K.R. MANGALAM UNIVERSITY
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1947 TO 2047

CASE STUDY

ON

"Evaluation of Primary English Language among Students in Nearby Villages"

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES

K.R. MANGALAM UNIVERSITY, GURUGRAM

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Table of Contents

S. No.	Title	Page No.
1	Cover Page	1
2	Table of Contents	2
3	Acknowledgement	3
4	Introduction	4
5	Objectives of the Study	7
6	Methodology	8
7	Literature Survey	12
8	Pre-Intervention Observations	18
9	Activities Organised	22
10	Limitations and Barriers	26
11	Outcome and Result Analysis of the Study	31
12	Conclusion	48
13	Recommendations	50
14	References	52
15	Photographs	53
16	Signatures	59
17	Annexure I: Attendance Sheet of the Participants	60
18	Annexure II: Questionnaires Responses	62
19	Annexure III: Forms and Approvals	102

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Introduction

Rural education in India has long been a subject of concern, characterized by persistent challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited access to quality instruction, and pronounced disparities in learning outcomes compared to urban counterparts. These issues have highlighted the urgent need for comprehensive reforms to ensure inclusive and equitable educational development across the nation. In recognition of this need, the Government of India introduced the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, a landmark initiative aimed at transforming the country's education system through a more holistic, flexible, and inclusive framework.

The context of rural education is both complex and significant. Rural areas account for nearly 65% of India's population, and the children residing in these communities are not only the future workforce but also critical to the nation’s socio-economic fabric. Despite their importance, rural students often face systemic barriers: resource limitations, underqualified teachers, and teaching methods that emphasize rote learning over critical thinking and practical application. Historically, efforts to address these issues have been fragmented and insufficiently visionary. NEP 2020, however, represents a strategic shift toward a more integrated and forward-looking approach, aiming to bridge the rural-urban education divide and promote lifelong learning.

Among the many aspects of education, language proficiency—particularly in English—plays a vital role in shaping students' confidence, communication abilities, and access to future opportunities. English is increasingly essential in both academic and professional domains, serving as a gateway to higher education, competitive examinations, and global employment prospects. Oral proficiency, in particular, is a key indicator of a learner’s practical language competence. Unlike reading and writing skills, oral proficiency reflects the ability to use

language dynamically and interactively, a crucial skill in today's interconnected world where collaboration and communication are highly valued.

Despite the recognized importance of English, rural schools across India, including Rajkiya Madhyamik Vidhyalaya, Berka village, and Shaheed Shree Jayakrishan R.K.M. Vidyalaya, Alipur Sohna, Gurugram, continue to struggle with the development of oral English proficiency. Several factors contribute to this persistent challenge: minimal exposure to spoken English in daily life, lack of trained English-speaking educators, large class sizes, and a curriculum that often prioritizes grammar and memorization over conversational practice. Additionally, socio-cultural factors such as limited parental support for English learning and a lack of English-speaking role models further impede students' progress.

To address these challenges, a focused oral proficiency assessment was conducted on October 18, 2024. The purpose of this assessment was to evaluate the students' spoken English abilities, identify the barriers they face, and propose targeted interventions to improve their language use in real-life contexts. The assessment sought to go beyond traditional written exams, employing interactive and communicative tasks that more accurately reflect students' ability to use English in practical situations.

This case study aims to evaluate the current state of English language education in these two rural schools, with a particular emphasis on oral proficiency. By analysing the students' performance and the conditions affecting their language learning, the study seeks to contribute to the development of more effective and inclusive English teaching practices in rural India. It also highlights the importance of teacher training, community engagement, and the integration of technology as potential levers for change. Ultimately, this study underscores the critical role of spoken English skills in empowering rural students, enabling them to participate more fully in academic, social, and professional spheres, and expanding their horizons in an increasingly globalized world.

By situating the findings within the broader framework of educational reform and rural development, this case study aspires to offer actionable insights for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders committed to bridging the language divide and fostering equitable opportunities for all learners.

