

NEEDS ANALYSIS REPORT

**MAHARASHTRA ENGLISH LANGUAGE INITIATIVE FOR
SECONDARY SCHOOLS (ELISS)**
SEPTEMBER 2013

Needs Analysis Report

Maharashtra English Language Initiative for Secondary Schools (ELISS)

September 2013

Cover photograph: *A secondary school classroom in Jalna district (June 2013)*

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CCE	Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation
<u>CEFR</u>	Common European Framework of Reference
DIET	District Institute for Education and Training
<u>ELIPS</u>	English Language Initiative for Primary Schools
<u>ELISS</u>	English Language Initiative for Secondary Schools
INSETT	In-Service Teacher Training
L1	First language
<u>MCGM</u>	Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai
<u>MSBSHSE</u>	Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education
MT	Master Trainer
<u>NCERT</u>	National Council of Educational Research and Training
<u>NCF</u>	National Curriculum Framework
<u>NCFTE</u>	National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education
<u>RMSA</u>	Rashtriya Madhyamik Shikshan Abhiyan
<u>SCERT</u>	State Council for Educational Research and Training
SIE	State Institute of English
TC	Training Consultant

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following the success of the English Language Initiative for Primary Schools ([ELIPS](#)), training 67,200 Maharashtrian primary school teachers, the Government of Maharashtra invited the British Council to conduct a Needs Analysis to investigate the teaching and learning of English in the 9th and 10th standards in Government and Government-aided schools in Maharashtra, with the aim of training 20,000 English subject teachers.

The Needs Analysis involved over 1,000 stakeholders, including students, teachers, principals, parents and education officials, using questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups. It has found that several key requirements for successful English language teaching and learning are already in place. When combined with other pedagogical aspects that are currently lacking, they will create a strong base that will facilitate enhanced teaching quality and student learning outcomes across the state.

English proficiency is considered a vital skill by secondary school students, teachers and parents alike, so motivation to learn is already strong. In many classrooms, we found that English is already the main classroom language being used in English classes, with L1 being used judiciously to boost students' understanding. The new textbooks are potentially well-suited to developing students' English, if used in the way they were intended, by teachers and students of the appropriate level.

However, the English levels of both teachers and students are typically much lower than they should be, so the textbook content is often too linguistically challenging. We tested the English proficiency (speaking, reading, grammar and vocabulary) of 404 secondary

school English subject teachers, and found that around half of them had levels of A2 or lower on the Common European Framework of Reference ([CEFR](#)) (see Appendix 1). Students' speaking proficiency is similarly low, often A1 or below. This means textbooks cannot be used as intended, and as students' comprehension of them may be limited, 'mugging up' (rote-learning) becomes the most effective method for passing exams, rather than deep understanding.

The [Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education](#) Syllabi for standards IX and X (2012) states:

"The new curriculum underscores the need of making education learner centered and of adopting the constructivist model of education.

The learner, therefore, is expected to discover and construct his/her learning."

(pg. 32)

Our findings suggest that teachers should be trained in the theory and practice of specified learner-centred approaches that fit their textbooks. Teachers should prioritise students' individual needs, provide them



A government school teacher, Maharashtra

with environments conducive to learning, and facilitate their active involvement in the classroom. When consistently applied to the syllabus, these approaches will give learners enhanced opportunities to develop their English.

Teacher focus groups and questionnaires found that many teachers are tired of in-service teacher training. The National Curriculum for Teacher Education 2010 (NCFTE) mentions that:

“Over-training, routinised and superficial training leads to cynicism and training fatigue.”

(pg. 67)

It is therefore vital that Master Trainer (MT) selection should be rigorous to ensure suitable MTs, and that training materials combine active involvement, practical activities, and reflection. There is a clear argument for cascade training to be only one strand in the ELISS model, as five annual training days are insufficient to tackle the ambitious needs outlined in this report. Other strands should run throughout the

year, and be considered integral elements of ELISS. These include self-access online and offline options, such as the British Council’s portfolio of language learning courses and resources. The focus should therefore be on building the capacity and capability of the MTs so that they may support more decentralised training programmes in the future.

Teachers should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own professional development, in and beyond the training room. They should learn self-study skills for language learning, be given access to language learning resources, conduct action research, and be encouraged to set up and join professional communities of practice, such as teachers clubs and social media groups.

By 2016, Maharashtra should have a cadre of over 1,000 experienced Mentors and Master Trainers, trained by the British Council under the [ELISS](#), [ELIPS](#) and [MCGM](#) partnership projects. They can play key roles in achieving long term educational change in Maharashtra as cascade trainers, as full time teacher educators, and as facilitators of Block and Cluster-level CPD initiatives.

2 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

Use of ICT

We found that students' ICT and internet literacy is relatively high, and industry predictions suggest that IT penetration in India is constantly growing. Students should therefore have increasing access to online and off-line resources that will help develop their English. The British Council 'LearnEnglish' interactive DVD contains a wealth of learning resources that focus on the particular needs of Indian secondary school students, as well as lower and upper primary students. Its content has been mapped onto the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) curriculum. The DVDs and supporting teacher notes could be distributed during Year 2 of ELISS, one per school. Simultaneously, the British Council would train teachers on how, when and why to use the resource, and monitor its implementation.

Recommendation 2

Use of English vs. mother tongue

Many teachers currently use English as the main classroom language, and use L1 judiciously to boost students' understanding and learning. This balance, and the rationale behind it, should be endorsed by ELISS materials in order to normalise this proportional classroom language use amongst all teachers.

Recommendation 3

Teachers' English development needs

As the CEFR level of the textbooks is around B2, all secondary school English teachers' English levels should also ideally be at least B2 level. The interactive training methodologies used in ELISS training will give teachers opportunities to develop their spoken fluency and confidence. Raising English levels requires intensive long-term training, teacher motivation and self-study

skills. It is beyond the scope of the ELISS project to provide intensive English language proficiency training, as only five days' training per year are available. However, the ELISS programme will include training on self-study skills to help teachers develop their own English, and access to free British Council online resources as part of their Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

Recommendation 4

Use of classroom space

Teachers should be encouraged to use classroom space more effectively. Suitable seating arrangements and classroom decoration should be discussed and demonstrated during ELISS training, and mentors can guide teachers during classroom observations. Photos and videos of classroom layouts and decoration are also valuable ways of demonstrating better uses of classroom space.

Recommendation 5

Personalising learning

Teachers demonstrated a need to be trained in the rationale and techniques for personalising learning to individual students' needs, particularly in large multi-ability class situations. Using 'experiential learning' and 'loop input' during ELISS training will enable teachers to experience these techniques themselves, as the TC will personalise training sessions to suit trainees' needs.

Recommendation 6

Elicitation techniques

Questioning is an important element in constructivism, endorsed by the NCF (2005). Teachers need to learn how to use questioning techniques to activate and elicit students' prior knowledge, and to give them opportunities to speak. This is more beneficial than directly transferring information to them in the form of lectures,

which they may or may not retain, and which afford few opportunities for active involvement or speaking.

Recommendation 7

Peer learning

In ELISS training, teachers should discuss examples of collaborative tasks, and practise implementing group/pair work, peer-learning and peer-correction during micro-teaching. This will develop an appreciation of how the teacher's role shifts from that of a dispenser of knowledge, to a facilitator who monitors students' activity and encourages peer-interaction. During training, teachers will also participate in pair and group activities, and will reflect on the experience, so that they are more aware of the benefits of collaborative approaches.

Recommendation 8

Understanding and implementing strategies and skills

Teachers need to understand the rationale behind the strategies and higher order thinking skills contained in the textbook activities, and practise activities that use them during micro-teaching sessions, so that they can then implement them in their classrooms. To do this they also need to understand how children learn languages at this stage in their development.

Recommendation 9

Understanding the rationale behind textbook activities

It is essential that teachers develop awareness of the rationale behind the activities and tasks given in the new textbooks, and the motivation, know-how and confidence to use them in class. This may lead to the British Council and MSBSHSE collaborating to develop resource notes and lesson plans to guide teachers in how to use the new textbooks.

Recommendation 10

Giving clear instructions

Teachers should be trained in a variety of instruction-giving techniques that will enable them to set up activities faster, with more

clarity, and with greater student involvement.

Recommendation 11

Examinations should assess deep understanding

Assessing students' deep understanding, recognition, and application of language should be the ultimate goal of the assessment and examinations policy. If required, the British Council could provide consultancy services to MSBSHSE in assessment design, so that examinations project a positive influence throughout the curriculum.

Recommendation 12

How to teach writing, reading, speaking and listening skills

Teachers' wishes should be considered during ELISS training. When asked about their training needs in questionnaires and focus groups, they expressed a preference for ways of teaching the four skills of writing, reading, speaking and listening. As we also identified similar needs, concentrating on these areas will aid teacher motivation and provide face validity to the training.

Recommendation 13

Alignment to state and central government curricula

The pedagogical content and delivery models of ELISS will be anchored to the principles of the NCF 2005, NCFTE 2010 and Maharashtra State Curriculum Framework 2010, with relevant references to these documents in training materials when appropriate. This will ensure ELISS is aligned to the vision of the Maharashtra State Government and the Central Government, will raise teachers' awareness of this vision, and increase the credibility of the programme. Monitoring and evaluation of ELISS will provide more accurate measures of teachers' understanding of the NCF 2005 and Maharashtra State Curriculum Framework 2010.

Recommendation 14

Interactive and practical training sessions

Training methods must be interactive and practical, to ensure that teachers experience

learner-centred training, with a focus on practice as well as theory. This is particularly crucial for commonly-covered topics such as “group/pair work” and “adapting the textbook”, which participants may find repetitive unless the approach is highly practical. This is also essential as the Needs Analysis findings indicate that teachers are aware of theoretical principles, but they find it difficult to operationalize these in the classroom.

Recommendation 15

Rigorous MT selection

Selection and retention of skilled and motivated Master Trainers is essential if we are to improve teachers’ perceptions of INSETT, and enable ELISS to successfully reach its stated objectives. The British Council MT selection process is rigorous, having been developed as a result of our experience with ELIPS and other projects across India. We should not compromise on MT selection, to ensure that ELISS training is of the highest quality. Research conducted by the British Council indicates that it is preferable for MTs to work in pairs while cascading, so that they share responsibility with a partner, rather than training the full day alone. MTs stay fresher, learn from each other, feel more confident and trainees benefit from the combined experience and support of two MTs. This also helps in the case of absence or drop out. Cascading can be conducted in two rounds, to reach all teachers.

Recommendation 16

Establishing an institutional role for mentors

We recommend selecting 70 exceptional MTs (two per district) at the end of year 1 to become Mentors. Training will enable them to lead Block and Cluster-level workshops on English language and pedagogical development, and create conducive environments for Cluster-level teachers’ English Clubs to sprout. They can also observe teachers, and provide them with constructive feedback and action plans to support their development. This builds the capacity of the [RMSA](#) to go beyond

the traditional cascade model of teacher training.

Before selecting willing Mentors, the Maharashtra government must decide on the exact nature and length of their role, eligibility criteria, with which schools and teachers they work, the exact aims of the initiative, and how to monitor and evaluate it. The British Council can advise on this, and suggest best practices acquired from similar initiatives in India and in similar contexts elsewhere. It would be beneficial to pilot the mentoring initiative in two talukas first, in order to identify best practices. We should also ensure that this is in consultation with any existing mentoring and/or subject matter expert initiatives currently underway in Maharashtra, and aligned to British Council ELIPS and MCGM projects.

Recommendation 17

Reflective practice

Training should gradually raise the teachers’ habits of reflection, by regularly conducting reflection activities, introducing reflective journals, eliciting feedback during microteaching, and sharing case studies of how teachers use reflection to develop their professional practice.

Recommendation 18

Continuing Professional Development

Developing teachers by going beyond training interventions is vital. To support and encourage teachers’ CPD:

- i. Block and Cluster-level teacher clubs can bring teachers together to interact, discuss pedagogical innovations and challenges, and develop their English. Such clubs should be nurtured by removing institutional barriers, providing case studies of successful clubs elsewhere in India, sharing resources and tools that give inputs and facilitate peer interaction.
- ii. Increasing ICT literacy presents opportunities to use technology to support teachers’ CPD and contribute to their motivation and feeling of self-worth. Email, SMS, and dedicated social media groups can be used to

create communities of practice, for resource sharing, and as a platform for self-access learning. They can also be used for administrative communication related to ELISS.

- iii. The British Council audio resource [TeachingEnglish Radio India](#) should be broadcast and distributed via CDs and/or other media to BRCs and CRCs. It should be made available for teachers to access alone, or in groups, possibly facilitated by mentors.
- iv. Teachers should be informed of how to develop their own English, using online and off-line resources, including British Council free online resources.

Recommendation 19

Creating a core team

We propose the creation of an ELISS academic core team, consisting of ten voluntary members drawn from RMSA, [MSBSHSE](#), [SCERT](#), Yashada, SIE, the British Council, and other relevant bodies. They should meet regularly, face-to-face and/or remotely, before and after key project milestones. British Council experience from other states indicates that this is one of the most crucial components in ensuing the intervention is locally appropriate and sustainable. We should examine possible synergies with proposed core teams in the ELIPS and MCGM projects.

