



An Exploratory Study on ELT Methods and Approaches in Developing Curriculum and Evaluation in High Schools of Telangana State.

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ABSTRACT

This exploratory research article examines English Language Teaching (ELT) methods and approaches in relation to curriculum development and evaluation practices in high schools of Telangana State, India. The article synthesizes curriculum documents, teacher guidance materials, published research, and relevant theoretical literature to explore the pedagogical assumptions underlying the English curriculum, the methods and approaches promoted in classroom practice, and the relationship between curriculum transaction and learner assessment. Telangana's school English curriculum reflects a broad movement away from exclusively teacher-centred and grammar-dominated instruction toward learner-centred, interaction-oriented, integrated-skills, activity-based, and discourse-oriented pedagogy. At the same time, the implementation of these approaches is shaped by contextual factors such as teacher proficiency, class size, examination pressures, resource availability, multilingual classrooms, and variation in teacher preparation. The exploratory analysis suggests that curriculum development and evaluation should be treated as mutually reinforcing processes rather than separate administrative activities. A balanced framework is proposed that links curricular objectives, language competencies, classroom tasks, formative assessment, performance-based evaluation, feedback, and summative assessment. The article argues that high-school ELT in Telangana can be strengthened through systematic needs analysis, context-sensitive pedagogy, teacher professional development, authentic assessment, assessment literacy, digital support, and stronger feedback loops between evaluation evidence and curriculum revision. The study concludes with implications for policymakers, curriculum developers, teachers, school leaders, and future researchers.

KEYWORDS: ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING; METHODS AND APPROACHES; CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT; EVALUATION; ASSESSMENT; HIGH SCHOOLS; TELANGANA.

INTRODUCTION

English occupies an important position in Indian school education because it functions as a language of higher education, academic participation, employment, technology, and wider communication. In Telangana, English is taught across school levels, and the state curriculum and textbooks have sought to integrate language learning with meaningful contexts, interaction, and the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The curriculum therefore presents English not merely as a body of grammatical knowledge but as a set of communicative and literacy practices that learners should use in educational and social contexts.

The effectiveness of a language curriculum depends substantially on the relationship among curriculum intentions, classroom pedagogy, learning materials, teacher knowledge, and evaluation practices. A curriculum may advocate learner-centred or communicative teaching, but its intended outcomes may not be achieved if teachers continue to rely primarily on explanation, translation, memorization, and examination-oriented practice. Similarly, assessment systems can either support

curricular change or undermine it. When tests reward only recall and written reproduction, teachers and learners may rationally prioritize those outcomes even when curriculum documents emphasize interaction and integrated language skills.

This article explores the ELT methods and approaches relevant to developing and implementing curriculum and evaluation in Telangana high schools. It is exploratory rather than a report of a large-scale field survey. The purpose is to map important pedagogical orientations, identify relationships among curriculum, instruction, and assessment, examine contextual challenges, and propose a conceptual framework for strengthening high-school English education in the state.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Telangana's curriculum resources were developed in alignment with the State Curriculum Framework and broader national curricular principles. The state's English textbooks and teacher-support materials emphasize meaningful engagement, participation, integrated language skills, and the teacher's role as facilitator. The common English textbook approach across media of instruction was also intended to support parity of learning opportunities while recognizing the multilingual context of the state.

Published discussion of the Telangana English curriculum has described a movement toward interaction-oriented and learner-centred practices, including discourse activities such as stories, essays, reports, debates, interviews, plays, and other forms of language use. Such activities are pedagogically significant because they connect language learning with purposeful communication and require learners to construct meaning rather than only reproduce isolated rules. However, exploratory evidence and broader ELT research also suggest that curriculum innovation must be supported by sustained teacher development, practical classroom resources, and evaluation systems aligned with the intended pedagogy.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite curriculum reforms and the availability of textbooks and teacher handbooks, a persistent question remains: To what extent are the ELT methods and approaches advocated in curriculum documents translated into high-school classroom practice and reflected in evaluation? The problem is particularly important in a multilingual state where learners enter English classrooms with different levels of exposure and where teachers must balance curriculum expectations with large classes, time limitations, examination requirements, and uneven access to instructional resources. The present exploratory article addresses the need to understand ELT methods and approaches as interconnected components of curriculum development, curriculum transaction, and learner evaluation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To explore the major ELT methods and approaches relevant to high-school English curriculum development in Telangana.
- To examine the relationship between curriculum objectives, classroom pedagogy, and evaluation practices.
- To identify the pedagogical strengths and implementation challenges associated with learner-centred and interaction-oriented ELT.
- To analyze the role of formative, performance-based, and summative assessment in English language learning.
- To propose a context-sensitive framework for improving curriculum development and evaluation in Telangana high schools.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What ELT methods and approaches are most relevant to the development and implementation of the high-school English curriculum in Telangana?
2. How can curriculum design promote integrated development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing?
3. How do evaluation practices support or constrain the implementation of learner-centred ELT approaches?
4. What contextual challenges influence the translation of curriculum intentions into classroom practice?
5. What strategies can strengthen alignment among curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and curriculum revision?

