaluated. Accordingly, we recommend that in the next year or so, to align with the proposed major revision in 2015, the RSK commission an independent international consultant to evaluate the suitability of the curriculum and textbooks for all primary classes, particularly in terms of their grading. The British Council would be well positioned to advise on a consultant with experience of textbook development in similar contexts.

Recommendation 6
Prior to the commencement of any major revision or replacement of the current textbook, the RSK should commission a consultant to advise on the suitability of the current curriculum and textbooks, as well as on procedures for textbook development to NCF and international standards.

7.4.3 Active Learning Methods
In many schools where this has been introduced, the structured nature of the materials seems to be producing benefits for students but there also appears to be a misconception about the concept of ALM amongst teachers and the role of the teacher as a facilitator of learning. Whilst we observed students making use of ALM materials and appearing to enjoy what they were doing, many teachers seemed to be under the impression that this gave them licence to leave the classroom and to attend to other things in the school, such as administrative work. British Council Training Consultants observed that when they visited schools, often teachers came from other parts of the school when they arrived and left the classroom immediately after an observation to return to what they had been doing prior to our arrival. If this pattern is replicated elsewhere, it would seem that students are left to their own devices for much of the time and, thus, ALM is only partially achieving its objectives.

Recommendation 7
In a future training programme there should be attention paid to the role of the teacher as facilitator within ALM to ensure that this does not lead to an abdication of responsibility for children's learning.

7.5 School facilities, school attendance and the local environment for English

7.5.1 School facilities
Basic facilities are lacking in many schools. Of the 27 schools visited by the Training Consultants, only seven were recorded as having electricity, of which two had power only in the computer laboratory, one was noted as only having it in 50% of classrooms and another noted that power was frequently interrupted.

Clearly there would be serious problems with any effort to raise standards which depended on media resources of any kind, whether this is as basic as television, Edusat or on-line programming. Radio is the only medium which can be relied upon, and even this is dependent on schools having adequate supplies of batteries. The implication is that for the foreseeable future, teachers of English will be reliant on 'traditional' means for English teaching in the classroom, the blackboard, textbooks and other print materials. However, the lack of basic facilities in schools does not entirely preclude e-support for teaching. It is rare to find a teacher without a mobile phone and this offers one route for additional support. The RSK/ELTI could reinforce the methods that teachers learn on their INSET courses by sending regular 'English teaching tips' to teachers' mobile phones. These tips could easily be related to units in the textbook as the school year progresses, and integrated with INSET courses if these follow any kind of day-release model (see section 7.6 below). They could also focus on English language content with for example a 'word of the day' or 'words of the week', and so on. There may be the opportunity here to use some existing British Council training content in this format.

Recommendation 8
RSK/ELTI should develop a programme of e-support for teachers based on sending 'English teaching tips' to their mobile phones. Tips should focus both on teaching methods and on English language content; and be integrated with textbook material and INSET courses wherever appropriate.

Inside the classroom, with respect to furniture, in the 26 classes observed, none of the classrooms had desks and chairs for the students. Usually there was only a large desk and chair for the teacher. In the lessons observed, children either sat on mats covering most of the floor or on two strips of cloth running the length of the classroom, one for boys and one for girls (see representative photos below).

Lack of desks and chairs for students is not necessarily a significant disadvantage if this is the norm, as long as children are comfortable seated on the floor and the teacher is prepared to sit down with the students when required, for example to interact with individual students and to help with groupwork. Indeed, where there are desks and chairs or benches in classrooms and these are either difficult to move or in poor repair, they can often work against the use of classroom arrangements which focus on pair and/or groupwork to promote communication between students. However, of the two types of floor covering observed, mats covering most of the floor provide the best physical environment for the children, enabling them to spread out their materials as well as joining with other students for pair or group work. We therefore recommend that RSK seek ways to ensure floor mats are provided in all schools. This is important in ensuring that children who are disadvantaged in so many ways have a classroom environment which is conducive to learning.

Figure 14: Classroom in Grade A school in Ujjain district

Figure 15: Classroom in tribal school in Ratlam district

Recommendation 9
The RSK should consider ways in which floor mats can be provided for all schools so as to improve the study environment for children.

If the physical classroom environment is improved, it may also contribute to solving some of the problems identified in the next section, in that the school will be an appealing place to spend increased amounts of time.

