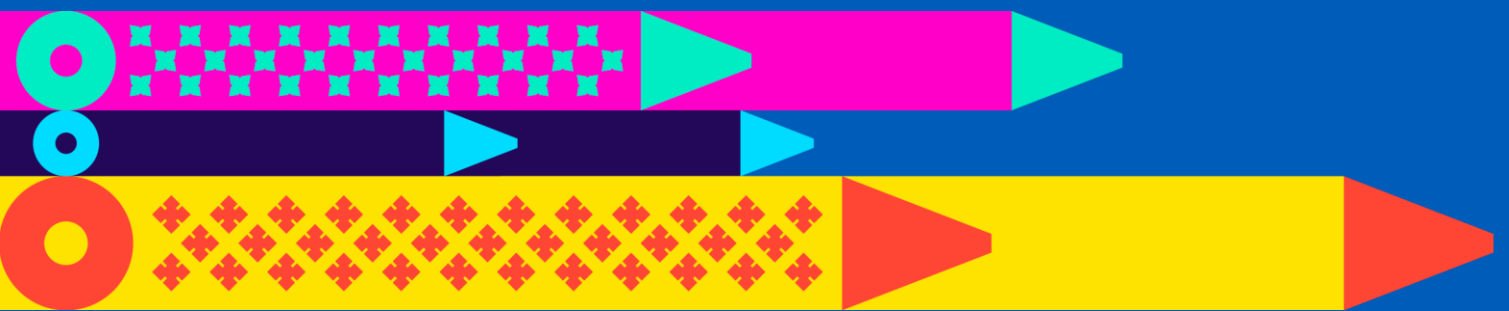




New Directions  
South Asia

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# Call for papers



New Directions in Language  
Assessment Conference:  
South Asia edition 2025

**New Directions in Language Assessment** is the British Council's flagship language testing and assessment conference. The conference provides perspectives and insight on trends and approaches in English language assessment at a local, regional, and international level. Since being established in 2013, the conference has celebrated sixteen editions in East Asia, Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa. This year's conference in New Delhi marks a first for South Asia.

# Technology and Tradition: The Changing Face of Assessment in English Language Learning Systems

Technology in education is not a new phenomenon. Educators have been using tools such as cassette players and videos for years. Innovation in education is often associated with technology, yet teachers have been innovating through more 'traditional' methods long before the digital age. Nowadays, when we refer to technology in education, we mainly refer to digital technology.

While different types of technology can significantly enhance the quality of assessment, access remains unequal across different regions and socioeconomic groups. This disparity limits the opportunities for many individuals, particularly in education, where consistent and reliable access to technology is crucial for fair and effective assessment. Technology has the potential to bridge this digital divide by providing remote assessment opportunities, access to a wide array of resources, and facilitating communication between educators and students. The current educational landscape is varied, with some educators leveraging technology effectively for assessment, others integrating it with traditional methods, and some not using technology at all. The level of adoption varies due to factors such as affordable internet access, distribution of digital devices, digital literacy programs, and teacher preparedness and motivation to change.

The education environment is currently a dynamic space where learning systems are striving to ensure optimal assessment experiences while addressing issues of access, equity, and security. There is no one-size-fits-all solution, especially as we recognize the importance of contextual and personalized assessment. In South Asia, rich traditions of language learning and teaching have a significant impact on how assessment systems are developed and implemented.

New Directions South Asia will explore the intersection between technology and tradition for English language assessment from the perspective of key stakeholders. The conference aims to celebrate different contexts and how they realize English language assessment policy and practice through exploring and experimenting with various approaches and methodologies. The conference sub-themes will provide further opportunities to examine and discuss relevant topics at the forefront of dynamic English language assessment environments in the region.

## Sub-themes

### 1 English for Employability

Employers are increasingly seeking candidates with strong English language proficiency, especially in global markets. Key skills include effective communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, and adaptability. Education systems are adapting by incorporating more practical and skill-based curricula, emphasizing English language learning from early stages, integrating soft skills training, and collaborating with industries to ensure the relevance of the skills taught. Additionally, vocational training and professional development courses aim to align educational outcomes with market demands. However, important gaps remain between the assessment of English and the requirements of employability. How can these gaps be bridged? How can materials, pedagogies, and assessment practices boost employability more effectively? What new directions are emerging in the interrelation between English and employability?

This sub-theme will examine the role of English in employment and how assessment systems can meet employers' needs.

### 2 Artificial Intelligence (AI) in English Education

AI in education is a hot topic. It offers opportunities to enhance personalized learning, streamline administrative processes, improve student engagement through interactive tools, and provide detailed analytics to support educational decisions. AI can personalize learning experiences, automate administrative tasks, and provide analytics to identify learning gaps and predict student performance. AI influences the entire educational process, including assessment. However, it requires teacher upskilling, raises accessibility issues, and presents challenges around data privacy and ethical standards.

What key opportunities and challenges does AI offer in English education? How may AI impact assessment policies and practices? How can AI be harnessed to address issues of equity and access and improve the quality of English education? What new directions are AI and digital technology leading to in English education?

