

**INTEGRATED ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (IELT):  
CURRICULUM AND IMPACT AMONG TRIBAL STUDENTS  
IN INDIA**

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**Abstract:**

Jesuit Madurai Province has been running nine Tamil medium schools in Tamil Nadu, India. A special IELT (Integrated English Language Teaching) programme to promote the communicative competence of the students of VI, VII and VIII standards in English is being implemented since 2007 in all these nine Jesuit schools.

The pitiable factor is that though Tamil medium students study and learn English from the first standard onwards up to twelfth standard, they find it extremely difficult to speak and write in English even after completing their twelfth standard.

This interesting and interactive; creative and communicative, participative and practical means and methods of teaching and learning of English through motivational clippings, activities, role-plays, language games, songs, videos, audios, stories, kinesthetic, project works, pictures etc have remarkably enhanced the communicative capacity of our target students. Thus it is a successful IELT story which could be emulated in other schools too in Tamil Nadu.

This, IELT venture includes the following five elements: Motivation sessions, language games/activities, rhymes, stories and case studies. The scholar conducted this programme as ten days package in 14 places among mostly tribal students in the middle zones of India. This paper presents the details of the IELT programme and its impact among the tribal students in the middle zones of India.

**1. Introduction:**

English has become very basic for the successful survival in today's world. The rich and elite are able to get it (and get it right!) by their wealth and influence whereas the poor and the disadvantaged sections of the society are denied this opportunity to master English and thus enhance their ability and employability. In short, these disadvantaged people need to learn English for employment, enhancement and empowerment.

British colonialism is a thing of the past but the hegemony of English is stronger today than ever. It is the language in which the modern world loves to communicate. No language in the history of mankind has been more of a lingua franca, more widely spoken and understood in the world over than English. It is also the language of the internet age. The emphasis today is on functional, everyday, real life English as opposed to literary English. If the language being learnt today is different so is the way of teaching it in this age of internet connectivity. More effective learning is expected to take place and much faster than in the pre-internet era. What is happening in our schools today?

## **2. The sad state of our Tamil medium schools**

Right from the first standard, the Tamil medium students of Tamil Nadu schools have been studying English as their second language. They begin turning the pages of the new English books with much pride and enthusiasm; pride because it is English and enthusiasm because it is a new and foreign language. When they complete their higher secondary education, as they turn back the pages of their school lives, all their efforts seem to have been only motiveless adventures; they have struggled a lot all the years with English but for no gain and not to its mastery. Only their progress reports show some traces of the existence of the English subject not their actual progress. They read and listen to a good amount of English text during their school days but they get deceived when it comes to its transformation into productive skills. We can summarize this that no Tamil medium school in Tamil Nadu has so far blessed its children with the 'gift of tongue', English speech.

However, we can tolerate no patience keeping the entire school going generation dump all along their lives unless and until the need arises to speak in English.

They begin their English learning adventure at the age of five. It is our duty to design their destination and make them fluent as early as possible so that, their interest may not get drained up. They are a good soil indeed when the English seed is sown. It is our duty to make them yield, help them serve us a good delicious language meal, i.e., to make them fluent. What is the attempt, we have been making so far in this regard for the past seven years in the Jesuit Tamil medium schools in Tamil Nadu, India?

## **3. Evolution of FPP (Future Perfect Project):**

Madurai Jesuit Province has been running nine Tamil Medium higher secondary schools, spread over Tamil Nadu. In all these schools, a special IELTS programme, named as FPP (Future Perfect Project) is being implemented since 2007. It aims to enhance the competence of the students in all the four (LSRW) skills. The research scholar prepared a ten days IELTS course, based on this FPP model and materials and conducted the same among mostly tribal students in the middle and northern zones of India in 14 different places from October, 2014 to February, 2015. This paper deals with the five aspects of the curriculum and its impact.

#### **4. Integrated Methodology:**

This research scholar has named this as integrated methodology because it integrates the following elements in the teaching and learning of English.