7.5.2 School attendance and the local environment
In some areas – particularly those designated 'tribal' – there are serious issues affecting children's regular participation in schooling. The first of these is that many children are first generation students and so the value of regular school attendance is not recognised in their families, and the second is that children's labour is needed during the farming season. Third, some children have to take responsibility for their younger siblings: in one school, the lesson observation form mentioned that:

> *One child has babysitting duty at home, but has brought his baby sister along to school.*

Whilst admiring the student for persisting in coming to school with his sister – and praising the school for allowing it – one can only wonder at the effect this has on the child's schooling, and that of his peers, in terms of their ability to concentrate on their lessons.

Even at non-farming times of the year, attendance is affected; during our visits to schools in mid-February 2013 we were told that we were currently in the 'wedding season' which also affected attendance. At other times, there is seasonal migration of whole families who are forced to look for work in other areas. The cumulative impact of these factors can be seen in the following table which details enrolment and attendance on a single day at a tribal school in Ratlam district on February 21st 2013. Out of a total enrolment of 99, only 12 students were present.

Class	Girls enrolled	Boys enrolled	Girls present	Boys present
I	09	12	03	01
II	12	11	01	01
III	14	12	01	01
IV	06	10	00	01
V	05	08	03	00
Total	46	53	08	04
Total	99 enrolled		12 present	

Table 6: Sample observed school attendance, tribal school in Ratlam district

It seems that the school calendar does not mesh with the realities of life for a large number of families – and we should remember that Madhya Pradesh remains a predominantly agrarian economy, with 72% of the working population engaged in agriculture and allied activities (much higher than the national average of 58% employment dependency on agriculture).[9] Schools are in session during the farming season and school holidays occur in the non-farming season. Though we do not have any specific suggestions to solve this issue, we recognise that if nothing is done to accommodate the demands and constraints inherent in the lives of farming families, it is inevitable that regular school attendance will remain a chimera and children in these families will struggle to break out of a cycle of under-achievement from one generation to the next.

Recommendation 10
The RSK should convene a task force to develop creative ways to combat student absenteeism and to maximise regular educational participation by children from rural farming communities.

We should recognise too that it is not just the students who are affected by their irregular attendance. Teachers also find it difficult to work in a context where they are not sure from one day to the next who will be in their classes. As the summary report of teachers' focus group meetings concluded:

9. Source: NSDC: National Skill Development Corporation (2013). District wise skill gap study for the state of Madhya Pradesh. January 2013. New Delhi: NSDC.

> [The] *teachers all said that absenteeism of the students was a great demotivating factor for them.*

7.5.3 The local environment for English

English is not a language that is common in the local environment. For some students, it is their third language after Hindi and whatever may be their first language, for example Malwi. Unless they are living in a larger urban area, students' access to English will be minimal. To quote again from the teachers' focus group summary:

> *The teachers in one voice said that there was a total lack of English environment outside the school and it was not possible to motivate the students to use English.*

It is difficult to imagine what RSK can do about the environment outside the school, if anything. Nevertheless, RSK, divisional and district education officials, schools and teachers can all work together to have an impact on the environment within schools for learning in general, and for learning English in particular. Activities like an English Day, spelling competitions, setting up an English Corner in a classroom, displaying students' English class work (and regularly changing it) and the use of bilingual signs throughout the school can all help to play a part in developing such an environment. It is thus important that any INSET programme which is developed focuses on creating a supportive school environment for English. This could form the topic for a specific training module and/or be a theme running across various modules.

Recommendation 11
Any INSET programme which is developed should have a core module on creating a supportive environment for English within schools and/or use this as a theme across various modules.

7.6 In-service training: models, content and trainers

7.6.1 Perceived needs for training in primary English teaching

In-service training is urgently required for teachers to help them to teach English

How adequate is the pre-service training in English language teaching that you have received?
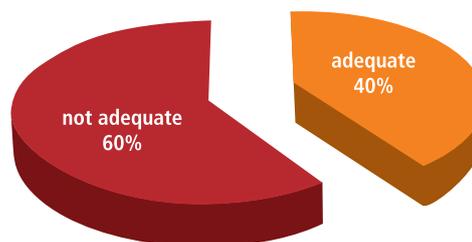

Figure 14: Teacher perceptions of prior training to teach English in primary schools

more effectively. This has been reinforced in discussions with education officials, by the lesson observations and by the teachers themselves in focus group discussions and in their responses to the questionnaire. To a certain extent, teachers' perceptions of prior training to teach English do not match the classroom outcomes observed in this needs analysis, as a substantial number – 40% – think their prior training to teach English in primary schools was adequate, even though a majority of 60% thought it was not adequate.