Objectives Of the Study

The primary objective of this case study is to evaluate of English proficiency among primary, School students at Rajkiya Madhyamik Vidyalaya, and Shaheed Shree Jayakrishan R. K. M. Vidyalaya, in Berka and Alipur (respectively) villages of Sohna, Gurugram and develop evidence-based strategies for improvement.

i. Assess current levels of oral English proficiency using standardized assessments.
ii. Identify challenges hindering oral English development (teacher training, resources, student demographics).
iii. Evaluate effectiveness of teaching methodologies and materials.
iv. Develop targeted interventions to improve oral English instruction and student outcomes

By achieving these objectives, the case study aims to contribute to the development of effective oral English language skills, improved academic success, and enhanced lifelong learning opportunities for primary school students.

Methodology

This study employs a descriptive case study design within a mixed-methods framework to evaluate English language learning and teaching among students from Classes 6 to 8 in rural schools. The descriptive case study approach is particularly suited for providing a detailed and contextualized understanding of the current state of English proficiency and pedagogical practices without attempting to establish causal relationships. By integrating both quantitative and qualitative data, the mixed-methods paradigm enables a comprehensive exploration of student competencies, learning experiences, and teaching challenges, thereby capturing the multifaceted nature of English education in rural settings.

The research was conducted in Shaheed Shree Jayakrishan R. K. M. Vidyalaya, Alipur, Sohna chosen for its representativeness of rural educational environments. A total of forty students from Classes 6, 7, and 8 participated in the study, representing a diverse range of abilities and backgrounds. Additionally, all English language teachers from the school were included to provide insights into instructional methods and resource availability.

Data collection was carried out in two phases: an initial baseline assessment followed by intervention activities and follow-up evaluations. The baseline assessment began with a vocabulary check designed to quantitatively measure students' receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge. Complementing this, students' oral reading skills were assessed through individually administered reading passages appropriate to their grade levels. These sessions were conducted in person, and observations on students' fluency, pronunciation, and comprehension were noted by Dr Padmani during the readings. Observation notes were taken to capture reading patterns and common errors, providing both quantitative and qualitative insights into students' oral reading skills.

To capture students' attitudes, experiences, and challenges related to English learning, an oral open-ended questionnaire was administered. This semi-structured oral questionnaire was conducted either individually or in small groups, enabling students to express their thoughts in their own words. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of students and all English teachers, providing deeper qualitative insights into learning environments, teaching practices, and resource constraints. These interviews were analysed thematically to extract nuanced perspectives on the educational context.

Following the baseline assessment, intervention activities were organized to actively engage students and reinforce language skills. After these activities, a multiple-choice questionnaire was administered to students to quantitatively assess their basic understanding and experiences with English language learning. This questionnaire, consisting of twenty age-appropriate items aligned with curricular objectives, was structured on the basis of the NCERT Tools for English Evaluation and the CBSE Assessment and Evaluation Handbook, ensuring both relevance and rigor. It was designed to capture learning gains and student perceptions post-intervention. Simultaneously, a teacher questionnaire—also developed in accordance with these established frameworks—was distributed to gather comprehensive data on teaching methodologies, resource availability, and challenges faced in rural English instruction. This teacher instrument included a mix of multiple-choice and open-ended questions, allowing for both quantitative summarization and qualitative exploration of instructional realities.

In addition to questionnaires, participatory classroom activities such as Word Bingo, Sentence Bingo, and Spelling Bee were conducted to reinforce vocabulary, sentence construction, and spelling in an interactive manner. These activities were designed to foster student engagement and active learning. The researcher observed these sessions, recording participation levels, accuracy, and enthusiasm, which were later analysed qualitatively to

assess the effectiveness of these pedagogical strategies and to identify areas requiring further support.

Data analysis involved a combination of descriptive statistical techniques for quantitative data and thematic analysis for qualitative data. Quantitative results from vocabulary tests, multiple-choice questionnaires, and teacher surveys were summarized using measures of central tendency and frequency distributions to provide a clear picture of student performance and teaching conditions. Qualitative data from oral questionnaires, interviews, and open-ended survey responses were coded and analysed thematically to uncover patterns related to learner motivation, instructional challenges, and resource constraints.

Ethical considerations were carefully observed throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from school authorities, and all participants, ensuring voluntary participation. Confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing data and using pseudonyms in all reports to protect participant identities. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without any negative consequences.