- Sessions on enhancing the self-esteem of the students
- Many of the positive elements of the other methodologies of teaching English have been incorporated into this.
- Pair share and group works are regularly done and this promotes cooperative and collective learning. The entire class is divided into several groups. Each group has a name and a leader. All the games and activities are mostly conducted in the groups and marks are allotted to each group based on the performance. Marks are displayed on the notice board cumulatively. This serves as an external motivation and promotes collective learning. Each group vies with others to win the prizes at the end of the course.
- Elements of multiple intelligences are incorporated
- All four aspects of language learning – listening, speaking, reading and writing – are given sufficient importance
- Corrections are done in a non-threatening way.

#### **5. The Five Major Elements of the IELTS Curriculum:**

- a. Motivational sessions to enhance the self-esteem of the students
- b. Language games and activities
- c. Rhymes connected to the language item taught
- d. Stories in audio-visual form
- e. Case studies and group discussion

##### **5.1. Motivational clippings to enhance the self-esteem of the students:**

‘The Learning Revolution’ by Gordon Dryden and Dr. Jeannette Vas (1994), speaks of the following three factors which would make teaching and learning effective and easy;

interesting and instant. The authors, together, have done a detailed study and research on all the best educational practices around the world and come out with the following three principles and findings which would foster easy and fast learning. The factors are:

1. Enhancing the self esteem of the students
2. Training the brain to bring out its best potentials and
3. Creating a positive class room climate

Lack of self esteem or self confidence, as mentioned by these authors, results in slow and low learning, as evidenced in most of our schools, especially among the low achievers and slow learners. Enhancing the self esteem of the students will definitely result in better and fast learning.

#### **5.1.1. Clarification of the concepts**

The sum total of a person's perceived and desired mental and physical characteristics, as well as the person's perceived worthiness from these, is often referred to as the self-concept. Thus, self-concept can be viewed as an "umbrella" term (Lawrence 1996) which encompasses the self-image, the ideal-self and the self-esteem of the individual.

In the words of James (1890), self-esteem can be considered as the ratio of "our actualities to our supposed potentialities". A low self-esteem therefore indicates a large discrepancy between the self-image and the ideal-self, and may be exhibited through several operations by the child (Lawrence 1996) like avoidance, compensation, low motivation and resistance.

#### **5.1.2: Educational Implications**

In an educational context, the premise of such programmes has been that there is a relationship between student achievement and self-esteem, and that improvements in self-esteem will lead to improvements in achievement. Whilst research findings on this relationship are mixed, there is a general agreement amongst researchers that students who are underachieving at school are also likely to have low self-esteem (Burns 1982).

To date, the most convincing evidence for causality comes from research works which attempt to improve achievement by first improving self-esteem; see, for example Brookover et al. (1965), Lawrence (1996), and the review of Andrews (1998). Such workers demonstrate that indeed an improvement in student self-esteem can lead to improvements in academic achievements and / or interpersonal behaviour. Based on these findings, sessions on self esteem have been incorporated to build up the confidence of the students in English classes.

#### **5.1.3: Self-esteem sessions in IELTS**

One or two motivational clippings are played at the beginning of the class. This motivational clippings contain footages of ordinary human beings, often times differently abled persons, achieving or doing extraordinary things. Students do some silent reflection after a few minutes of ‘pranyama’ (deep breathing exercise) and meditation, on the clippings watched. They write down all their reflections and the messages they get for their lives from these clippings. They share their reflections in pairs or in small groups. They fine tune their reflections and share with the entire class later. The significant points from their sharing are noted down on the board for all to see and get motivated. The teacher then presents and adds his own ideas and reflections.

Every self-esteem session ends with the loud repetition of some self-affirmation statements like the following: I am the best, I can do it, God is always with me, I am a winner, Today is my best day, I am amazing, I can do anything, Positivity is a choice, I celebrate my individuality, I am prepared to succeed, I am confident, I am brilliant, I am energetic, I am creative, I am fabulous, etc.