Recommendation 20

Stakeholder communications plan

RMSA and the British Council should devise an ELISS communications plan for stakeholders: parents, school principals, School Management Committee members, Education Officers and local persons of influence, such as Panchayat members. This should involve dissemination of brochures, workshops, and regular updates on ELISS in Marathi-language newspapers, radio and TV stations. Education department newsletters should also communicate key information about ELISS milestones to education stakeholders. We also propose a series of tips in Marathi, that advise parents how best to support their children in learning English, along with some useful English phrases

for them to learn. This would build on best practices we have established working with parents in other states of India.

Regular communication with stakeholders would result in greater support for all aspects of ELISS, and minimise any dissatisfaction caused by teachers being away from their classrooms to attend ELISS training.

Recommendation 21

Research into teachers' clubs

The British Council, in consultation with the ELISS core team and RMSA, will create a proposal containing specific research hypotheses that explore teachers' clubs. Depending on research findings, a possible output in Years 2 and 3 would be the sharing of tips, case studies, and resources with teachers and other ELISS stakeholders. These could then lead to the growth of more teachers' clubs in Maharashtra, and innovative models and practices that could be replicated across India.



A secondary school student, Maharashtra

3 ELISS OBJECTIVES

Detailed project outcomes and outputs will be agreed with the state core team and then described in a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework that will define and measure key impact indicators quantitatively and qualitatively throughout the project and beyond. The following objectives are based on the recommendations from this Needs Analysis and are proposed for discussion with project partners:

- i. To build the capacity of the RMSA to deliver high quality cascade training, and to move towards other more decentralised and sustainable models of in-service teacher development.
- ii. To enable teachers to understand the rationale behind personalised, student-centred approaches, and apply them to conducting activities aligned to their curriculum and/or textbooks.
- iii. To encourage and support teachers to take responsibility for their own CPD. This will contribute to teachers feeling greater professional satisfaction, considering their professional ambitions, and delivering classes using enhanced English language and pedagogical approaches.

4 PURPOSE OF THE NEEDS ANALYSIS

A Needs Analysis initiates the involvement and engagement of all stakeholders and recognises that the success of a change programme relies on taking account of peoples' feelings and beliefs. Involving stakeholders in planning and implementation increases the likelihood of commitment and ownership of initiatives.

Further, building trust, good relationships and a rapport with those directly affected by and responsible for the change is a key factor in overcoming challenges and encouraging acceptance.

This Needs Analysis aims to:

- Assess the current levels, teaching practices and needs of teachers and learners in 9th and 10th standard Government and Government-aided schools of all language mediums from across Maharashtra.
- Define the baseline situation of teaching and learning at the start of the project, against which to measure subsequent achievement of project aims and outcomes.
- Identify any similarities and differences between different categories of schools.
- Identify what is needed and why in order to bridge the gap between the existing situation and the proposed changes.
- Ensure that all stakeholders' voices are considered, therefore increasing buy-in and commitment to any potential project.
- Enable the development of delivery models and training modules that will be relevant to the needs and requirements of the teachers and their teaching and socio-cultural contexts.



A secondary school classroom in Jalna district (June 2013)

5 METHODOLOGY OF THE NEEDS ANALYSIS

5.1 Overview

Eight British Council TCs, supported by British Council Project Managers, conducted the Needs Analysis in the cities of Mumbai and Pune, and in urban and rural areas of the districts of Nashik, Aurangabad, Jalna and Nagpur between 20th June and 6th July 2013. The Training Consultants visited schools to observe English lessons and conduct focus groups with learners, parents, teachers, principals and administrators. They were accompanied by district education officials. 1,049 stakeholders were directly involved in the process.

This Needs Analysis report is generated from both primary and secondary data. Primary sources comprised data obtained through lesson observations, focus groups, interviews, language tests, and survey questionnaires. Secondary data sources included an analysis of class 9 and 10 textbooks and syllabi, and a brief review of policies and information published by the

Government of India and the Government of Maharashtra. TCs took photographs during their interactions with stakeholders, and synthesised their observations into analytical reports.

5.2 Needs Analysis tools

Tools were developed by the British Council, piloted in other contexts in India, and revised for this Needs Analysis. All British Council personnel involved were thoroughly briefed on ELISS aims and Needs Analysis procedures. TCs' own ratings of language levels and classroom performance were calibrated before going to the field by using videos of lesson observations.

Data was entered and analysed by the British Council. The data entry of key tools was rechecked by different personnel, to ensure reliability. Table 1 provides a summary of the tools used and the number of stakeholders involved. The tools can be found in Appendix 2.

Table 1: Summary of Needs Analysis tools*

Name of tool	Description	Number
Classroom observation tool CL1	Filled in by the TC while observing a class 9 or 10 English class. Contains 35 questions on a four-point scale, measuring the quality of teaching-learning. It also contains five questions about teacher's and students' actions and needs, which required the TC to write analytical answers. While observing, TCs sat discretely in a classroom, typically for one 30-minute period. They did not intervene in the lesson in any way.	51
Classroom post-observation reflection CL2	A sheet filled in by the teacher after being observed. It contains seven qualitative questions that investigate the teacher's reflective capacity and perceived training needs.	51

Name of tool	Description	Number
Teacher questionnaire TQ 1	A paper questionnaire filled in by teachers after attending the language assessments. It contained a series of multiple choice questions, and questions that elicited teachers' opinions. It focused on background information, teachers' perceived use of English in the classroom, their opinion on the curriculum and textbooks, previous teacher training, and current training needs.	376
Teacher Focus group TFG1	Teachers were interviewed by a TC, in groups of around twelve. The TC conducted a typical warmer activity that the ELISS materials may contain. This 'broke the ice', and also enabled the TCs to assess the suitability of such warmers. Participants were then asked about their use of English and students' mother tongues in the classroom, their teaching beliefs, their opinion on the curriculum and textbooks, their opinion on previous teacher training, and perceived current training needs. English was mainly used, with TCs switching to Hindi or Marathi if teachers didn't understand.	140 teachers in 11 focus groups
Student questionnaire SQ1	A paper questionnaire was filled in by students. It was in English, and the language level of the questions was kept at A1 on the CEFR. Most questions required students to tick a box, with a few questions requiring one word or short sentence answers. TCs translated questions to students if they appeared to have any doubts. Questions probed students' basic perceptions of classroom teaching-learning, their use of English inside and outside the classroom, and their future ambitions.	527
Student focus group SFG1	Students were interviewed by a TC, in groups of around 15-20. Interviews took place in Marathi and Hindi, with a little English when possible. The students interviewed were usually the same ones as those observed in class, and who filled out questionnaires. The focus groups gave the TCs opportunities to delve deeper into issues from the student questionnaires. The TC conducted a typical warmer activity that the ELISS materials may recommend. This "broke the ice", and also enabled the TCs to assess the suitability of such warmers for students. Students were then asked about their use of English inside and outside the classroom, teaching-learning in the classroom, and their future ambitions.	453 students in 24 focus groups

Name of tool	Description	Number
Parent focus group PFG1	Parents were interviewed by a TC, in focus groups of Six to ten participants. Interviews took place in Marathi or Hindi. They were asked questions about their background, literacy and proficiency in English and other Indian languages, the access their children have to English in the home, their aspirations for their children and the importance of English, and their views on taking teachers out of the classroom for training.	65 parents interviewed in 8 focus groups
Decision-maker focus group DM1	Decision-makers were interviewed by a TC in small groups of two to five participants. They included Education Officers, school trustees, principals and Zilla Parishad officials. Interviews were held in Marathi, Hindi, and English, when possible. Participants were briefed on ELISS, and asked about the place of English in schools, the textbooks and curriculum, characteristics of government and government-aided schools, previous teacher training initiatives and current teacher training needs.	30 decision-makers, interviewed in 15 focus groups.
English tests	British Council 'Aptis' tests measured teachers' vocabulary, reading and grammar, and scores were combined. Speaking skills were measured by British Council International Language Assessment interviews, conducted by TCs. Scores were referenced to the CEFR.	404 teachers

**Some stakeholders were involved in more than one Needs Analysis tool. For example, some teachers who were given the teacher questionnaire were also interviewed in teacher focus groups. The total number of stakeholders interviewed was 1,049.*

5.3 Limitations of the data

The ELISS project includes English, Semi-English and vernacular medium schools. Schools are Government, tribal and Government-aided, from urban, semi-urban, rural and tribal areas across Maharashtra.

It was beyond the scope of this Needs Analysis to survey statistically representative samples for each of these categories. However, we believe the sample sizes are sufficiently large to provide qualitative insights into teaching-learning.

During previous needs analyses, it is our experience that teachers were informed in advance that TCs were visiting their schools; lessons observed were often rehearsed or repeated, so not representative of day-to-day classroom realities. Bearing this in mind, TCs and Education Officers were briefed not to plan or announce in advance which teachers would be observed. In 41 out of 51 observations, the teacher was not informed of observation beforehand. However, it should be remembered that the presence of an outside observer, no matter how discrete or unannounced they are, will influence the classroom context being observed.

6 FINDINGS

A: English levels

1. Students' English levels

In 2001, English was made a compulsory subject from 1st standard in all schools of Maharashtra. All students currently in 9th and 10th standard should therefore have studied English from 1st standard. During classroom observations, British Council TCs estimated students' average speaking levels in each classroom according to the CEFR, as formally testing each student's level was beyond the scope of this survey. Although these estimates are only approximations, and the sample size is too small to infer general trends, comparing students' spoken English levels between the vernacular medium schools and the English/Semi-English medium surprisingly reveals few differences of CEFR distribution. It certainly appears likely that the speaking levels of most 9th and 10th standard students in such schools is A1 or even lower (see Figure 1 below). After eight or nine years of studying English, this suggests that the approaches to English teaching and learning commonly used in government and government-aided schools have not succeeded in giving students anything more than the ability to produce basic spoken utterances related to familiar situations.

Students' listening, reading and writing skills

may be higher than their speaking levels. Certainly, after observing students in class and meeting them in focus groups, TCs felt that some had reasonable understanding of spoken English, and were able to understand a range of vocabulary at an A2 level. Students' main language needs include increased exposure to listening to English, and the confidence and skills to construct simple sentences from the isolated vocabulary they may already know, which they could then use for basic communication. The syllabus requires students to acquire a broad range of speaking, listening, writing and reading skills.

2. The importance of English for students

Data from student questionnaires and focus groups reveals most appreciate the importance of English to their future jobs, and the vast majority of students wish to go to university after leaving school (see Figure 2 below), for which English is often an important skill. To be able to cope with the demands of Higher Education studies that are partially or fully in English medium, we estimate that students would require at least a B2 level (see Appendix 1 for CEFR descriptors).

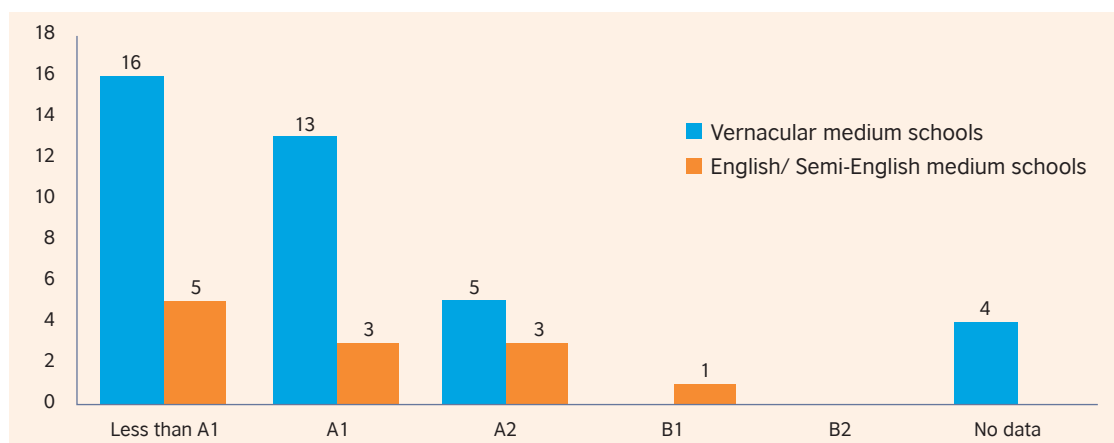


Figure 1: CL1 question 34: Vernacular vs. English/Semi-English students' spoken CEFR levels based on informal estimates (total: 51 classrooms)

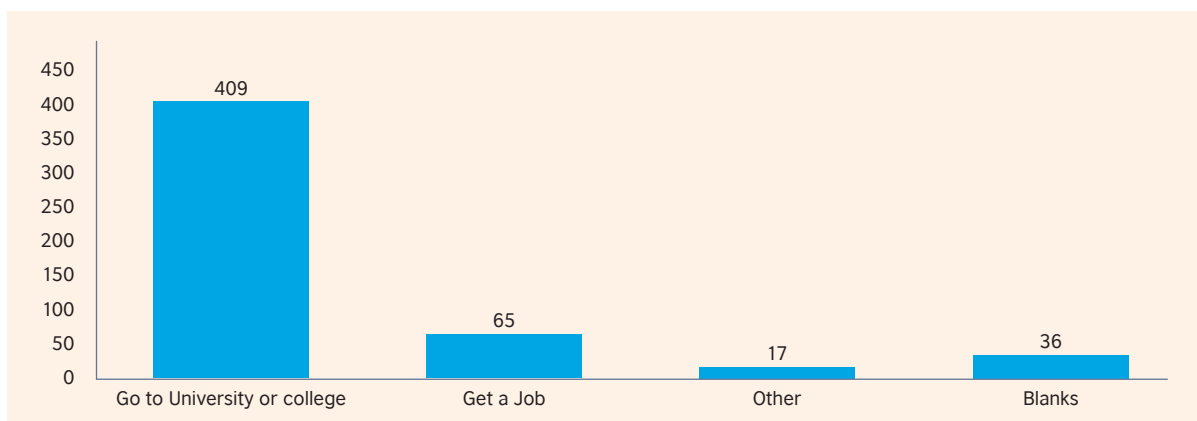


Figure 2: SQ1 question 3.1: What do you want to do when you leave school? (total: 527 students)

3. Students' use of English outside the classroom

Students are motivated to develop their English, and enjoyed participating in the speaking activities our Training Consultants conducted with them. The fact that they stated they had never done similar activities before suggests that teachers are missing opportunities of conducting speaking activities that engage students actively. Such speaking activities are particularly important, as Figure 3 below shows that most students do not use English outside the classroom. Even those who have replied affirmatively may only use isolated English words occasionally. Interestingly, Figure 3 also shows that a majority of students claim to be ICT and internet literate.