Despite the methodological rigor, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The study's focus on a single rural school limits the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts. Additionally, the relatively short duration of the intervention activities restricts the ability to assess long-term impacts on language proficiency. Finally, self-reported data, particularly from students, may be subject to social desirability bias or inaccuracies.

In summary, this descriptive case study, grounded in a mixed-methods approach, provides a detailed and contextualized evaluation of English language proficiency and teaching practices in rural middle schools. By combining quantitative assessments, qualitative insights, and participatory learning activities, the study offers valuable evidence to inform future

educational interventions and policy decisions aimed at improving English language education in rural India.

Literature Survey

The evaluation of primary English language proficiency among students in rural Indian villages is a subject of growing academic and policy interest, reflecting broader concerns about educational equity, social mobility, and the role of English in a rapidly globalizing India. English has long been regarded as a tool for upward mobility and access to better educational and employment opportunities. However, the realities of English language education in rural India are shaped by a complex interplay of historical, socio-economic, policy-driven, and pedagogical factors.

Historical and Policy Context

The roots of English language education in India can be traced back to the colonial period, when English was established as the language of administration and higher education. Post-independence, the Indian government sought to promote linguistic diversity and national integration through the three-language formula, which mandated the teaching of English, Hindi, and a regional language in schools. While the policy intended to balance the need for a national link language with respect for regional identities, its implementation has been uneven, particularly in rural areas.

Over the decades, several national policies have aimed to improve educational access and quality in rural India. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), launched in 2001, was a flagship program to universalize elementary education and address disparities in access and quality. SSA emphasized infrastructure development, teacher recruitment, and the inclusion of English as a subject at the primary level. The Right to Education (RTE) Act of 2009 further mandated free and compulsory education for children aged 6-14, with a focus on equity and inclusion. More recently, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has articulated a vision

for holistic, multidisciplinary, and multilingual education, recognizing the importance of English while prioritizing mother tongue instruction in the early years.

Despite these policy frameworks, challenges persist in translating policy intent into classroom realities, especially in rural settings. The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) has consistently highlighted gaps in learning outcomes, including in English, with rural students lagging behind their urban counterparts. These gaps are attributed to a range of factors, including resource constraints, teacher quality, socio-economic barriers, and limited exposure to English outside the classroom.

Infrastructure and Resource Constraints

One of the most significant challenges facing rural schools is the lack of adequate infrastructure and resources. Many rural schools operate in dilapidated buildings with poor ventilation, inadequate lighting, and insufficient classroom space. Basic amenities such as clean drinking water, functional toilets, and electricity are often lacking, which affects both student attendance and teacher morale. The availability of teaching-learning materials, including textbooks, supplementary readers, and audio-visual aids, is limited. In the context of English language teaching, the absence of age-appropriate, culturally relevant, and engaging materials further hampers effective instruction.

Access to technology, which has the potential to bridge educational divides, remains limited in many rural areas. While initiatives such as Digital India and the deployment of smart classrooms have made some inroads, the digital divide persists due to unreliable internet connectivity, lack of devices, and low digital literacy among teachers and students. As a result, rural students have fewer opportunities to engage with interactive and multimedia-based English learning resources that are increasingly available to their urban peers.

Teacher Quality and Pedagogical Challenges

The quality of English language teaching in rural schools is a major concern. There is a chronic shortage of qualified English teachers, and those who are available often lack proficiency in the language and training in modern pedagogical approaches. Many rural teachers are generalists who teach multiple subjects, including English, without specialized training. Pre-service and in-service teacher education programs, delivered through District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) and State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs), have struggled to keep pace with the evolving demands of English language pedagogy. Training is often theoretical, with limited focus on practical classroom strategies, communicative language teaching, or the use of technology.

Classroom practices in rural schools tend to be dominated by traditional, teacher-centered methods, with a focus on rote memorization, grammar drills, and textbook-based instruction. There is little emphasis on developing communicative competence, oral fluency, or critical thinking skills. Large class sizes, multi-grade classrooms, and irregular student attendance further complicate the teaching-learning process. The lack of opportunities for teachers to engage in professional development, peer learning, or reflective practice limits their ability to innovate and adapt to the needs of their students.

Socio-Economic and Cultural Barriers

Socio-economic factors play a critical role in shaping educational outcomes in rural areas. Many rural families face poverty, food insecurity, and precarious livelihoods, which affect children's ability to attend school regularly and engage fully in learning. The need for children to contribute to household income or agricultural work often leads to absenteeism or early dropout. Parental education levels are generally low, and parents may be unable to support their children's English language learning at home.