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Curriculum as a Dynamic Educational Process

Curriculum is more than a syllabus or textbook. It includes aims, learning outcomes, content, pedagogical processes, learning resources, assessment practices, and the social context in which teaching occurs. Tyler's objective-oriented model highlighted the importance of educational purposes, learning experiences, organization, and evaluation, while later curriculum theorists emphasized curriculum as a negotiated and context-sensitive process. In language education, curriculum development commonly involves needs analysis, objectives, content selection, sequencing, methodology, materials, assessment, implementation, and evaluation (Richards, 2001).

Language Teaching Methods and Approaches

An approach refers to broad assumptions about language and language learning, whereas methods and techniques refer to more specific ways of organizing instruction. Modern ELT has moved from method-centred debates toward principled, context-responsive pedagogy. No single method is universally effective; teachers need to select and adapt practices according to learner needs, goals, proficiency, resources, and institutional expectations. The major orientations considered in this study include grammar-oriented teaching, direct and audio-lingual practices, communicative language teaching, task-based learning, cooperative learning, content and language integration, discourse-based pedagogy, and post-method or eclectic approaches.

Constructivist and Sociocultural Perspectives

Constructivist perspectives view learners as active participants who build understanding through engagement with tasks, experiences, and prior knowledge. Sociocultural perspectives further emphasize interaction, mediation, collaboration, and the role of language in learning. These perspectives provide a theoretical basis for pair work, group work, scaffolding, dialogue, collaborative writing, peer feedback, and classroom discourse. In the Telangana context, they support pedagogies that treat multilingual repertoires and learner experiences as resources rather than obstacles.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Research and professional literature on ELT consistently emphasizes the importance of alignment between curriculum design and assessment. Richards (2001) explains that curriculum development requires systematic attention to objectives, content, teaching procedures, and assessment. Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) emphasize that language assessment should be valid, reliable, practical, authentic, and useful for decision-making. Black and Wiliam's work on formative assessment demonstrates the educational value of using evidence of learning to adapt teaching and support learner progress.

Within Telangana, published analyses have documented interaction-oriented features of the revised school English curriculum. Latha and Fathima (2016) characterized the curriculum as learner-centred and

interaction-based, with attention to the four language skills and discourse activities. Telangana teacher-support documents similarly emphasize meaningful learner participation, teacher facilitation, classroom planning, and evaluation. Research on high-school ESL learners has also pointed to the need for closer attention to actual learner proficiency rather than assuming that years of English instruction automatically produce functional competence.

The literature nevertheless reveals an implementation gap common to many curriculum reforms. Curriculum documents may promote communicative and integrated approaches, while classroom practices remain shaped by examination culture, time constraints, large classes, teachers' confidence, and available resources. Therefore, exploratory research on Telangana requires attention not only to what the curriculum prescribes but also to the conditions that make pedagogical change possible.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopts an exploratory qualitative research design based primarily on document analysis and integrative review. Exploratory research is appropriate when a topic requires conceptual mapping, identification of patterns, and generation of propositions for further empirical investigation. The present study does not claim to estimate causal effects or provide population-level generalizations. Instead, it synthesizes official curriculum resources, teacher guidance materials, published research articles, and established ELT and assessment literature.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

The analysis draws on Telangana curriculum-related resources and teacher-support materials, published studies on the state's English curriculum SCERT and foundational scholarship on curriculum development, language pedagogy, and assessment. School Education Official materials were examined for stated aims, pedagogical principles, treatment of language skills, teacher roles, learning activities, and evaluation expectations. Published studies were reviewed for observations concerning learner-centred instruction, interaction, curriculum implementation, and learner proficiency.

ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

A thematic analysis was used to organize the evidence into five broad domains: (a) curriculum orientation, (b) ELT methods and approaches, (c) classroom implementation, (d) evaluation and assessment, and (e) implementation challenges and policy implications. The analysis then examined alignment among these domains. Themes were interpreted cautiously because the study is exploratory and does not include primary observations or interviews conducted specifically for this article.