Recommendation: Use of ICT. We found that students' ICT and internet literacy is relatively high, and industry predictions suggest IT penetration in India is constantly growing. Students should therefore have increasing access to online and off-line resources that will help develop their English. The British Council 'LearnEnglish' interactive DVD contains a wealth of learning resources that focus on the particular needs of Indian secondary school students, as well as lower and upper primary students. Its content has been mapped onto the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) curriculum. The DVDs and supporting teacher notes could be distributed during year 2 of ELISS, one per school. Simultaneously, the British Council would train teachers on how, when and why to use the resource, and monitor its implementation.

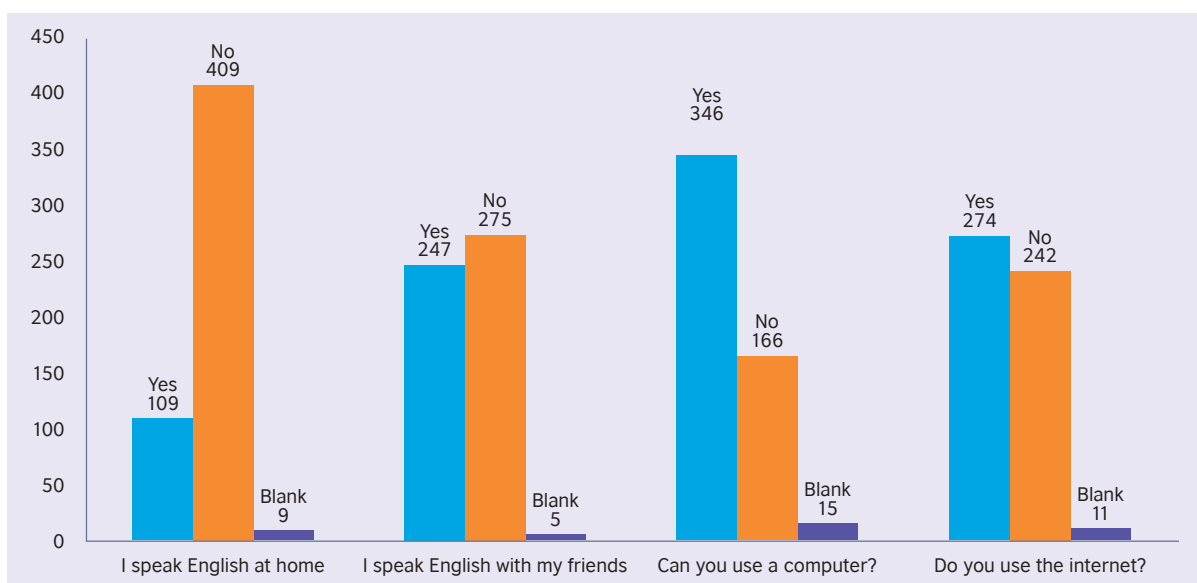


Figure 3: SQ1 questions 17, 18, 2.6, 2.7: Students' use of English outside the classroom, and students' computer and internet use (total: 527 students)

4. Teachers' use of English in classrooms

The question of whether teachers should use English or L1 in their classrooms is complex. We believe that in certain situations, such as translating difficult vocabulary, or helping students understand advanced concepts, L1 use can be justified. However, we would recommend secondary teachers use English as the main classroom language while teaching English as much as possible, as this gives students vital exposure to the language for a longer amount of time per day.

Looking at Figure 4 below, it is encouraging to see that in 35 out of 51 observations, most or all of the lesson was conducted in English. This suggests that many teachers are already aware of the benefits of using English in the classroom and have some ability to use English already.

Recommendation: Use of English vs. mother tongue. Many teachers currently use English as the main classroom language, and use L1 judiciously to boost students' understanding and learning. This balance, and the rationale behind it, should be endorsed by ELISS materials in order to normalise this proportional classroom language use amongst all teachers.

5. Teachers' English proficiency levels

We tested 404 teachers' English levels. British Council Aptis grammar, reading and listening tests were combined into one result (see Figure 5), with a separate British Council International Language Assessment speaking test (see Figure 6). To triangulate these findings, a third measure of English levels was the speaking level of the 51 observed teachers, as estimated by the TC (see Figure 7). Interestingly, these three analyses revealed fairly similar results, with speaking results slightly higher.

6. Teachers' English language needs

Cambridge Assessment, the testing body of Cambridge University, recommends that English teachers should have a minimum level of B1. Only 47% (Figures 6 and 7) or 39% (Figure 5) of teachers have B1 level or above. However, our analysis of the textbooks suggests that their level is around B2, which means that a teacher's level should be at least B2 in order to understand and teach the content effectively.

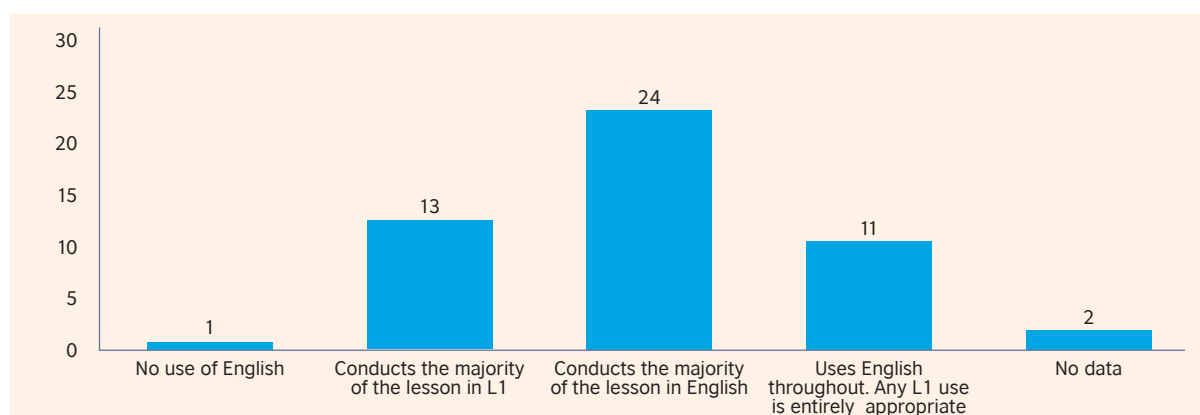
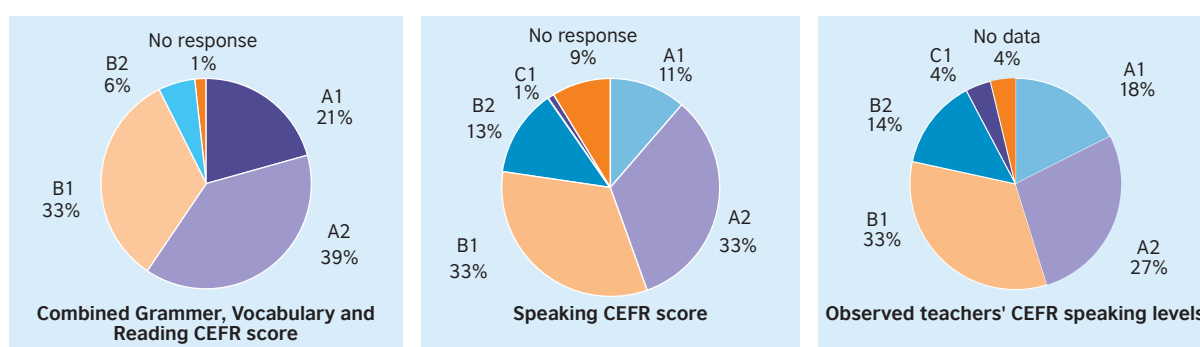


Figure 4: CL1 question 8: Teachers' use of English in the classroom (total: 51 classrooms)



Figures 5, 6 and 7: Teachers' English proficiency levels

Our TCs observed that most teachers need to develop all aspects of their English, with speaking confidence, question formation and complex sentence structure being the most commonly identified needs. It is estimated to take at least 150-200 hours of communicative learner-centred language training, to move up one level on the CEFR, though this figure is dependent on many variables, and where they are on the CEFR scale.

Recommendation: Teachers' English development needs. As the CEFR level of the textbooks is around B2, all secondary school English teachers' English levels should also

ideally be at least B2 level. The interactive training methodologies used in ELISS training will give teachers opportunities to develop their spoken fluency and confidence. Raising English levels requires intensive long-term training, teacher motivation and self-study skills. It is beyond the scope of the ELISS project to provide intensive English language proficiency training, as only five days' training per year are available. However, the ELISS programme will include training on self-study skills to help teachers develop their own English, and access to free British Council online resources as part of their Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

B: Classroom context

1. Classroom infrastructure

In the 51 classrooms we observed, class sizes ranged from 17 to 112, with an average of 55.8 students per class. Language learning in such large classes requires certain techniques to be effective, including those documented above. Space is often limited, filled with classroom benches. However, as one British Council TC pointed out, *"even though the desks were immovable, the teacher still could have used the furniture more effectively."* We found that in a majority of classrooms, there was scope for improved use of the space (see Figure 8 below).

2. Classroom decoration and displays

Decorating classrooms with charts, posters and/or students' work is important. It provides learning resources, acknowledges students' good work, and personalises the learning environment. If more than one school operates from the same school premises, then different classroom shifts can be allocated different parts of the classroom for display space. Figure 9 shows that classrooms are not sufficiently decorated, as can be seen in the photograph on page 13, that was taken in Jalna district during a classroom observation.