Cultural attitudes towards English and education more broadly also influence student motivation and aspirations. While there is a growing recognition of the value of English as a skill for social mobility, some communities may view English with suspicion or associate it with cultural alienation. The absence of an English-speaking environment outside the classroom means that students have limited opportunities to practice and reinforce their language skills. This lack of exposure contributes to low confidence, anxiety, and a reluctance to use English in real-life situations.

Learning Outcomes and Performance Gaps

Empirical studies and large-scale assessments such as ASER have consistently documented significant gaps in English language proficiency between rural and urban students. Rural students often struggle with basic reading comprehension, vocabulary, and oral communication in English. These foundational gaps have a cascading effect on academic achievement, as English becomes the medium of instruction for many subjects at higher grades. Students who lack proficiency in English are at a disadvantage in accessing curriculum content, participating in classroom discussions, and performing well in examinations.

Gender, caste, and other forms of social disadvantage further compound these disparities. Girls, children from marginalized communities, and those with disabilities face additional barriers to accessing quality English language education. The intersection of these factors creates a complex landscape of exclusion and inequality that requires targeted interventions.

Government Initiatives and Policy Innovations

Recognizing these challenges, the Indian government has launched a range of initiatives to improve English language education in rural areas. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has supported the recruitment of additional teachers, the development of English language teaching materials, and the organization of teacher training workshops. The Rashtriya

Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and the integrated Samagra Shiksha scheme have extended these efforts to the secondary level, with a focus on holistic school improvement.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a significant shift in the approach to language education. It advocates for the use of the mother tongue or regional language as the medium of instruction in the early years, with a gradual introduction of English and other languages. The NEP emphasizes activity-based, experiential, and competency-driven pedagogy, moving away from rote learning towards the development of critical thinking and communication skills. It also calls for strengthening teacher education, leveraging technology, and fostering community participation in school governance.

Other notable initiatives include the Digital India program, which aims to expand digital infrastructure and promote the use of technology in education. The National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER) and the DIKSHA platform provide free access to digital learning materials, including English language resources. The Midday Meal Scheme and the National Literacy Mission support school attendance and foundational literacy, creating an enabling environment for language learning.

Innovative Practices and Community Engagement

In addition to government-led efforts, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations, and private sector actors have played a vital role in advancing English language education in rural India. NGOs such as Pratham, Room to Read, and the Azim Premji Foundation have developed innovative models for English language instruction, including bridge learning centres, peer learning groups, and mother-tongue based bilingual education. These organizations often work closely with local communities, schools, and government agencies to design contextually relevant interventions, provide teacher training, and monitor learning outcomes.

Community involvement is increasingly recognized as a key factor in sustaining educational improvements. Parental engagement, school management committees, and local leadership can help create a supportive environment for English language learning. Efforts to raise awareness about the importance of English, address cultural barriers, and build local capacity are essential for ensuring the long-term success of language education initiatives.

Research Gaps and Future Directions

Despite the growing body of research on English language education in rural India, several gaps remain. There is a need for more longitudinal studies that track the impact of specific interventions over time, as well as research that explores the experiences of marginalized groups, including girls, children with disabilities, and linguistic minorities. The role of technology in supporting English language learning, particularly in low-resource settings, warrants further investigation. Additionally, there is scope for comparative studies that examine different models of bilingual and multilingual education and their implications for English language proficiency.

In summary, the literature on evaluating primary English language proficiency among students in rural Indian villages highlights a range of interrelated challenges and opportunities. While government policies and programs have made significant strides in expanding access to education and promoting English language learning, persistent gaps in infrastructure, teacher quality, and socio-economic conditions continue to hinder progress. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic, multi-stakeholder approach that combines policy support, capacity-building, community engagement, and pedagogical innovation. Only through sustained and context-sensitive efforts can rural students be empowered with the English language skills they need to participate fully in India's educational and economic future.