SCOPE AND DELIMITATIONS

The article focuses on high-school English education, broadly corresponding to the secondary stage, in Telangana. It examines curriculum and evaluation through the lens of ELT methods and approaches. It does not present a statistically representative survey of teachers or students, and it should therefore be read as a conceptual and documentary exploration that can guide subsequent field-based research.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Because the study is based on publicly available documents and published literature, no human participants were recruited for the present exploratory analysis. Scholarly and official sources are acknowledged. Future empirical studies should obtain appropriate institutional permissions and informed consent when collecting data from teachers and students.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. A SHIFT TOWARD LEARNER-CENTRED AND INTERACTION-ORIENTED ELT

The first major theme is a curricular shift from transmission-oriented instruction toward learner participation and interaction. The English curriculum and associated teacher guidance encourage learners to engage with texts, visuals, questions, and discourse activities. This orientation is compatible with communicative language teaching and constructivist pedagogy because learners are expected to use English for meaning-making rather than merely learn rules about the language.

For high-school classrooms, interaction-oriented pedagogy can include information-gap activities, discussions, interviews, role plays, debates, collaborative problem solving, oral presentations, and peer response. Such practices can increase opportunities for meaningful language use. However, interaction

should not be treated as an end in itself. Tasks must be connected to explicit learning outcomes and supported through scaffolding, language input, vocabulary support, and feedback.

2. INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOUR LANGUAGE SKILLS

The curriculum orientation toward listening, speaking, reading, and writing supports an integrated-skills approach. In authentic communication, these skills frequently occur together: a learner listens to instructions, reads information, discusses ideas, and produces a written response. Curriculum units can therefore be organized around themes and communicative purposes rather than around isolated grammar points. For example, a unit on environmental responsibility may integrate reading an informational text, listening to a short message, discussing local problems, and writing a proposal or report.

The challenge is that written examinations may provide stronger incentives for reading and writing than for listening and speaking. A curriculum that values all four skills requires assessment mechanisms capable of capturing oral interaction, listening comprehension, and extended performance. Without such alignment, integrated pedagogy may be reduced to textbook rhetoric rather than sustained classroom practice.

3. THE CONTINUING RELEVANCE AND LIMITS OF TRADITIONAL METHODS

Traditional practices such as explicit grammar instruction, translation, explanation, repetition, and controlled practice should not automatically be rejected. In multilingual classrooms, judicious use of learners' familiar languages can support comprehension, comparison, and metalinguistic awareness. Explicit instruction may also help learners notice patterns and prepare for independent use. The problem arises when these practices become the sole or dominant form of teaching and displace meaningful communication.

A balanced curriculum should therefore distinguish between methods as resources and methods as rigid prescriptions. Teachers may combine explanation with guided discovery, controlled practice with communicative practice, and strategic multilingual support with opportunities for English use. This position is consistent with a principled eclectic or post-method perspective.

4. COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is particularly relevant because it prioritizes meaningful communication, learner participation, functional language use, and interaction. In high-school settings, CLT can be implemented through role plays, problem-solving tasks, peer interviews, collaborative projects, and authentic texts. The approach aligns with curriculum aims that emphasize learner autonomy and the use of English in real-life contexts.

Yet CLT must be adapted to local conditions. Large classes, limited time, mixed proficiency, and examination pressure can make full implementation difficult. The solution is not to abandon communication but to design manageable routines: structured pair work, short speaking cycles, group roles, oral checklists, and rotating participation. Teacher education should demonstrate how communicative principles can operate in ordinary classrooms rather than only in ideal settings.

5. TASK-BASED AND PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

Task-based learning organizes instruction around purposeful activities in which learners use language to achieve an outcome. A task might involve preparing a school survey, conducting an interview, designing a poster, comparing local issues, or producing a short presentation. Project-based work extends this principle over a longer period and can integrate language with social, scientific, and cultural topics.

For curriculum development, tasks provide a bridge between outcomes and classroom activity. Curriculum designers can specify what learners should understand or produce, while teachers retain flexibility to select contexts and supports. Evaluation can then focus on observable performance, including clarity, relevance, language use, collaboration, and reflection. Rubrics can make such evaluation more transparent.