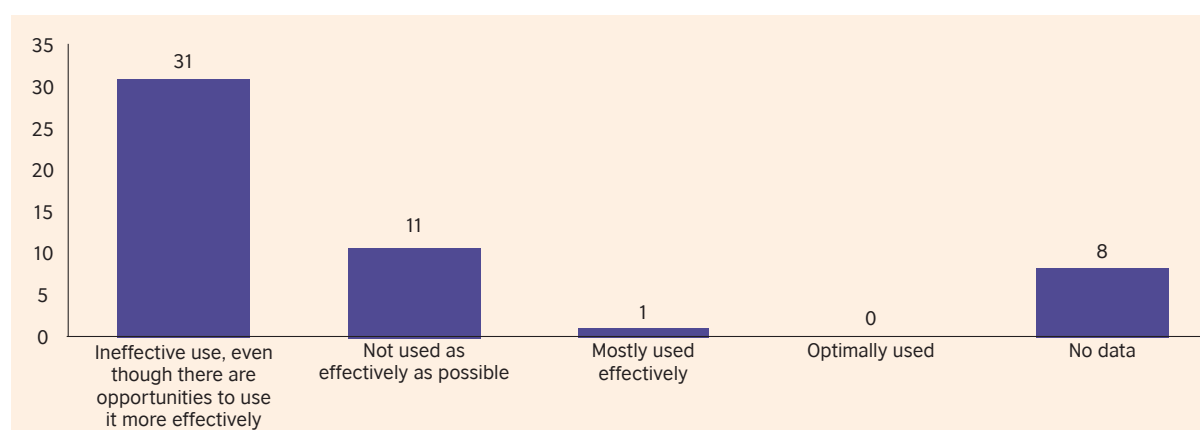


Figure 8: CL1 question 13 Use of classroom space and furniture (total: 51 observations)

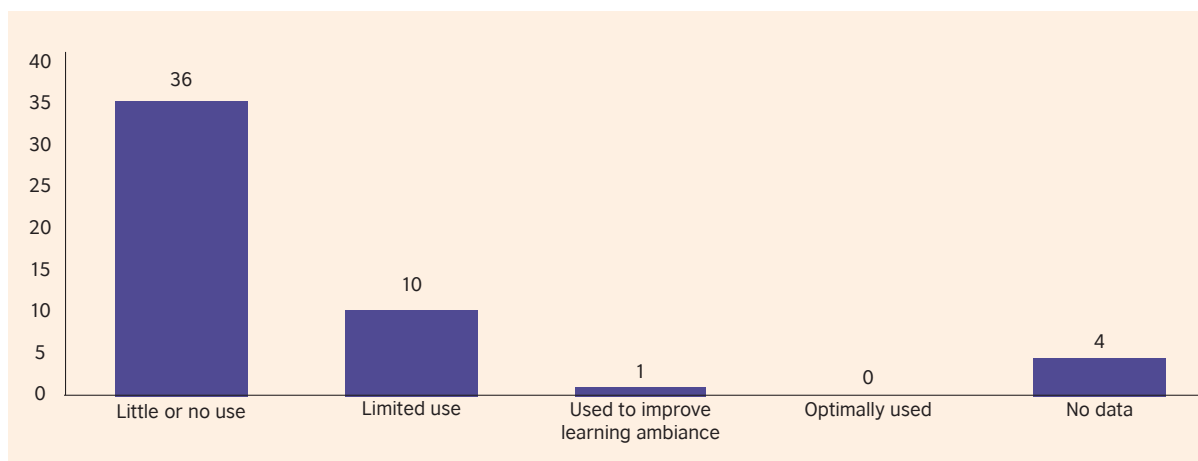


Figure 9: CL1 question 14: Use of walls and space for displaying charts and/or students' work (total: 51 classrooms)

Recommendation: Use of classroom space. Teachers should be encouraged to use classroom space more effectively. Suitable seating arrangements and classroom decoration should be discussed and demonstrated during ELISS training, and mentors can guide teachers during classroom observations. Photos and videos of classroom layouts and decoration are also valuable ways of demonstrating better uses of classroom space.

3. Creating a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning

"Children will learn only in an atmosphere where they feel they are valued."

(NCF 2005, pg 14)

The Needs Analysis process examined several indicators related to students' individual and affective needs in the classroom. Knowing the students' names is vital for CCE, a prerequisite for teachers to identify, monitor and record students' individual needs and progress. Consistently knowing and using students' names is an important way of personalising learning and encouraging students individually. Figure 10 shows that the vast majority of teachers did not sufficiently use students' names. With several classes observed containing over 100 pupils, teachers may not even know their students' names, though it is still entirely possible for them to learn them.

4. Praising and encouraging students

A teacher's praise and encouragement of students is vital in valuing students, and should be a constant feature of any classroom. This is

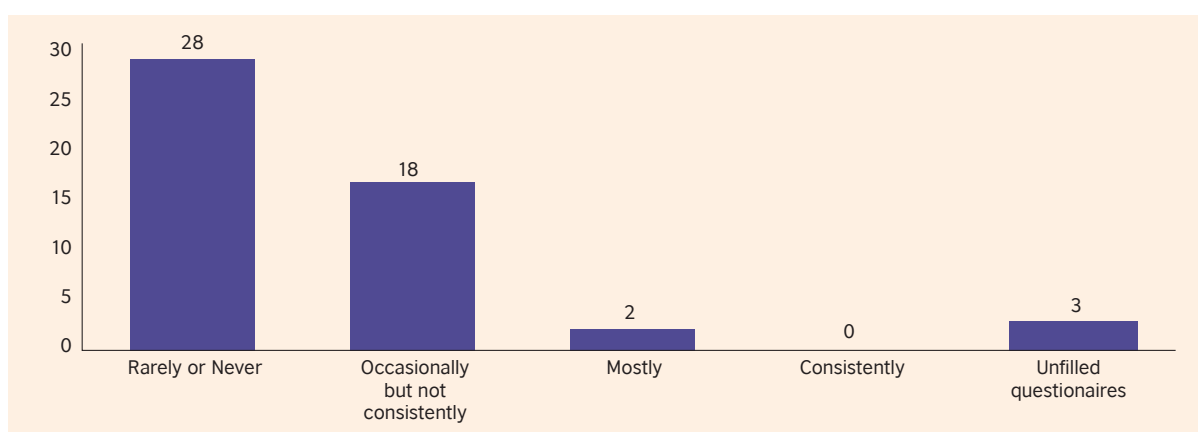


Figure 10: CL1: question 4: The teacher uses students' names (total: 51 classrooms)

true in both primary and secondary classes, yet this feature is often particularly neglected in secondary classrooms, where teaching may be more impersonal due to large class sizes. Indeed, in the field of language acquisition; Krashen's Affective Filter hypothesis suggests that language learning is blocked if students do not feel confident and at ease.

Figure 13 below shows that observed students receive little praise and encouragement. As one TC stated, *"Names were never used, except in one class. No feedback (or even praise or encouragement) was given when students answered."* It should also be remembered that teacher-centred approaches provide few opportunities for teachers to praise and encourage students, as students typically remain passive.

5. Considering students' individual needs

"Teaching and learning processes in the classroom should be planned to respond to the diverse needs of students."

(NCF 2005, pg 17)

Considering students as individuals, and bearing in mind their learning styles, levels, and interests, is a key feature of learner-centred pedagogy. However, Figure 12 shows that most teachers do not sufficiently take students' individual needs into account at all.

Recommendation: Personalising learning. Teachers demonstrated a need to be trained in the rationale and techniques for personalising learning to individual students' needs, particularly in large multi-ability class situations. Using 'experiential learning' and 'loop input' during ELISS training will enable teachers to experience these techniques

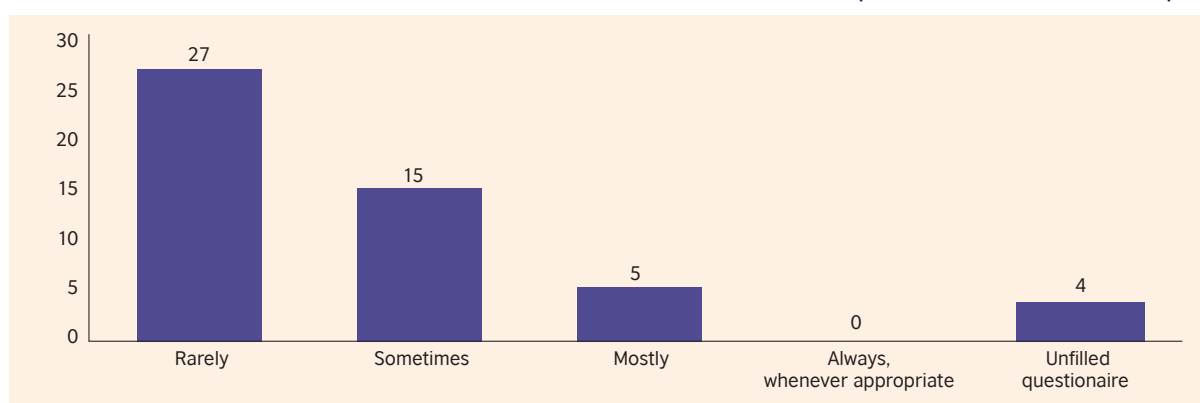


Figure 11 CL1: question 3: The teacher praises and encourages students (total: 51 classrooms)

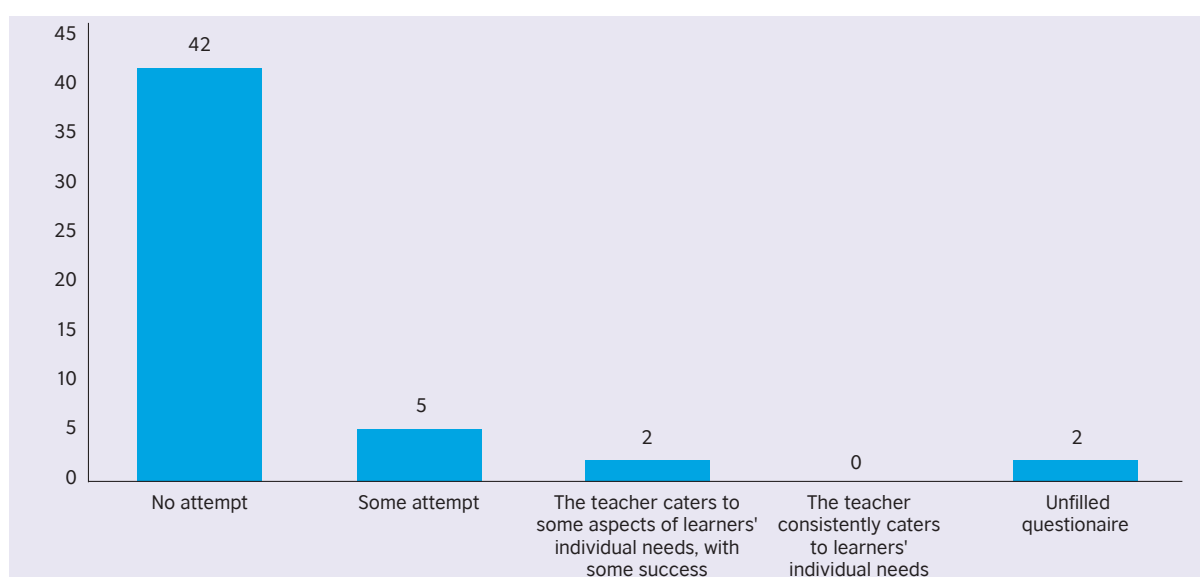


Figure 12 CL1: question 18: Catering to learners' diverse individual needs (total: 51 classrooms)

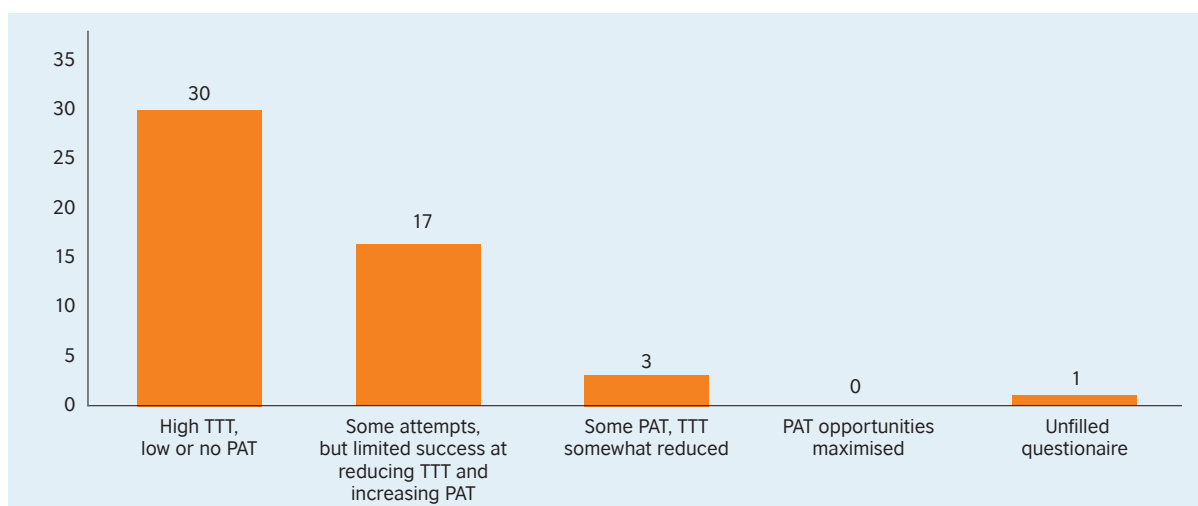


Figure 13 CL1: question 5: Teacher Talk Time vs. Pupil Activity Time (total: 51 classrooms)

themselves, as the TC will personalise training sessions to suit trainees' needs. This focus on personalisation should include:

Techniques for learning and remembering students' names, and the rationale behind this. Familiarity with students' names is also a prerequisite for CCE.

- How, why and when to praise and encourage students, to ensure they feel confident and valued.
- Personalising textbook topics
- Adapting activities to suit a variety of learning styles
- Differentiating activities by "adapting up" for stronger students, and "adapting down" for weaker students.

6. Student involvement

"Children's voices and experiences do not find expression in the classroom. Often the only voice heard is that of the teacher. When children speak, they are usually only answering the teacher's questions or repeating the teacher's words. They rarely do things, nor do they have opportunities to take initiative. The curriculum must enable children to find their voices, nurture their curiosity—to do things, to ask questions and to pursue investigations...[r]eorienting the curriculum to this end must be among our highest priorities"

(NCF 2005, pg 13)



Secondary school students reading and writing in a Pune classroom (June 2013)

Our Needs Analysis examined various aspects of student involvement: Teacher Talk Time (TTT) refers to the amount the teacher is talking, and can be contrasted with Pupil Activity Time (PAT), the amount the students are talking and/or actively involved. At some points in a lesson, TTT gives students valuable exposure to listening to English, as the teacher may be their main source of exposure to English. Students may also expect their teacher to lead their learning to some extent. However, TTT should be balanced with high PAT for much of the lesson, to ensure that students actively participate in the teaching-learning process. Figure 13 shows that teachers observed spent most of the lesson talking, and students' active involvement was typically low.