Pre-Intervention Observations

Before initiating the structured assessment and intervention activities, a comprehensive pre-intervention observational study was conducted to understand the existing conditions of English language education, particularly focusing on oral proficiency, in two rural schools:

- Rajkiya Madhyamik Vidhyalaya, Berka Village
- Shaheed Shree Jayakrishan R.K.M. Vidyalaya, Alipur Sohna, Gurugram

By combining the pedagogical expertise of English faculty with the fresh academic perspectives of undergraduate students from the School of Humanities, the interdisciplinary team enriched the observation process and contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the educational context.

The team visited the schools in early October 2024, prior to the implementation of any assessment tools or interactive activities. Their aim was to evaluate the learning environment, teaching practices, student engagement, and infrastructural support for English language instruction, with a specific emphasis on oral communication skills.

1. Classroom Environment and Infrastructure

The classrooms were functional but sparse in terms of English language learning resources. Most rooms had basic facilities like blackboards and benches, but lacked visual aids, posters, reading corners, or audio-visual tools that could support language immersion.

There was no dedicated English learning space or lab, and no exposure to spoken English outside the textbook content.

Class sizes ranged from 20 to 30 students, and seating arrangements were traditional, with limited opportunity for group or peer-based activities that could foster speaking practice.

2. Teaching Practices and Language Instruction

English was taught as a formal subject, often following a rigid, exam-oriented pattern. Lessons were dominated by reading passages, grammar explanations, and translations into the regional language (Hindi).

The English teachers displayed varying levels of confidence in spoken English, with some heavily relying on Hindi for instruction and classroom communication.

There was little to no evidence of communicative or interactive language teaching methods. Techniques such as storytelling, dialogue practice, role-play, or listening activities were absent from the classroom routine.

Most instruction focused on rote memorization rather than comprehension or application of language in meaningful contexts.

3. Student Engagement and Language Usage

Students appeared attentive and respectful, but generally hesitant to use English verbally, especially in the presence of visitors.

In informal discussions facilitated by the observation team, many students could recognize English words or sentences from their textbooks but struggled to construct or speak complete sentences on their own.

Oral reading, where attempted, was largely mechanical and lacked expression or understanding. Pronunciation difficulties were common, and students often paused or skipped unfamiliar words.

Peer interactions and classroom discourse occurred entirely in Hindi, reflecting the absence of English as a communicative tool rather than just a subject of study.

4. Learning Materials and Support Systems

The primary learning materials were limited to the state board-prescribed textbooks, which were often outdated and focused more on reading and grammar than listening or speaking skills.

No supplementary resources such as flashcards, bilingual dictionaries, storybooks, or spoken English guides were available to students or teachers.

Library facilities, where present, lacked age-appropriate English literature or language enrichment materials.

5. Observations from the Humanities Team

The faculty and students from the School of Humanities conducted structured and unstructured observations, including:

- Teacher-student interactions
- Student responses during lessons
- Language used in day-to-day school functioning

Humanities students, acting as neutral facilitators, engaged students in casual English conversations, which revealed a gap between receptive (understanding) and productive (speaking) language skills.

Students expressed interest in speaking English but reported a lack of exposure and opportunities to practice it meaningfully, both at school and at home.

The team noted a generally positive attitude toward learning English, with several students expressing aspirations linked to language proficiency (e.g., becoming teachers, doctors, or working in cities).

6. Teachers' and Administrators' Input

School faculty members appreciated the intervention initiative and acknowledged the urgent need to strengthen oral English skills among students.

Teachers cited challenges such as large class sizes, inadequate training in communicative language teaching, and a lack of materials as barriers to improving English proficiency.

The school heads in both institutions expressed willingness to collaborate and support interventions aimed at enhancing students' language outcomes.

The pre-intervention observations conducted by the English faculty and students from the School of Humanities provided critical insights into the current state of English language learning in rural classrooms. They highlighted systemic issues such as limited oral language use, traditional teaching practices, insufficient resources, and teacher capacity gaps. At the same time, the observations also revealed a strong desire among students to learn and speak English, suggesting a promising foundation for targeted interventions.

These findings informed the design of subsequent activities, which aimed to activate students' spoken English in low-pressure, interactive formats, foster a more engaging learning environment, and offer teachers models for incorporating oral language tasks into regular instruction.