Responses to other questions in the survey reveal, however, that teachers would value additional training to manage their English classes. For example, when asked to identify needs for training in various topic areas, few teachers said they had 'no need' for training and the majority identified a 'great need' for training in most topic areas, as can be seen in Figure 17.

It also bodes well for the success of any future training programme that teachers seem to have found their most recent experience of INSET courses quite useful (32%) or very useful (52%), with only a minority (16%) saying it was not very useful (see Figure 18). We take this to mean that most teachers can see the relevance of the training they have received to their own classrooms though, as we shall see in section 7.6.2 below, there is some concern amongst teachers about the strategies trainers use to impart information as well as the direct application of the training to the classroom.

Some of the preconditions for successful in-service training for primary English teaching seem, then, to have been met in that teachers see an obvious need for the training and they recognise the value of the previous training they have received. This is important because if teachers do not see the significance of the proposed training courses they are unlikely to have much impact in the classroom.
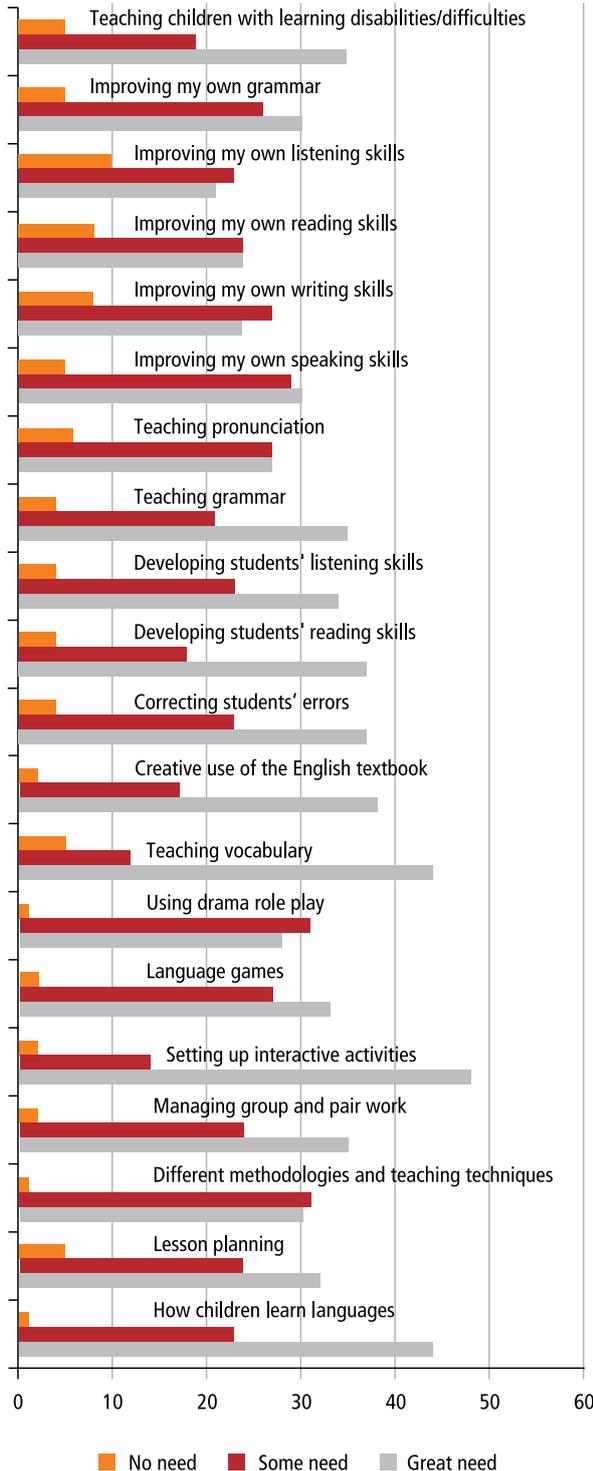
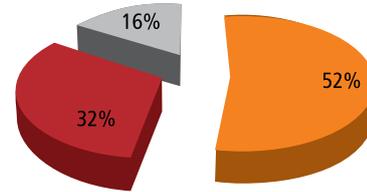**How useful are your INSET training programmes?**

Figure 18: Teacher opinions of most recent training courses

More is of course needed if training is to be successful. RSK needs to decide what format the training should follow, what the content should be, and who should conduct it. We will discuss these issues in sequence.