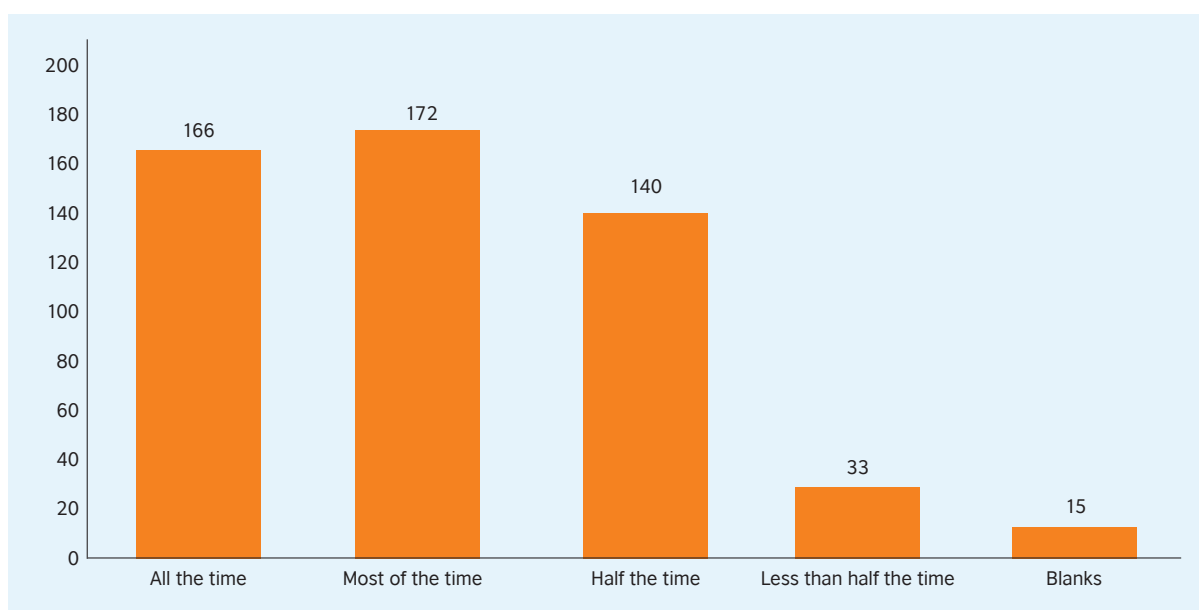


Figure 14 SQ1 question 2.1: How much does your teacher speak during your English lesson? (total: 526 students)

One Training Consultant noted, “teachers seemed unaware of the importance of student participation and involvement. They are still using traditional ways of teaching; lecturing, explanation etc.” This finding was supported by the student questionnaires, see Figure 14.

A related indicator of participation was the extent to which the teacher exploited opportunities to encourage students to speak. For example, after students’ responses to standard questions, the teacher could ask extra questions that encourage students to speak in more unscripted, authentically communicative ways, or the teacher could ask a question and ask students to come up with answers by discussing it for 30 seconds with the student sitting next to them, so that all are involved. However, one of our

Training Consultants summarised her eight observations by saying, “students were mainly passive, listening to the teacher. There was no student participation.” Figure 15 below shows that most teachers observed exploited only a few or no opportunities of giving their students speaking opportunities.

Recommendation: Elicitation techniques.

Questioning is an important element in constructivism, endorsed by the NCF (2005). Teachers need to learn how to use questioning techniques to activate and elicit students’ prior knowledge, and to give them opportunities to speak. This is a more beneficial than directly transferring information to them in the form of lectures, which they may or may not retain, and which afford few opportunities for active involvement or speaking.

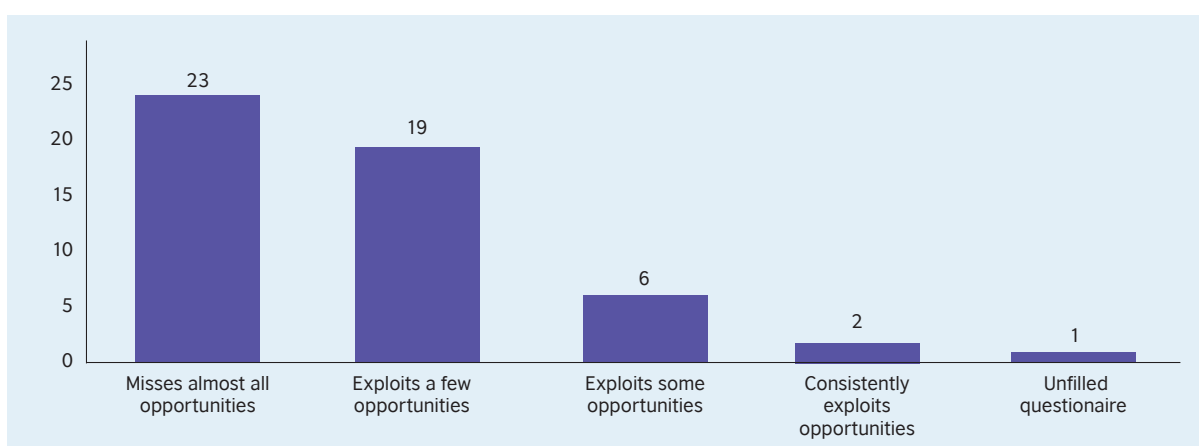


Figure 15 CL1 question 6: To what extent does the teacher exploit speaking opportunities? (total: 51 classrooms)

7. Collaborative learning

“Learning is active and social in its character”

(NCF 2005, pg.13)

Peer to peer interaction in pairs and groups has many benefits for learning, including raising active involvement, student autonomy and confidence, developing social skills, and providing opportunities for speaking practice in a safe environment. Team-working is also a much-prized aspect of employability.

Figure 16 below shows that pair/group work is rare, and when used, it is not usually meaningful. For example, one teacher asked

students to work in pairs, but no interaction was actually observed; they just worked individually while sitting together. The photo below shows a classroom in Pune (June 2013) in which pair work was being used somewhat meaningfully, and demonstrates the sorts of interaction patterns that are entirely feasible in secondary classrooms.

Figure 17 below shows the lack of group/pair work in the observed classrooms identified above is closely mirrored by the lack of monitoring. If the students are involved in a task, whether alone or in pairs/groups, monitoring enables the teacher to ensure that all are engaged in the task, guide any students who require extra support, and share appropriate feedback afterwards. This

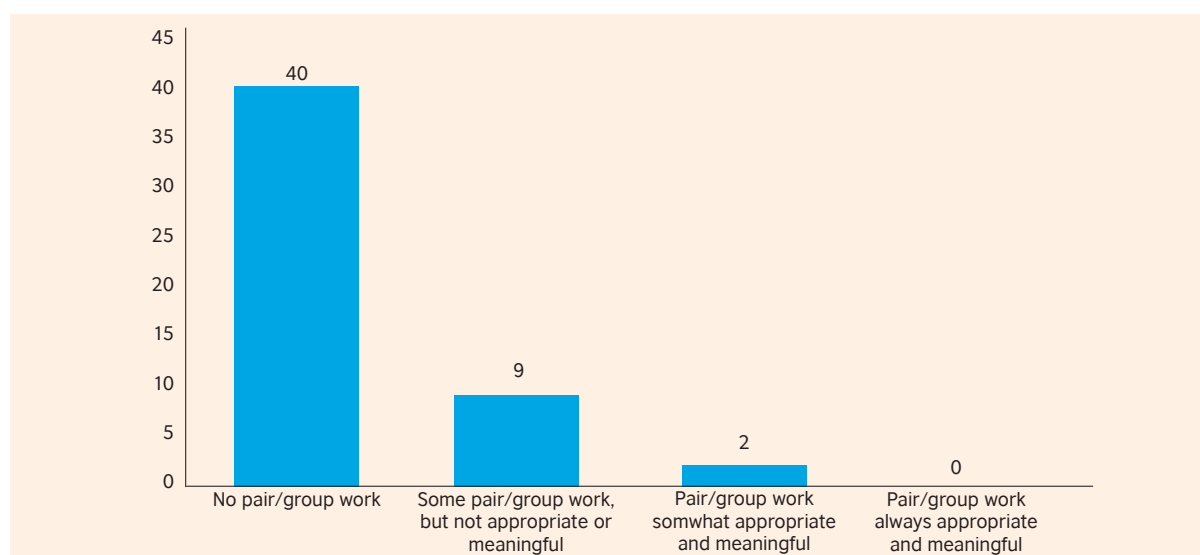


Figure 16 CL1 question 1: Use of pair/group work (total: 51 classrooms)

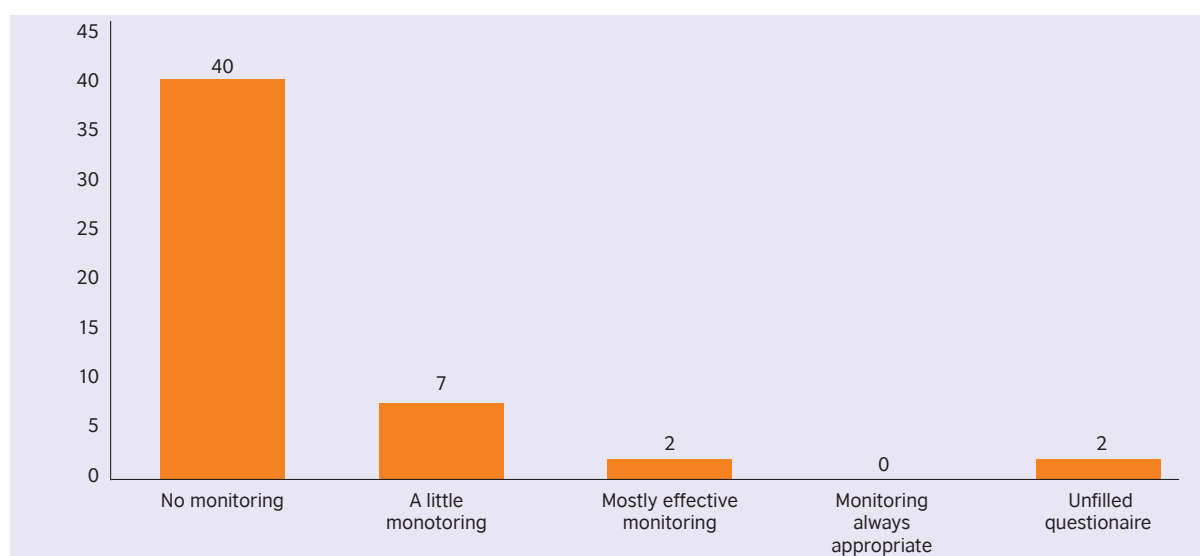


Figure 17 CL1 question 11: Monitoring (total: 51 classrooms)

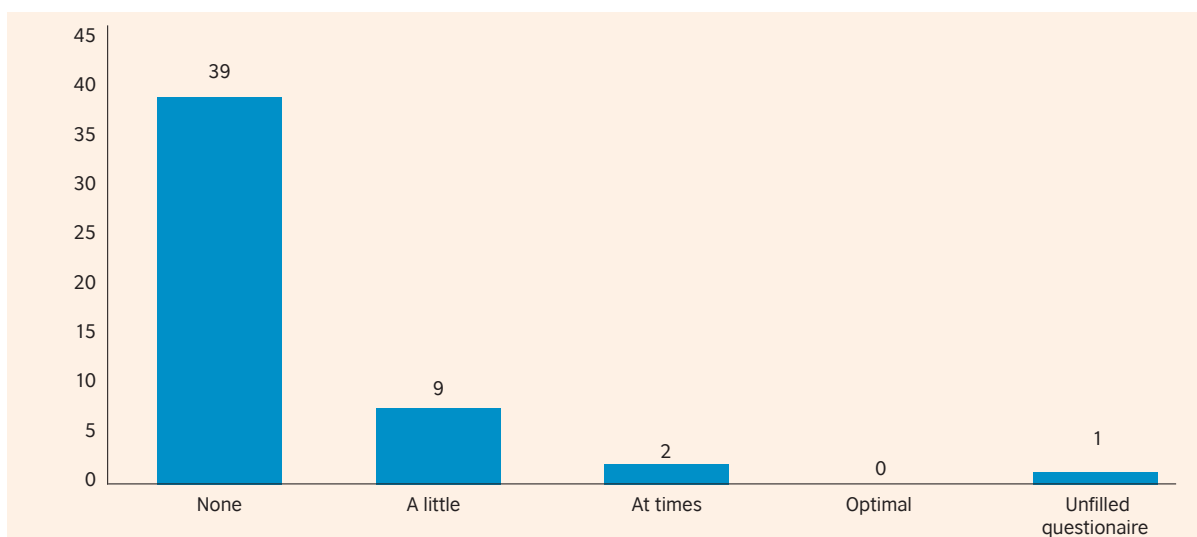


Figure 18 CL1 question 2: Peer-correction and peer-learning (total: 51 classrooms)

role is an important element in successful collaborative learning, and is different from a teacher's traditional role, so teachers' need to build awareness of the rationale behind monitoring, and how to implement it. Video materials and micro-teaching are particularly useful for this.