The students learn and sing songs like ‘Be the best’; ‘I have a dream’ etc at the end of each session. Students are encouraged to use only English to share, discuss, write and report during this session. English learning starts with self-esteem sessions.

### **5.2: Language games or activities**

There are different games and activities for the different items in the teaching of English.

I would like to mention a few here:

- Self-introduction with already formulated simple sentences such as My name is.... My father’s name is....etc. Students sit in a big circle. Each student repeats what his previous companion shared and then adds his/her own self-introductory statements.
- Rhyming adjectives for each one’s name
- Teaching imperatives through kitchen imperative activity.
- Shooting the country for learning imperatives
- Noun tour: each group runs around the campus and collects whatever they find. Each group is given a place in the classroom for displaying the collected items. They have to show, name and sentence the object. All the group members have to write down the nouns they have collected and write meaningful sentences for them.
- Verb act: Each member in a group selects at random a verb kept in a box and acts out that verb. That group has to find out the verb, say the five parts of the verb and give a meaningful sentence for that verb.

Thus, games and activities are used for each and every item in the teaching and learning of English.

### 5.3: Rhymes:

Plenty of action rhymes/songs are incorporated in this. These rhymes are selected on the basis of the games or activities conducted and the language item taught before. A few popular rhymes are 'Are you sleeping; Row, row, row your boat; Put your right hand in; Noun song; Is God dead?; We shall overcome; My Bonnie lies over the ocean; The rich are getting richer; Makka sai; Darling open the door; I want to zoom, etc.

### 5.4: Stories in audio-visual form:

Students watch stories in audio-visual form. Each story is shown twice or thrice. The following activities are conducted after the presentation. All the four skills are effectively practiced in this.

- Role play
- The entire group acts out the story
- Vocabulary related activities
- Summary writing
- Narrating the story in pairs or groups.
- Discussing the moral of the story in groups and presenting the reflections.
- Interviewing, dialogue writing, report writing, diary entry etc for writing practice
- Creating and acting out a new story based on the original presented.

### 5.5: Case studies

Problematic, thought provoking cases, moral dilemma, etc. are presented to the students. They work in groups and come out with their solutions and conclusions. Through this, they are automatically forced to think and write in English.

## 6. Impact of this IELTS Methodology among the Tribals

This research scholar conducted this programme in 14 different places in the central tribal zones of India among mostly tribal students and teachers. Most of the students who participated in the programme had finished up to 10<sup>th</sup> standard in the regional medium schools. 310 students and 90 teachers attended this programme in various places. Table: 1 gives the basic details about the programme. The following is the impact of the programme.

**Table: 1. IELTS: Basic details of the participants**

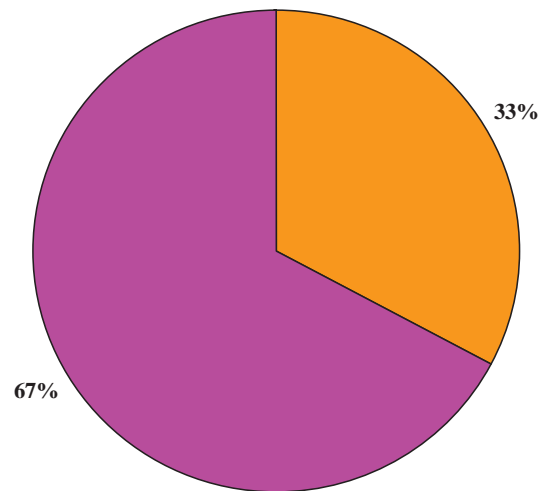
S. No	Name of the Institution	Place	No. of participants	Category of the participants	Percentage
1	Congregation of	Sitagarah,	30	Students	7.5