This sub-theme will explore examples of AI applications in English language education, highlighting how planning and implementation consider these factors for effective use in assessment.

### 3 Assessing Young Learners

Assessing young learners is essential for early intervention, motivation, parental involvement, providing personalized and overall educational effectiveness. It ensures that each child receives the support they need to succeed academically and developmentally. Different stages of cognitive development require appropriate assessments for different age groups. This requires relevant knowledge and skills from teachers and adequate time in the curriculum.

During basic education, children experience both summative and formative assessments. Both types of assessment have different purposes and can benefit the learning process. How can formative and summative assessments complement each other to promote holistic learning? How can technology make assessments more engaging, enriching, and interactive? What support and upskilling can help teachers make assessments responsive and responsible? What new directions is the assessment of young learners heading towards?

This sub-theme will investigate all aspects of assessment and its crucial role in the holistic development and learning trajectory of young learners.

## **4 The Role of English in Multilingual Education Contexts**

The use of multiple languages is the norm in most contexts around the world. Classrooms often reflect the multilingual reality of their societies, where teachers and learners use linguistic resources to enable effective learning. The presence of multiple languages in the English classroom can be challenging but also highlights the rich linguistic resources available. Research into concepts such as ‘translanguaging’ and ‘mother-tongue-based multilingual education’ can inform policy and practice.

How can teachers enable young people to utilize their full linguistic repertoire to support their educational and employment ambitions? What do emerging trends and research outcomes imply in terms of guidance, support, and training for schools and teachers? In what new directions can materials, pedagogies, and assessments of English evolve in multilingual classrooms?

This sub-theme will shed light on English language assessment policy and practice in multilingual education contexts.

## **Conference dates**

The conference will convene on 21 and 22 February, 2025 in New Delhi, India.

## **Conference dates and format**

New Directions South Asia 2025 will take place as a face-to-face conference in New Delhi, India. Presenters who wish to be part of the conference will be required to present in person in New Delhi, India.

## **Call for papers: Key dates**

Call for papers opens:

**19 September 2024**

Paper proposal submission deadline:

**30 October 2024 (11:59 PM Indian Standard Time)**

Notification of acceptance:

**4 December 2024**

Speaker confirmation deadline:

**18 December 2024**

## Guidelines for submission



We invite proposals that address the main theme of the conference, focusing in particular on the sub-themes detailed above. Presentations are expected to be given in English, and will be 20 minutes in length, with an additional 10 minutes allocated for Q&A at the end.



### To submit a proposal:

- Go to our conference management system: <https://coms.app/NDSA2025>
- Create an account, following the instructions on the screen. You will need to do this even if you have submitted proposals for a New Directions conference in the past.
- Create and submit a proposal under 'Your submission/s'.
- Authors may submit more than one proposal.



### Proposals should be:

- a maximum of 350 words in length.
- reflective of at least one of the themes of the conference.
- of practical interest to the audience.
- relevant to the South Asia region, and/or of interest to the international language testing community.
- original and insightful.
- submitted in English.

**Any proposals that do not meet these criteria will be automatically disqualified from the review process.**

## Travel grants for educators

The British Council is delighted to offer travel grants to the New Directions in Language Assessment Conference in New Delhi on 21&22 February 2025. The grants will support five presenters from South Asia: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

Applications are invited from educators who are using interesting and/or innovative approaches to English language assessment and testing with their learners or have used language tests in their classrooms and wider educational environment. We are particularly interested in examples of how the assessments have been used to impact learners and learning and lessons learned. Successful applicants will secure a presentation slot in the programme for New Directions South Asia 2025 in New Delhi.

## South Asia

### New Delhi, India 2025

The travel grants will cover:

- economy class travel to and from the conference,
- for the successful applicant in Pakistan, this will include travel to and from the in country New Directions event,
- visa, if necessary,
- accommodation during the conference,
- meals or subsistence during the conference,
- conference registration fees.

The British Council will book travel and accommodation for the successful recipients.

#### Benefits of participating in New Directions

- Access to talks by leading experts in the area of language learning and assessment.
- Access to a wide range of presentations by researchers and action researchers from around the world.
- Opportunity to present to a wide audience from different professional backgrounds and countries.
- Networking with local, regional and international members of a professional community.

#### How to apply

Send a 500-word written summary which includes:

- the context in which you work
- approach / application of the assessment / test
- outcomes and impact of using the assessment/test
- lessons learned

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit a short, self-recorded video on why they should be awarded the travel grant, the benefits of attending the conference and what they hope to learn from it, and examples of how they will share their learning with others after the conference.

**To submit an application please complete this form:** <https://forms.office.com/e/hMieNvzLwZ>

The deadline for submitting the application is 30 October 2024, 11:59 PM Indian Standard time. The result of your application will be shared with you between 19 and 22 December 2024.

## Contact

If you have any questions, please contact us at:

[newdirectionssouthasia@britishcouncil.org](mailto:newdirectionssouthasia@britishcouncil.org)

<https://www.britishcouncil.in/programmes/new-directions-south-asia-2025>