8. Peer-correction and peer-learning

The teacher can invite students to correct each other's speaking and writing. This increases autonomy, involvement, and encourages students to analyse their own and others' utterances, thus deepening understanding. If used appropriately, it does not undermine the teacher's authority, lead to friction, or result in confusion between right and wrong answers. Figure 18 shows that peer-learning and peer-correction were rare or non-existent.

Recommendation: Peer learning. In ELISS training, teachers should discuss examples of collaborative tasks, and practise implementing group/pair work, peer-learning and peer-correction during micro-teaching. This will develop an appreciation of how the teacher's role shifts from that of a dispenser of knowledge, to a facilitator who monitors students' activity and encourages peer-interaction. During training, teachers will also participate in pair and group activities, and will reflect on the experience, so that they are more aware of the benefits of collaborative approaches.

9. Thinking skills and sub-skills/ strategies

Learning and using reading and listening sub-skills/strategies, such as predicting the topic, skimming for gist, or scanning for information, can help students comprehend faster and more thoroughly, and are explicitly mentioned in the Maharashtra 9th and 10th standard syllabi and throughout the new 9th and 10th standard textbooks.

The textbooks also aim to develop higher order thinking skills, such as analysing, drawing inferences, synthesising ideas, problem-solving, and giving opinions. The development of students' critical thinking is key to the constructivist critical pedagogies proposed in the NCF 2005, and is also a vital aspect of employability in many fields.

Figures 19 and 20 show that in the majority of classes observed, reading and writing strategies, and higher order thinking skills, were absent. In a significant minority of classrooms, they were somewhat involved in the lesson, possibly due to their inclusion in the textbook, but rarely were they present in appropriate ways.

Recommendation: Understanding and implementing strategies and skills. Teachers need to understand the rationale behind the strategies and higher order thinking skills contained in the textbook activities, and practise activities that use them during micro-teaching sessions, so that they

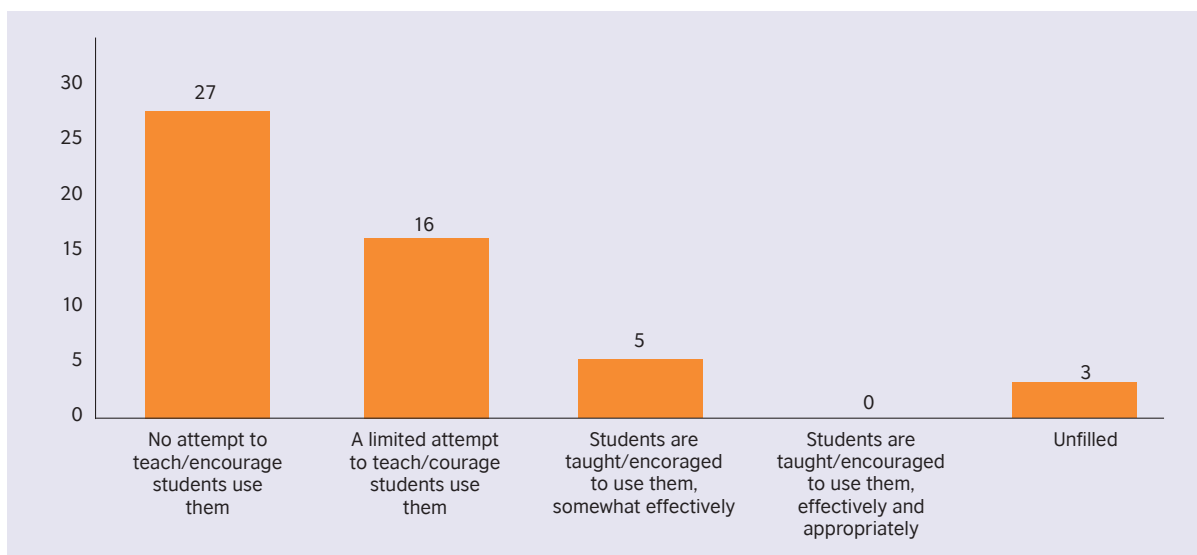


Figure 19 CL1 question 17: Reading and writing strategies (total: 51 classrooms)

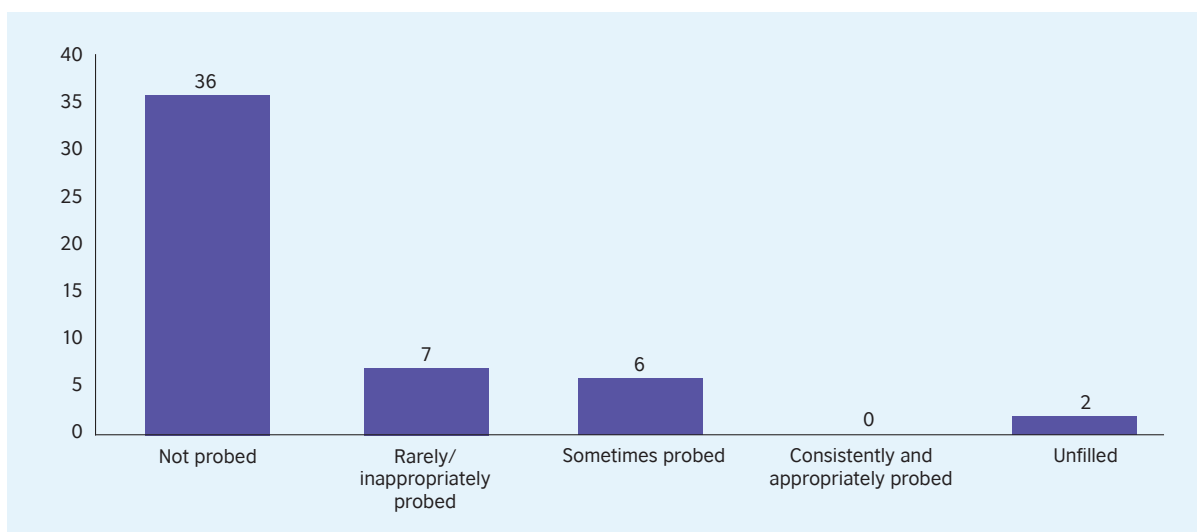


Figure 20 CL1 question 21: Students' higher order thinking skills (total: 51 classrooms)

can then implement them in their classrooms. To do this they also need to understand how children learn languages at this stage in their development.

Government, but the schools are managed privately. They include individual schools, or smaller/larger chains. They can be operated by family trusts, religious institutions, NGOs, and corporates.

10. Different types of schools involved in ELISS

ELISS will include all 9th and 10th standard English subject teachers from Tribal schools, Government schools and Government-aided schools, of all language mediums. As Table 2 below shows, around 90% of schools and 93% of enrolled students attend Private Aided schools. In Private Aided schools, teachers' salaries are paid by the

Type of school	Number of schools	Enrolled students
Tribal/Social Welfare Department	447	2,06,086
Department of Education	10	
Local Body	1028	
Private Aided	14,116	25,96,003
Total	15,601	28,03,089

Table 2: Breakdown of secondary schools according to type (source: RMSA, 2012)

The RMSA informed the British Council that around 65% schools are vernacular medium (predominantly Marathi), and 35% are semi-English, in which Science, Maths and English are taught in English and the remaining subjects in the vernacular language. There are also a few fully English medium schools. Semi-English and English medium use the 'English as a first language' textbooks, whilst vernacular mediums use the 'English as a third language' textbooks. The RMSA have informed the British Council that the total number of English subject teachers to be trained by ELISS is around 20,000.

This Needs Analysis attempted to investigate possible differences between all these categories. However, sample sizes were

too small, and no clear trends emerged. It is however likely that there are substantial differences between standards of teaching-learning in these schools, due to teacher and head master motivation, trustees' vision, the wealth of the education trust, classroom facilities, teacher recruitment policies, school infrastructure, students' backgrounds, school and class size, etc. Such factors could influence the feasibility of comparing baseline data and monitoring and evaluation data throughout the project, due to the amount of possible variables. Different categories of schools may also be more or less in favour of teachers attending CPD initiatives with teachers from other local schools, who may also be competitors.

C: Textbooks

1. Textbook overview

The English Reader (English as a third language), and Kumarbharati textbook (English as a first language) date from 2012 (class 9) and 2013 (class 10). Each book contains eight broad themes, with multiple activities designed to facilitate students' deeper understanding of both the themes, and the language required to investigate them. They include broad themes that are relevant to contemporary Maharashtrian society, rather than containing antiquated, inaccessible literature.

2. Teachers' use of textbooks

Teachers are mostly satisfied with these new textbooks (see Figure 21), which is a positive factor in improving secondary school education.

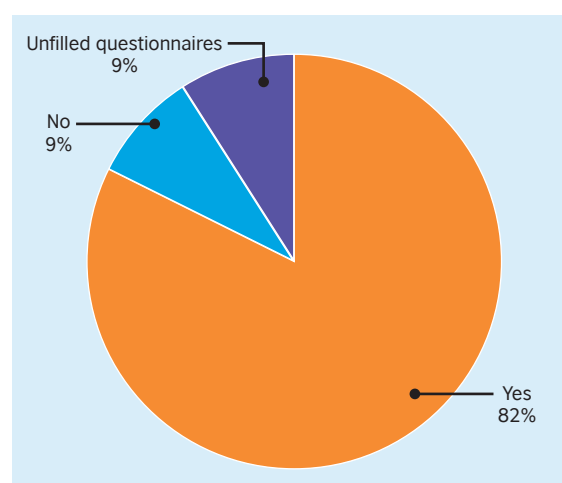


Figure 21 TQ1 question 3.1: Are you satisfied with the current English textbooks for the standards you teach? (total: 378 teachers)

Recommendation: Understanding the rationale behind textbook activities. It is essential that teachers develop awareness

i. Training in the theory and rationale behind the tasks and activities

Teachers will not be motivated to implement new activities unless they understand their purpose. They have already received some training on the new textbooks. It would be extremely useful to view the training content, and

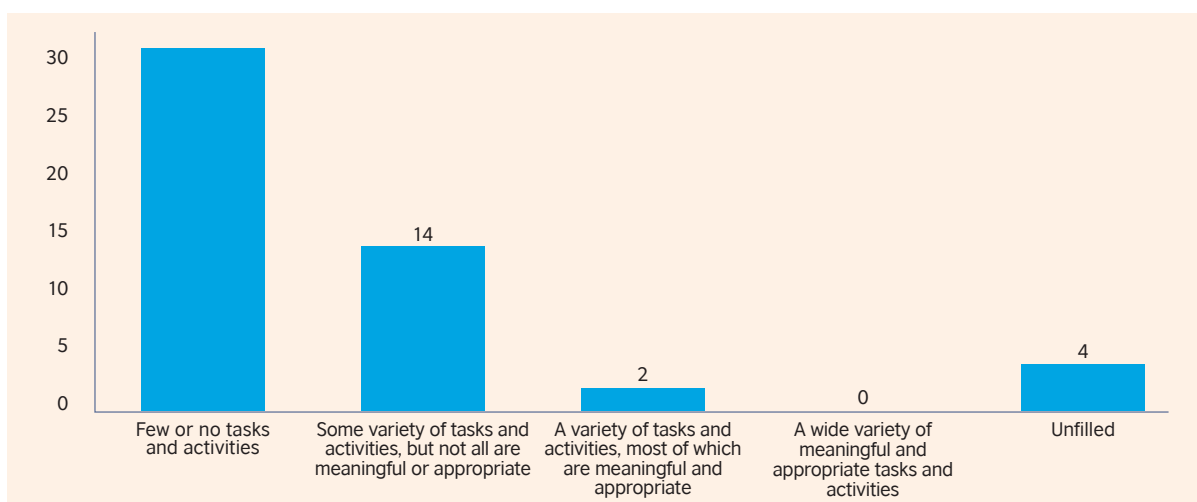


Figure 22: CL1 question 16: Use of meaningful and appropriate tasks and activities (total: 51 classrooms)

any monitoring and evaluation data, to understand what was covered, and how successful it was. This would help us avoid any overlap of training content, which could lead to training “fatigue” amongst teachers if ELISS covers similar areas in similar ways.

ii. Implementation of tasks and activities

Demonstration lessons and micro-training during training sessions enable teachers to observe, plan and conduct activities with colleagues, followed by developmental feedback. Having practised the activities in the training room, they will be more confident to implement them in their classrooms.

In the classroom, ELISS mentors can observe teachers, and ELISS-trained teachers can observe peers. Observers can give developmental feedback, as well as reflecting on any lessons they have learnt from the other teacher’s teaching style.

iii. Teacher resource notes

These could guide teachers how to use the activities. It is our experience that teacher resource notes, when provided, are not necessarily followed by teachers. Some teachers interviewed in focus groups felt notes would be useful, others disagreed. Any notes should be concise, and incorporated directly into textbook margins, rather than in separate resource books. We suggest the ELISS core team should further assess the need for such

a resource. This may lead to the British Council and MSBSHSE collaborating to develop resource notes and lesson plans to guide teachers how to use the new textbooks.