7.6.2 In-service training formats/models and strategies

In-service training courses can be delivered in a variety of formats. We do not propose to discuss on-line modes of training here due to the general lack of computer facilities available to teachers in their school or home environments, which is where they would be most likely to access on-line training. More traditionally, in-service courses are frequently conducted in school vacations so that no teaching time is lost in school. These courses may also be residential and usually cover a great deal of content in extended blocks of time, with little or no follow-up in schools. This model has the disadvantage of potentially overwhelming teachers with so much new information and so many skills to be developed that when they return to the classroom they do not know how best to apply what they have learned. Further, if in-school follow-up and support is not available from trainers, teachers often do not even attempt to implement what they have learnt and stick with their 'tried and trusted' methods.

At the other end of the scale, in some systems schools are closed to students on particular days during term-time so that teachers can participate in school-based training. While this model has the advantage of enabling teachers to work on issues of immediate relevance to them in their local context, there are generally no more than three or four days per year

Figure 17: Teachers' expressed training needs

devoted to this kind of training and there is no uniform content focus across the system. Such a model is not suitable for large-scale training initiatives in which a general lack of competence in particular areas has been identified.

For larger-scale training, experience in other Asian and Southeast Asian countries suggests that the greatest impact on teachers is gained from a 'day-release' course model, whereby teachers are either given one day's release from their teaching duties or spend one day at weekends (not a preferred time here, see Figure 19) engaged in face-to-face training and then spend the remainder of the week in their schools practising methods, activities and techniques from the immediately preceding training. In the following training session they are then able to provide direct feedback on implementation of what trainers have recommended. Cyclical, formal INSET of this kind thus contributes to continuing professional development as teachers are given the opportunities on a regular basis to analyse their practice and to incorporate new approaches into their teaching within the framework of a supportive learning environment with peers. Most importantly, they are not left to fend for themselves with no feedback on their attempts to innovate as they are able to discuss their experience each week, and especially if trainers are able to visit teachers in their schools.[10] On the other hand, students in school are faced with the prospect of not having a teacher for one day a week for the duration of the in-service programme. We are not in a position to determine what impact this might have in Ujjain, or Madhya Pradesh as a whole, but our own view is that a short-term loss in this respect may lead to a long-term gain. The following table illustrates how a day-release model works in practice (of course, the training day may be any day in the week).

However, it is axiomatic that any training format/model has to be suited to the realities of its context. What works well in one context may not work equally well in another. Practical considerations also hold sway. In Ujjain division

Session	Training focus (Mondays)	In-schools (Tuesday onwards)
1	*Introduction to the course* *Teaching-learning methods on the course* *Topic: How children learn languages* *Topic: ALM – the role of the teacher*	*Practise with ALM; focus on teacher as facilitator* *School visits: trainer visits two schools per day*
2	*Feedback: Reporting on classroom experience with ALM in the previous week; providing evidence of children's language learning* *Topic: Classroom language – maximising the use of English* *Topic: The bilingual classroom: knowing when and how to use the first/regional language*	*Practise using more English in class; practise restricting use of Hindi to certain parts of the lesson.* *Look for and document evidence of children's language learning strategies.* *School visits: trainer visits two schools per day*
3	*Repeat pattern with feedback from previous week's experience in school* *Select new topic for input*	

Table 7: Day-release training schedule with sample topic areas

alone there are 20,959 teachers working in 8,431 primary schools who need to be trained in the first year of the project, and a further 8,685 teachers in 3,469 middle schools in the second year. With 10 divisions across the state as a whole, the scale of the task in the long-term is immense.

Another factor in which model to choose is the preference of teachers themselves for training to be conducted at particular times. In their questionnaire responses, teachers themselves expressed a strong preference for training in non-teaching weeks, followed by term-time and holidays. There was minimal support for training in the evening or at weekends, as can be seen in Figure 19 below.

10. For more information on models of INSET, see Hayes, D. and Chang, K. (2012). Theoretical perspectives on, and international practice in, continuing professional development for English teachers. *English Teaching*, 67, 107-129.