Activities Organised Under This Programmes

1. **Ice-Breaking Session**

Interactive activities at the beginning of a program or class to help students feel comfortable speaking in English. Examples include name games, "two truths and a lie," “find someone who…” tasks, or simple storytelling.

a. **Objective:** To create a safe and welcoming environment where students feel comfortable speaking in English. To encourage students to express basic personal information in English.

b. **Learning Outcome:** During the ice-breaking session, students responded to simple questions about their personal likes and interests, such as their name, favorite food, or preferred games. This activity encouraged students to speak in English and helped them feel more confident while interacting with peers and the facilitator in a relaxed and supportive environment.

How it helps:

- Reduces anxiety and builds confidence to s
- Speak in English.
- Encourages peer interaction using simple English structures.
- Helps the teacher assess students’ baseline communication skills informally.

2. **Spelling Bee Competition**

A competitive event wherein students spell words aloud. It can be adapted for different levels.

a. **Objective**: To test students’ vocabulary and spelling abilities.

b. **Learning Outcome:** The activity witnessed enthusiastic participation from students across all classes. Many demonstrated strong vocabulary skills and quick recall. The competition was healthy and encouraging, with students cheering each other on. The top performers were rewarded with pens as tokens of appreciation and motivation.

How it helps:

- Encourages accurate spelling and attention to phonics.
- Enhances concentration, memory, and word recognition.
- Creates a fun and motivating learning environment.
- Builds public speaking skills and confidence.

3. **Questionnaires for Teachers and Students**

Pre-designed tools to collect feedback and data about learning needs, challenges, and progress from both students and teachers.

a. **Objective:** To gather insights on the methods of English instruction, resources available, challenges faced by teachers, and student attitudes toward learning English.

b. **Learning Outcome:** Responses revealed a significant level of interest and effort from both teachers and students despite the infrastructural limitations. Teachers cited a lack of teaching aids and formal training in English language instruction, while students expressed a positive attitude towards learning the language, citing its importance for their future.

How it helps:

- Helps teachers understand students' language backgrounds, confidence levels, and preferences.
- Empowers students by giving them a voice in their learning process.

- Informs curriculum adjustments and targeted interventions.

4. **Word Bingo**

A fun game where students match spoken or defined words with a bingo card.

a. **Objective:** To reinforce word recognition and listening comprehension in an interactive format.

b. **Learning Outcome:** The Word Bingo game created an enjoyable learning environment. Students were quick to recognize familiar words and showed notable excitement during the game. The exercise proved effective in engaging even the more reserved students, indicating that inclusive, activity-based teaching methods can significantly enhance participation.

How it helps:

- Reinforces vocabulary and listening skills.
- Provides multisensory learning (visual, auditory, and kinesthetic).
- Encourages quick recall of learned words in a relaxed setting.

5. **Oral Reading Assessment**

Students read a short passage aloud to assess pronunciation, fluency, intonation, and basic comprehension.

a. **Objective:** To assess students' fluency, pronunciation, and ability to interpret a familiar text. To evaluate students' comprehension through both factual and inferential questions.

b. **Learning Outcome:** In the oral reading assessment, students were asked to read a paragraph from a previously taught textbook aloud. The facilitator observed their pronunciation, fluency, and ability to decode unfamiliar words. After reading,

students answered a set of comprehension questions, demonstrating their understanding by identifying key details from the text and making simple inferences based on the content.

How it helps:

- Builds fluency and vocabulary recognition.
- Helps diagnose phonetic or pronunciation difficulties.
- Improves reading confidence and pace.
- Enables teachers to tailor future instruction based on individual needs.

6. Vocabulary Check

Simple tasks like matching words to meanings, fill-in-the-blanks, word puzzles, or picture-word association to assess vocabulary knowledge.

a. **Objective:** To evaluate students' knowledge of selected vocabulary from the passage. To encourage the use of contextual clues to infer the meanings of unfamiliar words.

b. **Learning Outcome:** As part of the vocabulary check, students were asked to identify and explain the meanings of 2–3 underlined words from the passage they had read. For unfamiliar words, they were encouraged to use context clues to guess the meanings. This activity helped assess their existing vocabulary and supported the development of strategies for understanding new words through contextual interpretation.

How it helps:

- Strengthens word recall and contextual usage.
- Expands active and passive vocabulary.
- Makes vocabulary learning more interactive and less rote-based.