3. Teachers’ use of instructions in class

Students can only conduct tasks and activities if the teacher gives clear instructions. Figure 23 below shows that in more than half of the classes observed, there were no tasks or activities, so the teacher had no opportunities to give instructions. In the remaining classes observed, instructions were often ineffective.

Recommendation: Giving clear instructions. Teachers should be trained in a variety of instruction-giving techniques that will enable them to set up activities faster, with more clarity, and with greater student involvement.

4. Adapting the textbooks to meet students’ needs

The level of the textbooks (both first language and third language) is B2 level, whereas most students’ levels are substantially lower. This discrepancy probably stems from the low achievement of learning outcomes in English during standards 1 to 8, and means that students will struggle to understand the textbook unless it is adapted and personalised to meet their level and needs. Figure 24 shows that this is not happening.

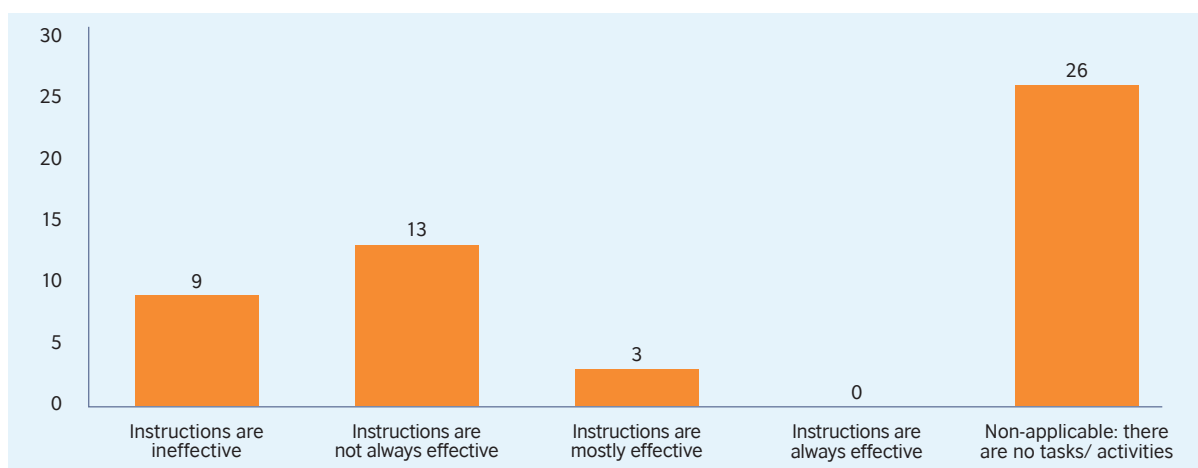


Figure 23 CL1 question 10: Instructions for tasks and activities (total: 51 classrooms)

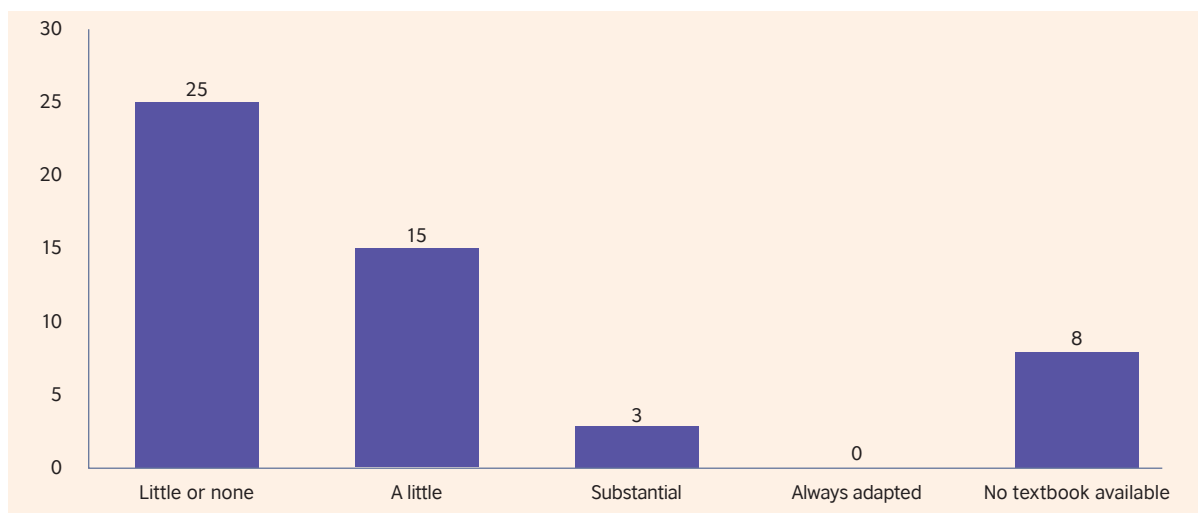


Figure 24 question 20: Adaptation and/or personalisation of textbook content to learners' needs and contexts (total: 51 classrooms)

It is therefore particularly important that teachers are able to adapt the textbook to suit their students' needs, deciding which activities are valuable and realistic, and which are less suitable due to constraints of time and level. TCs found that lessons *"were mostly realistic for learners' levels"* in only 9 out of 51 classes observed (CL1 question 15).

5. Alignment between textbooks and examinations

Teachers report that all teaching-learning in class 10 is limited to preparation for board exams, and that success in exams is achieved by getting students to rote-learn question-answers. During a focus group, one teacher stated that, *"students have no interest in classroom learning because coaching classes prepare them for exams"*.

As the new textbooks will be assessed by new exams, teachers' comments on the exams may not be relevant, as they are not yet familiar with the new exams. An exam that requires students to rote learn in order to pass will influence the entire teaching process, by encouraging and rewarding rote-learning. By moving examinations towards the assessing of understanding, and incorporating more Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE), examinations could project a positive influence throughout the curriculum (known as positive wash-back), particularly in 10th Standard. In order for students to fulfil their academic potential in the assessments, all stakeholders should understand the rationale

behind the new system. The best exam preparation should involve following the sorts of activities already in the textbook, with a focus on deeper learning rather than surface memorisation. It is appreciated that sudden shifts in exam policies can lead to unintended consequences for parents, students and teachers, so change should be introduced sensitively and transparently.

Recommendation: Examinations should assess deep understanding. Assessing students' deep understanding, recognition, and application of language should be the ultimate goal of the assessment and examinations policy. If required, the British Council could provide consultancy services to MSBSHSE in assessment design, so that examinations project a positive influence throughout the curriculum.



Class 9 students interacting in a Pune Secondary School (June 2013)

D: Teacher training contexts and Continuing Professional Development

1. Teachers' beliefs about their own training needs

When asked about their training needs in teacher questionnaires and focus groups, teachers gave a wide variety of responses. The most-mentioned training need was support in how to teach writing skills, identified as being key for students' examination success. Other most-identified needs included:

- Teaching reading
- Teaching listening
- Teaching speaking
- Teaching vocabulary
- Teaching pronunciation
- Lesson planning
- Different teaching methodologies and techniques

Recommendation: How to teach writing, reading, speaking and listening skills. Teachers' wishes should be considered during ELISS training. When asked about their training needs in questionnaires and focus groups, they expressed a preference for ways of teaching the four skills of writing, reading, speaking and listening. As we also identified similar needs, concentrating on these areas will aid teacher motivation and provide face validity to the training.

2. Teachers' awareness of the NCF (2005)

Figure 24 on the right shows teachers' professed familiarity with the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 or Maharashtra state curriculum framework 2010. This question was rather ambiguously worded, but it does appear that a substantial minority are not "familiar". Of the 57% who claim some degree of "familiarity", we cannot assume that they fully understand the aims, or implemented them in classrooms.

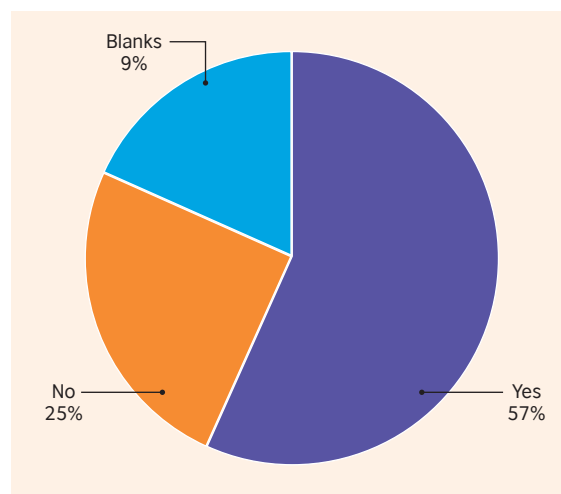


Figure 24: TQ1 question 3.3: Are you familiar with the NCF (2005) and Maharashtra State Curriculum Framework (2010)? (total: 379 teachers)

Recommendation: Alignment of ELISS to state and central government curricula.

The pedagogical content and delivery models of ELISS will be anchored in the principles of the NCF 2005, NCFTE 2010 and Maharashtra State Curriculum Framework 2010, with relevant references to these documents in training materials when appropriate. This will ensure ELISS is aligned to the vision of the Maharashtra State Government and the Central Government, will raise teachers' awareness of this vision, and increase the credibility of the programme. Monitoring and evaluation of ELISS will provide more accurate measures of teachers' understanding of the NCF 2005 and Maharashtra State Curriculum Framework 2010.

3. Previous INSETT initiatives

Teachers were asked in focus groups, interviews and questionnaires about their previous experience of INSETT, and many stated that Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is important. There was some positive feedback concerning previous teacher training organised by Yashada, with some teachers appreciating the skills of the Resource Persons employed.

In the Teacher Questionnaire, 70% of respondents (see Figure 25 below) claimed to have implemented new ideas and techniques from training in their classroom, mentioning approaches such as group/pair work, constructivism, and using teaching aids. This is positive, but the 51 teachers we observed showed insufficient evidence of actually demonstrating these techniques. Therefore, training may have raised theoretical awareness of certain learner-centred concepts, which is an important step in pedagogical change. Further training can help bring about changes to classroom practice. There is also a danger that as these important topics have already been “covered” in training, they may lead to fatigue and resistance to further training on similar topics.

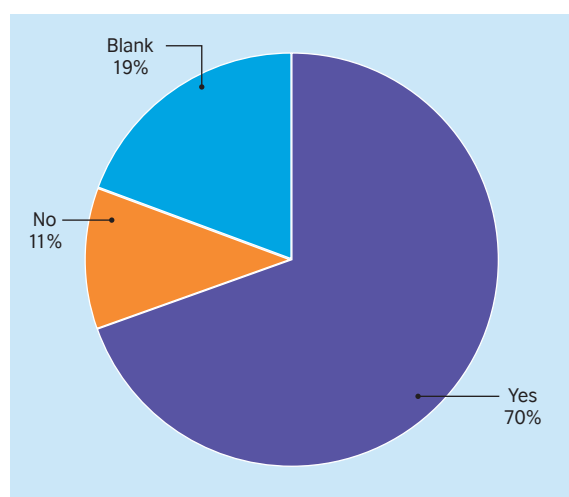


Figure 25 TQ1 question 4.2: Did you implement the training in your classroom? (total: 379 teachers)

Indeed, in focus groups, some teachers were cynical as to the benefits of any teacher training. They frequently described previous teacher training as being “a waste of time”, or “useless”. They mentioned factors such as:

- “poor planning”
- “unsuitable Resource Persons”
- “complete lack of “follow-up” to the training”

Also, teachers frequently mentioned issues related to the pedagogical content and delivery of training, such as:

- “too much time on lecture, not enough on discussion”
- “too much theory”
- “no clear objectives of training”
- “not participative”

This further emphasises the need for the British Council to work collaboratively with the state government, RMSA and the core team to ensure that the project is participatory and meets stakeholder needs.

Recommendation: Interactive and practical training sessions. Training methods must be interactive and practical, to ensure that teachers experience learner-centred training, with a focus on practice as well as theory. This is particularly crucial for commonly-covered topics such as “group/pair work” and “adapting the textbook”, which participants may find repetitive unless the approach is highly practical. This is also essential as the Needs Analysis findings indicate that teachers are aware of theoretical principles, but they find it difficult to operationalize these in the classroom.

Training can be made more practical by including elements such as:

- trainees designing learner-centred lesson plans using their own textbook
- micro-teaching of mock lessons from teachers’ own textbook, with developmental feedback from peers and the trainer
- reflective activities that help teachers develop their own teaching

Recommendation: Rigorous MT selection, with MTs cascading in pairs. Selection and retention of skilled and motivated Master Trainers is essential if we are to improve teachers’ perceptions of INSETT, and enable ELISS to successfully reach its stated objectives. The British Council MT selection process is rigorous, having been developed as a result of our experience with ELIPS and other projects across India. We should not compromise on MT selection, to ensure that ELISS training is of the highest quality. Research conducted by the British Council indicates that it is preferable for MTs to work in pairs while cascading, so that they share responsibility

with a partner, rather than training the full day alone. MTs stay fresher, learn from each other, feel more confident and trainees benefit from the combined experience and support of two MTs. This also helps in the case of absence or drop out. Cascading can be conducted in two rounds, to reach all teachers.