	Mother of Carmel	Jharkhand			
2	F.C.C	Hazaribag, Jharkhand	30	Students	7.5
3	Indian Missionary Society	Sitagarah, Jharkhand	20	Students	5.0
4	Montfort Primary School	Kanabadh, Jharkhand	10	Teachers	2.5
5	Nirmala Shiksha Bhawan School	Shahpur, Bihar	40	Teachers	10.0
6	Samaritan	Sitagarah, Jharkhand	10	Students	2.5
7	Society of Jesus	Patna, Bihar	20	Students	5.0
8	Society of Jesus	Sitagarah, Jharkhand	32	Students	8.0
9	St. Ann's of Luzern	Sitagarah, Jharkhand	8	Students	2.0
10	St. Xaviers Hr.Sec.School	Palayam Kottai, Tamil Nadu	20	Teachers	5.0
11	St.Gabrial High school	Dhawaiya, Jharkhand	20	Teachers	5.0
12	St.Gabrial House	Sitagarah, Jharkhand	20	Students	5.0
13	Tripolia Social Service Hospital	Patna, Bihar	70	Trainee nurses	17.5
14	Ursuline Congregation of Tildonk	Sitagarah, Jharkhand	70	Students	17.5
<b>Total</b>			<b>400</b>		<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Computed Data*

Most of the participants (67%) are females, as revealed by Chart 1. 91% of the students who participated in the programme are tribals.

**Chart: 1**  
**Sex of the participants**



*Source: Computed Data*

Male
  Female

**Table: 2**  
**Social groups of the students**

Social groups	No of the participants	Percentage
SC/ST	283	91.3
OBC	17	5.5
OC	10	3.2
Total	310	100.0

**Table: 3**  
**Social groups of the teachers**

Social Groups	No. of Respondents	Percent
SC/ST	49	54.4
OBC	28	31.1
OC	13	14.4
Total	90	100.0

All the participants have complexly agreed to the following points of this methodology. They all like this methodology. Learning of English is very much important for their future career/life. Due to this course, they are fully involved and more attentive in the English classes. From now onwards, they eagerly look forward to the next English class. Overall evaluation of this course is given in Table: 4

**Table: 4 Overall evaluation of the IELTS course**

S. No	Particulars	Very Good	Good	Others	Total
1	Overall involvement	248 (62.0)	134 (33.5)	18 (4.5)	400 (100.0)
2	Overall opinion	292 (73.0)	99 (24.8)	9 (2.3)	400 (100.0)
3	Trainer's efficiency	324 (81.0)	72 (18.0)	4 (1.0)	400 (100.0)

*Source: Computed Data*

Almost 95% of the participants have agreed that this course has enhanced their communicative ability in English.

**Table: 5**

**ILT Course has enhanced their communicative skills in English**

Enhancing the Communicative Skills	No. of Respondents	Percent
Very Much	228	57.0
Much	150	37.5
Others	22	5.5
Total	400	100.0

The following is the evaluation of the group system, followed in the IELTS methodology.

**Table: 6**

**Evaluation of the group system**

S. No	Particulars	Strongly Agree	Agree	Others	Total
1	Ensures students' participation in class	292 (73.0)	99 (24.8)	9 (2.3)	400 (100.0)

	activities				
2	Motivates and promotes a healthy competition	287 (71.8)	110 (27.5)	3 (0.8)	400 (100.0)
3	Helpful in collective learning	298 (74.5)	100 (25.0)	2 (0.5)	400 (100.0)
4	Enhances interest and enthusiasm to learn English	279 (69.8)	113 (28.3)	8 (2.0)	400 (100.0)
5	Learning of English become easy and interesting	298 (74.5)	97 (24.5)	5 (1.3)	400 (100.0)