Figure 19: Teachers' preferred times for in-service training

This would seem to provide support from the teachers' perspective for a day-release model with teachers attending one day of training per week during term-time if that is deemed to be feasible by RSK. The overall length of the course would be determined by the topics needing to be covered but 10-12 weeks is probably sufficient for one block of training: it may be difficult for teachers to sustain motivation for training for any significant period beyond that, no matter how good the training itself. Though, on balance, we recommend following a day-release model for teacher training, we recognise that RSK must assess all relevant factors before a final decision is made, including the number of teacher-trainers required to provide training for all primary teachers in the division (see section 7.6.4 below).

Recommendation 12

To enhance the prospect of impact at the classroom level, it is recommended that the INSET programme for teachers follows a day-release model, with teachers attending the course for one day of their teaching week and applying the knowledge and skills learned in the other days. The length of the course will be determined by the number of course topics, but is likely to run for 10-12 weeks.

Whichever in-service training model is decided upon, training strategies will play a crucial part in determining the success of the courses. As one of the authors of this report has commented elsewhere:[11]

International experience has shown that different training strategies may have markedly different long-term effects on the recipients of the training. Training which involves only a simple dissemination of information and instructions is less likely to have a long-term impact. Training which involves the transfer and development of knowledge and skills as well as addressing fundamental change issues can be expected to assist teachers to manage change processes within themselves.

This indicates that training needs to have a direct connection with teachers' classroom practice and be conducted in such a way that methods and skills are modelled by trainers for teachers. We strongly recommend that training should be reflexive, i.e. it should model the methods that teachers are expected to use in the classroom with their students. A lecture on activity-based teaching methods is unlikely to have as much impact as a training session which uses an activity-based methodology to present knowledge and practice skills to implement these teaching methods. The desirability of this approach is endorsed by comments collected in the summary report of the teachers' focus group meetings where the opinion was expressed that:

Many teachers felt that they should have training that they could actually practice with their students in the schools. Most of the training that they had received was on general methodology and had no connection with the prescribed text.

We therefore make the following recommendation.

Recommendation 13

Training courses should be experiential and reflective rather than transmissive. Training strategies should model the methods that teachers are expected to use in the classroom with their students.

7.6.3 Training content

It is clear from the discussion in section 7.2 of

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11. From: Hayes, D. (2008). *Primary Innovations Project. In-service teacher training for primary English teachers.* Unpublished report. Bangkok, Thailand: British Council.

this report that the vast majority of teachers are in urgent need of language improvement: it is essential that this is incorporated into the training programme and that training should be bilingual, utilising Hindi and English appropriately. We recommended previously (see section 7.5.3) that any future training programme should have a core module on creating a supportive environment for English within schools and/or use this as a theme across various modules. We also recommended in section 7.4.3 that additional attention should be given to ALM to correct misperceptions of the role of the teacher as facilitator. Further, as we have seen in section 7.6.1, teachers have expressed needs for additional training in virtually every aspect of classroom teaching presented to them. This is backed up by the lesson observations conducted by British Council Training Consultants and data from focus group discussions (see section 7.4.1). In addition, observations in schools and discussions with the Commissioner and senior officials from RSK and ELTI indicated that training would need to incorporate a focus on multigrade teaching to deal with the realities of the many smaller schools in which students in different grades have to be combined and taught in the same class. These discussions reinforced the need for training courses to be bilingual if they are to be understood fully by teachers. It is apparent, then, that the training course content potentially has to re-train teachers in virtually every aspect of classroom instruction. This is not feasible in an INSET course which may be anything from 10-20 days in total length. RSK and ELTI must, therefore, prioritise the topics which they wish to see covered and collaborate with the British Council on the development of appropriate materials for these topics. We thus have the following general recommendation for developing the training course content.

Recommendation 14
Training courses should have a dual focus on English language improvement and appropriate methodology for the primary classroom in Madhya Pradesh schools, should be conducted in Hindi and English. The precise topics for training courses will need to be formulated in discussions between RSK, ELTI and the British Council but, as strands

running through the course as a whole, all topics will need to incorporate a focus on multigrade teaching and ALM as well as making reference to textbooks currently in use.

It follows from this that training content should not be generic but specifically tailored to the context and to the needs of teachers in Madhya Pradesh. Training modules will need to be written – or adapted from existing materials – which incorporate reference to the curriculum, textbooks and ALM materials that teachers use in their daily teaching.

Recommendation 15
Training modules need to be written – or adapted – to reflect the realities of the schools and classroom in which teachers in Madhya Pradesh work. It is essential that they incorporate reference to the curriculum, textbooks and ALM materials which teachers currently use.