6. DISCOURSE-ORIENTED PEDAGOGY AND GENRE AWARENESS

Telangana's curriculum discussions have highlighted discourse activities such as reports, debates, interviews, and plays. A discourse-oriented approach helps learners understand that language choices depend on purpose, audience, and context. Teaching a report, for example, involves more than vocabulary and grammar; learners need to understand organization, factual language, sequencing, and the expectations of the genre.

Genre awareness can be developed through model texts, joint construction, guided practice, peer review, and independent production. Evaluation should examine whether students can use language appropriately for the intended purpose, not simply whether individual sentences are grammatically correct.

7. THE TEACHER AS FACILITATOR AND CURRICULUM MEDIATOR

Teacher handbooks and curriculum frameworks assign teachers an active mediating role. A facilitator is not a passive observer. Effective facilitation involves planning, selecting resources, diagnosing learner needs, providing comprehensible input, organizing interaction, scaffolding difficult tasks, monitoring participation, and giving feedback. The teacher also mediates between curriculum expectations and local realities.

Teacher competence is therefore central to curriculum success. Teachers need language proficiency, pedagogical content knowledge, assessment literacy, digital competence where relevant, and the ability to work with diverse learners. Professional development should be continuous, practice-based, and linked to classroom problems rather than limited to one-time orientation programmes.

8. EVALUATION AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Telangana curriculum tradition emphasizes continuous and comprehensive assessment principles and the use of multiple techniques. From an ELT perspective, evaluation should be integrated into instruction. Diagnostic assessment identifies learners' starting points; formative assessment supports improvement during learning; summative assessment records achievement at defined stages. These purposes require different tools and should not be collapsed into a single written test.

Useful formative tools include observation schedules, oral questioning, exit tasks, learning logs, portfolios, peer assessment, self-assessment, draft feedback, and short performance tasks. Summative assessment may include written tests and standardized examinations, but it should also represent broader language outcomes where feasible.

9. AUTHENTIC AND PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT

Language ability is demonstrated through use. Authentic assessment therefore asks learners to perform meaningful tasks resembling real communicative demands. Examples include giving directions, participating in a discussion, summarizing information, writing an email, producing a report, presenting a viewpoint, or responding to a text. Such tasks can provide richer evidence than isolated multiple-choice items alone.

Performance assessment requires clear criteria. Analytic rubrics can assess dimensions such as task completion, organization, vocabulary, grammatical control, pronunciation or intelligibility, interaction, and coherence. Criteria should be age-appropriate and manageable for teachers. Moderation and sample-based standardization can improve consistency across classrooms.

10. ALIGNMENT BETWEEN CURRICULUM, PEDAGOGY, AND ASSESSMENT

The central finding of this exploratory analysis is that alignment is the key organizing principle for effective ELT. Curriculum objectives should identify intended competencies; learning activities should provide opportunities to develop those competencies; assessment should gather evidence of the same competencies; and results should inform teaching and curriculum revision. Misalignment produces predictable problems. For example, a curriculum may value speaking, but if evaluation measures only written recall, speaking receives less instructional attention.

A practical alignment model for high schools can be represented as: Needs Analysis → Learning Outcomes → Content and Tasks → Classroom Pedagogy → Formative Assessment → Feedback and Remediation → Summative Assessment → Curriculum Evaluation and Revision. Each stage should generate information for the next stage rather than functioning as an isolated administrative exercise.

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION

Several contextual challenges can influence implementation. First, high teacher workload and large classes may reduce opportunities for individualized feedback and speaking assessment. Second, variation in teacher proficiency and confidence can affect the use of communicative and interaction-based methods. Third, examination pressures may encourage teaching to the test. Fourth, mixed proficiency levels require differentiated support. Fifth, schools may differ in access to libraries, audio resources, digital tools, and stable connectivity. Finally, professional development may not always provide sustained classroom coaching.

These challenges do not imply that learner-centred ELT is unrealistic. Instead, they indicate the importance of scalable practices. Teachers can use pair and group routines, peer feedback, short formative tasks, shared rubrics, locally available texts, and low-cost resources. Curriculum planners can prioritize essential outcomes and provide exemplar tasks that are adaptable to different school contexts.

PROPOSED EXPLORATORY FRAMEWORK FOR TELANGANA HIGH SCHOOLS

Based on the synthesis, the article proposes a five-component framework: Context, Competencies, Classroom Processes, Continuous Evidence, and Curriculum Feedback (the 5C Framework). Context requires systematic attention to learner backgrounds, multilingual realities, school resources, and teacher needs. Competencies define observable language outcomes across the four skills and language use. Classroom Processes include interaction, scaffolding, explicit instruction where needed, task-based learning, reading and writing workshops, and collaborative activity. Continuous Evidence uses diagnostic, formative, performance-based, and summative assessment. Curriculum Feedback ensures that evidence from schools informs textbook revision, teacher support, assessment design, and policy decisions.