4. The role of Mentors

Mentors can support teachers' CPD in a sustainable and localised way. This is aligned to what the Government of India (2012) recommends in its 2012 publication "Restructuring and reorganising of the centrally sponsored scheme on teacher education: Guidelines for implementation". It states:

"Trainings must be designed and delivered locally to the extent possible, rather than routinised implementation of trainings received from above in the cascade system."

(pg.33)

Recommendation: Establishing an institutional role for mentors. We recommend selecting 70 exceptional MTs (two per district) at the end of year 1 to become Mentors. Training will enable them to lead Block and Cluster-level workshops on English language and pedagogical development, and create conducive environments for Cluster-level teachers' English Clubs to sprout. They can also observe teachers, and provide them with constructive feedback and action plans to support their development. This builds the capacity of the RMSA to go beyond the traditional cascade model of teacher training.

Before selecting willing Mentors, the Maharashtra government must decide on the exact nature and length of their role, eligibility criteria, with which schools and teachers they work, the exact aims of the initiative, and how to monitor and evaluate it. The British Council can advise on this, and suggest best practices acquired from similar initiatives in India and in similar contexts elsewhere. It would be beneficial to pilot the mentoring initiative in two talukas first, in order to identify best

practices. We should also ensure that this is in consultation with any existing mentoring and/or subject matter expert initiatives currently underway in Maharashtra, and aligned to British Council ELIPS and MCGM projects.

5. Teachers' reflective practice

The NCFTE (2010) suggests that reflective practice should be,
"the central aim of teacher education. Pedagogical knowledge has to constantly undergo adaptation to meet the needs of diverse contexts through critical reflection by the teacher on his/her practices."

(pg.19)

The Needs Analysis examined teachers' reflective practice by asking them to reflect on the lesson observed by British Council TCs, by asking them questions about their perceived training needs, and by interviewing them in focus group discussions.

To investigate the extent to which teachers were able to reflect on their classroom teaching, teachers were asked after the observed lesson:

"Do you think the students achieved the lesson aims? Why/why not?" (CL2 question 2)

40 of the 41 respondents replied "Yes" or made a similar affirmation. For example,

"Yes, they learned by heart and they answered my asked questions"

"Yes, students read the lesson with purpose"

"Yes, students understood the activity"

"Yes, I think that the students achieved the stated aims – the skill of comprehension."

"I am satisfied because students response me"

These sorts of answers reveal that teachers probably do not consider aims as being SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound. Their claims to achieving lesson aims, when compared to the

low standards of teaching-learning observed in most of the same classrooms, suggest that teachers lack the practice of reflecting on their teaching, or whether students achieve lesson aims. However, it should also be considered that some teachers may have been aware of weaknesses in their lesson, but were unwilling to admit these to a stranger in order not to lose face.

Only one teacher gave a more nuanced reply to the same question:

“At some level. Some students didn’t understand meaning of summary.”

This is the kind of comment that a reflective teacher might make, as it demonstrates awareness that aims were not fully met. It should be remembered that even if a highly skilled teacher teaches a class brilliantly, it is unlikely that all students will fully achieve all learning outcomes; there is always scope for a teacher to reflect on ways of improving his/her teaching.

Recommendation: Reflective practice.

Training should gradually raise the teachers’ habits of reflection, by regularly conducting reflection activities, introducing reflective journals, eliciting feedback during microteaching, and sharing case studies of how teachers use reflection to develop their professional practice.

6. Computer facilities and ICT literacy

Teachers are increasingly likely to have access to the internet via their own computer, mobile phone and/or computer in school. As Figure 26 below shows, a clear majority claim to be IT and internet literate, and a substantial minority own, or have access to, computers and the internet.

We have used online applications forms for the MT selection procedure and received over 700 applications online, which shows that a significant amount of teachers have access to the internet. This also means that most MTs will have internet access.

Over the coming three years, this access will surely increase further, so ELISS should incorporate the internet whenever it can be used to support project goals. According to Cisco’s Visual Networking Index forecast, *“In India, there will be 348 million Internet users in 2017, up from 138 million in 2012”*. (Source : http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-06-04/news/39740674_1_traffic-internet-access-indian-mobile-data)

It is also our experience that teachers feel valued and motivated when they are given access to cutting-edge technology. However, it is important to ensure that teachers without computer and/or internet access are not excluded from any aspects of ELISS, by always providing off-line alternatives.

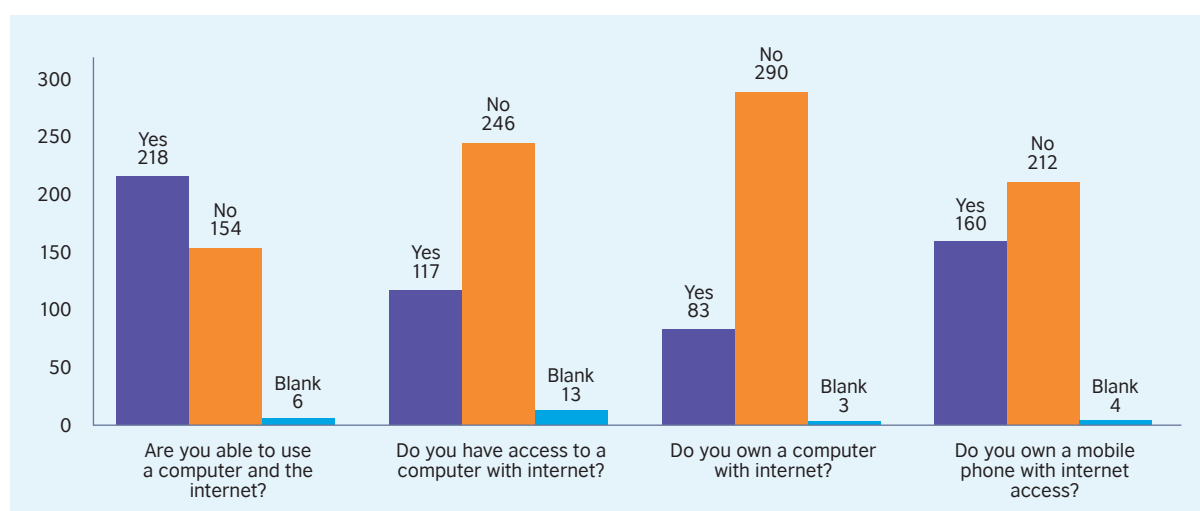


Figure 26 TQ1 questions 1f, 1g, 1h, 1i: Teachers’ computer and internet access (total: 376 teachers)

7. The role of Continuing Professional Development

ELISS is a three-year programme, with five days of teacher training and six days of training for Master Trainers per year. Compared to other teacher training initiatives the British Council has been involved in, this is a small amount of training, so it is therefore vital that between annual training, ELISS project outcomes are achieved through other interventions that help teachers in their CPD.

Recommendation: Continuing Professional Development. Developing teachers by going beyond training interventions is vital. To support and encourage teachers' CPD:

- i. Block and Cluster-level teacher clubs can bring teachers together to interact, discuss pedagogical innovations and challenges, and develop their English. Such clubs should be nurtured by removing institutional barriers, providing case studies of successful clubs elsewhere in India, sharing resources and tools that give inputs and facilitate peer interaction.
- ii. Increasing ICT literacy presents opportunities to use technology to support teachers' CPD and contribute to their motivation and feeling of self-worth. Email, SMS, and dedicated social media groups can be used to create communities of practice, for resource sharing, and as a platform for self-access learning. They can also be used for administrative communication related to ELISS.
- iii. The British Council audio resource "[Teaching English Radio India](#)" should be broadcast and distributed via CDs and/or other media to BRCs and CRCs. It should be made available for teachers to access alone, or in groups, possibly facilitated by mentors.
- iv. Teachers should be informed of how to develop their own English, using online and off-line resources, including British Council free online resources.

8. Core steering team

An academic core team can help guide the ELISS project, unite key education stakeholders, share experiences and best practices learnt from previous teacher training initiatives, obtain specific academic inputs, and help ensure that teacher training initiatives are consistent across the field of secondary education. Individuals involved will also be able to learn from their experience of working on ELISS and apply it to future teacher training initiatives in Maharashtra.

Core team in Assam AHA project

The core team consists of twelve members, including SCERT consultants, DIET lecturers, the Head of English Language Teaching Department, Guwahati University, ELTI (English Language Teaching Institute) Professors, SSA Academic consultants and a UNICEF Consultant.

Meeting monthly or quarterly, it aims to ensure the overall quality in the delivery of training and allied project activities. By establishing and sharing good practices, the Assamese SSA will have greater capacity and expertise to run future teacher training initiatives.

Its activities include reviewing materials for teacher training and Master Trainer training, mentoring teachers and MTs, observing training, and advising on CPD initiatives. Members' wide range of relevant skills and know-how strengthens the project. Members advocate the AHA project to a wide range of external stakeholders, and provide external independent monitoring and evaluation feedback to British Council and SSA.

Recommendation: Creating a core team. We propose the creation of an ELISS academic core team, consisting of ten voluntary members drawn from RMSA, MSBSHSE, SCERT, Yashada, SIE, the British Council, and other relevant bodies. They should meet regularly, face-to-face and/or remotely, before and after key project milestones. British Council

experience from other states indicates that this is one of the most crucial components in ensuing the intervention is locally appropriate and sustainable. We should examine possible synergies with proposed core teams in the ELIPS and MCGM projects.

9. The role of parents

We interviewed 65 parents across eight focus groups, from a mix of Marathi and semi-English medium government, tribal and government-aided schools. Only one, a teacher, spoke some English. The rest knew very little or no English, apart from isolated words like “hospital”, “medical”, “job”, and most reported that they didn’t have English-speaking relatives either. Some of the parents reported speaking to their children in Lambadi, meaning that English could well be the children’s fourth language, after Marathi and Hindi.

Parents unanimously viewed English as an important skill for the children, instrumental in helping them study and get good jobs in the future. Some parents regretted they were unable to help their children with it, as they knew no English themselves.

After our TCs explained the overall aims of the ELISS project, parents were overwhelmingly in favour, and seemed to understand the link between teacher training and improving their children’s English.

When asked their views about teachers being absent from the classroom to attend teacher training, views expressed were mostly supportive:

“The teachers should go [for training] if it benefits their English.”

“They in turn help our children gain knowledge.”

“It’s for the benefit of students.”

“Yes, we will look after the classes [in the teachers’ absence].”

One focus group revealed less positive attitudes:

“Our children’s studies are affected.”

10. The role of Principals and Education Officers:

School principals and Education Officers are

key agents in facilitating positive change in schools and teaching-learning practices. By informing them of ELISS aims, and involving them in the project, we can obtain their cooperation in the administrative aspects of ELISS, and encourage their support for teachers in CPD initiatives and pedagogical improvements in the classroom.

Recommendation:Stakeholder communications plan. RMSA and the British Council should devise an ELISS communications plan for stakeholders: parents, school principals, School Management Committee members, Education Officers and local persons of influence, such as Panchayat members. This should involve dissemination of brochures, workshops, and regular updates on ELISS in Marathi-language newspapers, radio and TV stations. Education department newsletters should also communicate key information about ELISS milestones to education stakeholders. We also propose a series of tips in Marathi, that advise parents how best to support their children in learning English, along with some useful English phrases for them to learn. This would build on best practices we have established working with parents in other states of India. Regular communication with stakeholders would result in greater support for all aspects of ELISS, and minimise any dissatisfaction caused by teachers being away from their classrooms to attend ELISS training.

11. Research proposal into teachers’ clubs

“Innovation has played – and continues to play – an important role in the development of the education system of India.”

(Promoting Innovations under RMSA: Guidelines, pg. 3)

Bearing in mind the need discussed in this report for sustainable in-service teacher development that occurs beyond cascade training sessions, we propose conducting research into Cluster-level teacher clubs. During ELIPS, we discovered that motivated MTs set up their own unofficial teachers clubs, whose aims were to improve the English

language and/or English language teaching methodologies of local teachers. We wish to investigate such clubs, in order to understand how best we can support and encourage them, how much guidance is advisable, which resources can be shared, the possible role of technology, and other features of successful, sustainable clubs. We will also investigate to what extent CPD can be developed through existing Gatha Sammelan initiatives (regularly held teacher meetings).

Recommendation: Research into teachers' clubs. The British Council, in consultation with the ELISS core team and RMSA, will create a proposal containing specific research hypotheses that explore teachers' clubs. Depending on research findings, a possible

output in Years 2 and 3 would be the sharing of tips, case studies, and resources with teachers and other ELISS stakeholders. These could then lead to the growth of more teachers' clubs in Maharashtra, and innovative models and practices that could be replicated across India.



Secondary students, Maharashtra

APPENDIX

Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) descriptors

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 & 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.



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