7.6.4 Master Trainers
A vital element in the success of a training programme is that the Master Trainers (MTs) we select to train the teachers should be competent to provide the kind of experiential, reflective training that we have recommended. Without this, the programme will fail to achieve its objectives of strengthening teaching in schools. MTs must also be 'contextually competent' to meet teachers' expectations: as the summary report of the teachers' focus group meetings concluded:

> *Teachers want an expert who knows the actual ground situation to train them, as then it would be more meaningful and useful.*

RSK and the British Council will need to develop selection criteria for MTs focused on the key criteria above of being able to provide experiential, reflective training and being well-versed in teachers' classroom realities. Reasonably strong English language levels are also required. We recommend that RSK issue a call for trainers through the DIETs and BRCs and that the application process asks applicants to complete a task which indicates their suitability/potential for delivering training in the manner expected. This task could be in the

form of a number of training scenarios, asking applicants to say how they would respond in the circumstances given. Applicants who appear to show the disposition needed should then be interviewed by the British Council to assess both their English language competence, their beliefs about effective in-service training and their previous experience of training.

Recommendation 16
It is recommended that criteria be developed against which potential MTs can be assessed for their suitability to implement experiential reflective training. RSK/ELTI should manage the initial screening of applications, with interviews conducted by the British Council to determine the final pool of MTs.

Recommendation 17
For the success of the programme, MTs selected will need to be release from other duties to enable them to concentrate full-time on running courses and associated follow-up support activities in schools.

It is likely that most MTs selected will show the potential to become experiential, reflective trainers but will have little to no prior experience of working in this way. Trainer training for MTs will, accordingly, need to focus as much on training skills as it does on understanding the content of the courses for teachers. It is not enough for MTs to simply experience the teacher-training course and then be expected to replicate it. They require input in such areas as:

- adult learning theory and practice
- interpersonal skills (e.g. showing respect for participants' contributions)
- elicitation skills – brainstorming, asking questions, working with participants' contributions
- active listening skills
- organising and managing groupwork – giving instructions, monitoring, providing support as groups work on tasks
- giving feedback and advice
- chairing discussions

- classroom observation skills
- monitoring skills

This is not an exhaustive list. It is presented only to indicate the complexity of the role of being a Master Trainer. Even when well-prepared, once they begin training the MTs will benefit from being given on-the-spot guidance and support from British Council Training Consultants. We therefore recommend:

Recommendation 18
Training for MTs should include a strong focus on trainer development as well as on understanding and implementing the teacher-training courses. They should also be equipped with the skills to effectively monitor classroom teaching, in order to be able to follow-up training with the teachers they work with and give ongoing feedback. As with teachers, MTs will need to be supported in their initial training endeavours and arrangements will need to be made for British Council Training Consultants to provide guidance and support.

With respect to the location of training for MTs, whilst in Bhopal we visited the proposed training venue, which is logistically convenient and meets all the usual requirements in terms of residential and teaching facilities. However, we were told in discussions that the location of training for Master Trainers in Bhopal may have an impact on the ability of women to attend if they are selected as MTs. RSK and ELTI will need to take every possible measure to ensure that women are not discouraged from either applying for or accepting offers to become MTs by logistical decisions.

Recommendation 19
RSK and ELTI should ensure that gender equity is a focus in the process of selecting and training MTs, in particular that women are not discouraged from becoming MTs as a result of decisions made for logistical reasons.

7.6.5 Harmonisation of training messages across all providers and at all levels
Though, strictly speaking, it is outside the scope of this needs analysis, we feel we need

to comment briefly on the need for harmony across all aspects of teacher-training provision in Madhya Pradesh, amongst every INSET initiative as well as between pre- and in-service training. Apart from our own perceptions, the dangers of 'mixed messages' was emphasised in meetings with the Commissioner and officials from the ELTI. For example, we visited a training session in progress at the ELTI and took part in a lively discussion with teachers and their instructor. One teacher asked about the value of TG – Transformational-Generative Grammar, as developed by Noam Chomsky – for teachers. This nativist linguistic theory is interesting in its own right, but relates to L1 acquisition rather than second/foreign language acquisition. It is also more commonly known now as 'Universal Grammar', or 'UG'. This development may not be familiar to the instructor who only had access to literature which is some 20–30 years old. For teachers who are planning to return to the classroom, TG/UG has little direct relevance and we believe teachers' time would be better spent on delving into research on classroom language learning, for example the effect of different forms of feedback on students' learning or the extent to which task-based language learning impacts language learning outcomes.