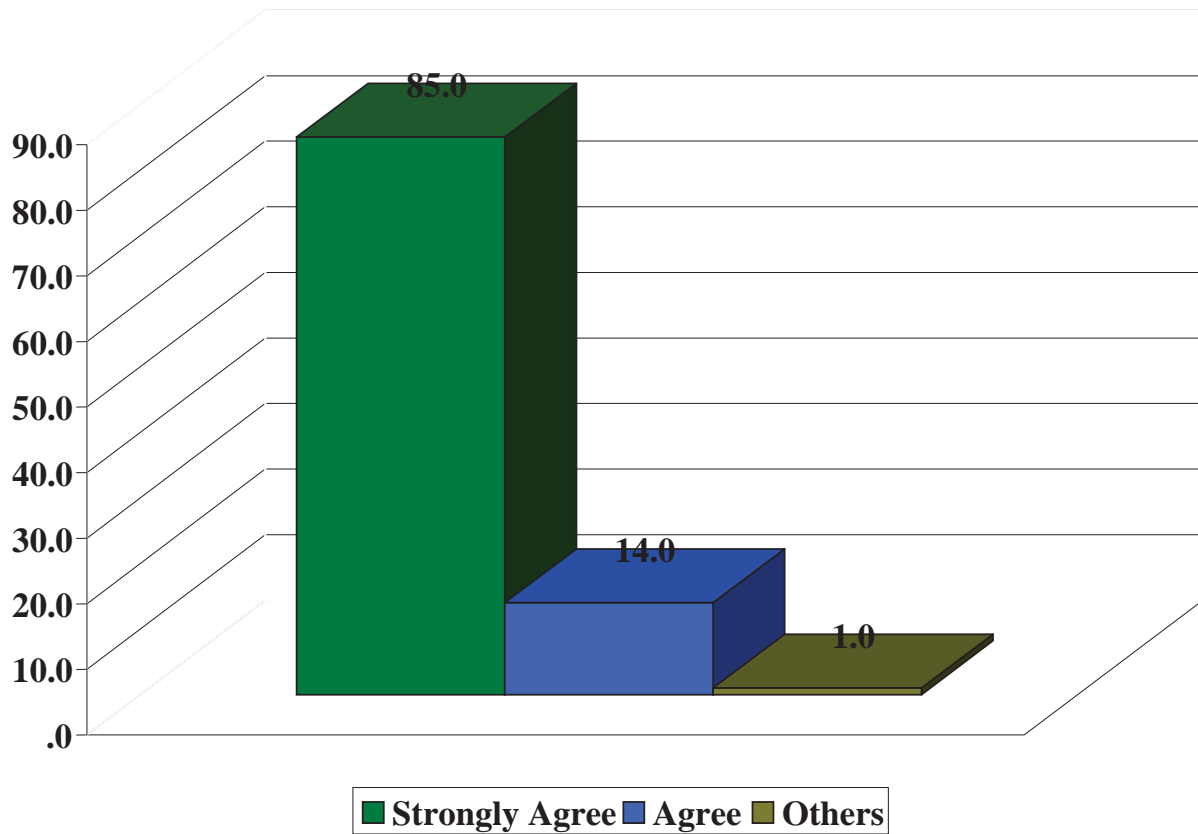
*Source: Computed Data*

**Table: 7 Evaluation of the teaching aids and various techniques used**

S. No	Particulars	Strongly Agree	Agree	Others	Total
1	Motivational clips motivated the students	334 (83.5)	63 (15.8)	3 (0.8)	400 (100.0)
2	Materials were appropriate, interesting and stimulating	286 (71.5)	106 (26.5)	8 (2.0)	400 (100.0)
3	Content of the course was interesting and full of the variety	304 (76.0)	89 (22.3)	7 (1.8)	400 (100.0)
4	Created a positive learning atmosphere	272 (68.0)	120 (30.0)	8 (2.0)	400 (100.0)
5	Various techniques, used were appropriate to learn English	320 (80.0)	77 (19.3)	3 (0.8)	400 (100.0)

*Source: Computed Data*

**Chart 2:**  
**Learning English became enjoyable**



*Source: Computed Data*

All the tables and charts prove that IELTS methodology is very effective, interesting and easy and can be actively promoted in all places.

### **7. Conclusion:**

From the impact assessment, it is firmly proved that this IELTS methodology of teaching and learning of English is very beneficial to the students in enhancing their skills in English. This can be effectively emulated in other vernacular medium schools too.

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