The framework does not prescribe one universal method. Its central principle is principled alignment and contextual responsiveness. A rural school, an urban government school, and a resource-rich school may use different pathways while working toward comparable learning outcomes.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

- Conduct periodic needs analyses involving teachers, students, school leaders, and local communities.
- Specify measurable language competencies and progression benchmarks for the secondary stage.
- Design units around themes, communicative purposes, and integrated language skills.
- Provide multiple task models so teachers can adapt activities to class size and proficiency.
- Include locally meaningful texts while ensuring exposure to diverse registers, cultures, and perspectives.
- Build explicit links between textbook activities and assessment criteria.
- Create formal mechanisms through which classroom evidence informs curriculum and textbook revision.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EVALUATION

- Use a balanced assessment system combining diagnostic, formative, and summative purposes.
- Increase opportunities to assess listening and speaking through feasible classroom-based tasks.
- Use portfolios, projects, presentations, and writing processes to document growth.
- Develop clear rubrics and provide teachers with assessment-literacy training.
- Use feedback for improvement rather than only for grading.
- Ensure examination blueprints reflect the competencies emphasized in the curriculum.
- Use assessment data at school and system levels to identify learning gaps and guide remediation.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teacher development should focus on demonstration, practice, observation, feedback, and reflection. Training can include model lessons, microteaching, lesson study, peer observation, action research, and professional learning communities. Priority areas include classroom interaction, multilingual pedagogy, integrated-skills teaching, task design, formative assessment, rubric construction, feedback, and the effective use of digital resources. Teachers should also be supported in adapting methods to large and diverse classes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish district- and school-level ELT professional learning communities.
2. Develop a bank of validated classroom tasks and performance-assessment tools aligned with secondary learning outcomes.
3. Introduce routine low-stakes speaking and listening assessment rather than relying only on occasional high-stakes tests.
4. Provide structured mentoring and classroom coaching following teacher training programmes.
5. Strengthen collaboration among SCERT, teacher education institutions, universities, and schools for curriculum research.
6. Conduct periodic curriculum evaluation using both quantitative learning data and qualitative classroom evidence.
7. Support schools with adaptable print, audio, and digital resources.
8. Encourage teacher-led action research on local ELT problems and innovations.
9. Develop assessment moderation processes to improve consistency in performance-based evaluation.
10. Commission representative empirical studies across districts, school types, and rural-urban contexts.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The article is exploratory and based mainly on documentary and literature analysis. It does not report original survey data, classroom observations, interviews, or experimental evidence collected for this study. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted as analytical propositions and context-sensitive insights rather than definitive estimates of implementation across all Telangana high schools. Future research should triangulate these themes through representative field studies involving teachers, students, school leaders, classroom observations, assessment records, and learning outcomes.

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future studies may investigate differences in ELT practice across districts, rural and urban schools, government and private institutions, and different media of instruction. Mixed-method studies could examine teacher beliefs, classroom practices, learner proficiency, and assessment outcomes simultaneously. Longitudinal research could explore whether sustained professional development improves the implementation of interaction-oriented pedagogy. Experimental or quasi-experimental studies could test the effectiveness of specific task-based, cooperative, digital, or formative-assessment interventions.

Further work is also needed on the validity and reliability of classroom-based speaking and writing assessments in large-scale school systems.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the development of an effective high-school English curriculum in Telangana depends on more than selecting content or prescribing a preferred teaching method. Curriculum, pedagogy, teacher capacity, resources, and evaluation form an interconnected system. The curriculum orientation evident in Telangana's English resources provides substantial support for learner-centred, interaction-oriented, integrated-skills, and discourse-based learning. The major challenge lies in sustaining these principles under ordinary school conditions and ensuring that assessment practices reinforce rather than contradict them.

A context-sensitive and principled approach to ELT is therefore required. Teachers should be able to combine explicit instruction with communicative practice, multilingual support with meaningful English use, and structured activities with learner autonomy. Evaluation should generate useful evidence about learning and should include formative feedback and authentic performance in addition to summative testing. Most importantly, curriculum evaluation should create feedback loops through which evidence from classrooms informs future curriculum development. Such alignment can strengthen the quality, equity, and relevance of English language education for high-school learners in Telangana.

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