We should emphasise that these comments should not be taken as a criticism – direct or implied – of the instructor who was highly qualified, competent and much respected. It

may also be the case that our snapshot of a single course was not representative of courses more broadly. Nevertheless, we recommend that a wide-ranging review be carried out of the content and modes of delivery of all programmes at ELTI to ensure that they are up-to-date theoretically, that they are providing training which is of most immediate and direct benefit to the target audience and that this training is in harmony with the aims and objectives of the INSET programme which is intended to follow this needs analysis.

A review should also be undertaken of the content of pre-service training programmes specifically for English teachers, as well as the knowledge and skills base of teacher educators themselves. It goes without saying that teachers coming into the system need to be trained by highly-qualified teacher educators who are themselves conversant with effective primary English language teaching methods.[12] We note that the British Council are well-placed to offer experts to perform such a review.

Recommendation 20
A broad-based review of all English language teacher-training programmes in Madhya Pradesh should be conducted to ensure harmonization of in-service and pre-service training messages across all providers and at all levels.

Appendix 1: Schedule of activities for Training Consultants

Schedule for project team for field work in six districts of Ujjain Division (Ujjain, Dewas, Shajapur, Mandsaur, Neemuch, Ratlam) Training Consultants (TCs) will visit the districts in pairs with Government of Madhya Pradesh representatives						
Sunday 17 February 2013	**Monday** 18 February 2013	**Tuesday** 19 February 2013	**Wednesday** 20 February 2013	**Thursday** 21 February 2013	**Friday** 22 February 2013	**Saturday** 23 February 2013
Morning: arrive Bhopal Planning the week: Attendees: UK consultant, Senior Teacher Trainer, Senior Project Manager, Training Consultants (TCs Sanjay Kumar Gupta, Shefali Kulkarni, Meera Mawani, Manoj Harpalani, Joypreet Anand)	Planning the week Attendees: UK consultant, Senior Teacher Trainer, Senior Project Manager, Training Consultants Members of Core Project Team Mrs Rashmi Shami Bhat, Commissioner, Rajya Shiksha Kendra, Mr Usman Khan, Lead Training and Budget, Mrs Kamlesh Sharma and Mr Hemant Sharma English Language Training Institute Evening: Shefali, Sanjay, Manoj and Amol travel to Ujjain (Ujjain will be the base) Meera and Joypreet – travel to Mandsaur	TCs: Shefali and Sanjay District: Ujjain Four schools Lesson observation Teacher focus group Student focus group	TCs: Shefali and Sanjay District: Ujjain Four schools Lesson observation Teacher focus group Student focus group	TCs: Shefali and Sanjay District: Ratlam Four schools Lesson observation Teacher focus group Student focus group	TCs: Shefali and Sanjay District Ratlam Four schools Lesson observation Teacher focus Group Student focus group Evening: return to Bhopal	Location: Bhopal Debrief Attendees: UK consultant, Senior Teacher Trainer, Senior Project Manager, Training Consultants Members of Rajya Shiksha Kendra, SSA, ELTI
		TCs: Amol and Manoj District: Dewas Four schools Lesson observation Teacher focus group Student focus group	TCs: Amol and Manoj District: Dewas Four Schools Lesson observation Teacher focus group Student focus group	TCs: Amol and Manoj District: Shajapur Four schools Lesson observation Teacher focus group Student focus group	TCs: Amol and Manoj District: Shajapur Four schools Lesson observation Teacher focus group Student focus group Evening: return to Bhopal	
		TCs: Meera and Joypreet District: Mandsaur Four schools Lesson observation Teacher focus group Student focus group	TCs: Meera and Joypreet District: Mandsaur Four schools Lesson observation Teacher focus group Student focus group	TCs: Meera and Joypreet District: Neemuch Four schools Lesson observation Teacher focus group Student focus group	TCs: Meera and Joypreet District: Neemuch Four schools Lesson observation Teacher focus group Student focus group Evening: return to Bhopal	

Appendix 2: Common European Framework descriptors[13]

Proficient User	**C2**	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	**B2**	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	**A2**	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

13. CEFR scale adapted from http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/source/framework_en.pdf