Limitations & Barriers Observed during Study

The study illuminated a range of entrenched barriers that collectively impede the development of oral English proficiency among students in rural educational settings. These obstacles are multifaceted, encompassing infrastructural shortcomings, pedagogical limitations, socio-economic pressures, and cultural dynamics. Understanding these challenges is crucial for designing effective interventions and policy responses.

1. Inadequate Audio-Visual Aids and English Reading Resources

A critical limitation observed was the scarcity of essential instructional materials that facilitate language acquisition. Classrooms in both schools were generally devoid of storybooks, age-appropriate English readers, flashcards, and listening tools. Audio-visual aids—such as projectors, recorded dialogues, or interactive language software—were either absent or non-functional.

Implications:

- **Limited Sensory Engagement:** The lack of multi-sensory materials restricts students' exposure to authentic English pronunciation, intonation, and conversational contexts.
- **Monotonous Learning:** Reliance on textbooks alone creates a repetitive, text-heavy environment, which fails to stimulate auditory or oral engagement.
- **Missed Opportunities for Natural Acquisition:** Without varied and rich English input, students are unable to internalize the language through natural listening and speaking processes, which are essential for oral proficiency.

2. Non-specialized and Undertrained Teaching Staff

The study found that English instruction was primarily delivered by generalist teachers, many of whom juggled multiple subjects and grade levels. Most lacked formal training in English language pedagogy, especially in communicative and interactive teaching methods.

Implications:

- **Traditional Teaching Dominance:** Teachers tended to favor grammar-translation and rote memorization over interactive speaking activities.
- **Limited Oral Practice:** There was little emphasis on group discussions, role-plays, or pronunciation drills, which are vital for developing oral skills.
- **Teacher Confidence:** Many teachers themselves lacked confidence in spoken English, further limiting their ability to model and encourage oral language use in the classroom.

3. Socio-Economic Pressures and Irregular Attendance

A significant proportion of students came from economically marginalized families, where education often competes with household or agricultural responsibilities. Irregular attendance was common, as many students were required to assist with family labor or caregiving.

Implications:

- **Interrupted Learning:** Inconsistent attendance disrupts the continuity necessary for language acquisition, which thrives on regular exposure and practice.
- **Reduced Engagement:** Socio-economic stress often results in low classroom energy, diminished focus, and limited practice time at home.

- **Learning Gaps:** Students who miss classes fall behind, creating cumulative gaps in their language skills, especially in speaking and listening.

4. Absence of an English-Speaking Environment

The community and home environments in these rural settings predominantly use Hindi or local dialects for communication. Opportunities to hear or use English outside the classroom were virtually non-existent.

Implications:

- **Academic Compartmentalization:** English is perceived as a school subject rather than a practical tool for communication.
- **Lack of Reinforcement:** Without environmental reinforcement, students rarely internalize classroom learning, resulting in low fluency and confidence.
- **Fear and Hesitation:** The absence of real-life practice contributes to anxiety and reluctance to speak English, even when opportunities arise.

5. The Digital Divide and Low Parental Involvement

The digital divide remains a formidable barrier. Most students lacked access to smartphones, computers, or reliable internet at home, severely limiting their exposure to online English learning resources.

Implications:

- **Missed Digital Opportunities:** Students are unable to benefit from language learning apps, online videos, or interactive games that could supplement classroom instruction.

- **Parental Support Constraints:** Many parents are not literate in English and are unfamiliar with how to assist their children's language development. This is not due to lack of interest, but rather a lack of capacity and resources.

- **Limited Home Practice:** Without encouragement or guidance at home, students have little motivation or opportunity to practice English outside school hours.

Systemic Nature of the Barriers

These barriers are not isolated; rather, they interact to form a systemic web that restricts students' access to quality English language learning. Infrastructural deficits limit resource availability, which is compounded by pedagogical gaps due to undertrained teachers. Socio-economic challenges lead to irregular attendance and low engagement, while cultural and environmental factors hinder the practical use of English. The digital divide and low parental involvement further exacerbate these issues, creating a cycle of disadvantage.

Recommendations for Addressing the Barriers

The findings of this study underscore the urgent need for context-sensitive, multi-level interventions, such as:

- **Teacher Capacity Building:** Invest in ongoing professional development focused on communicative English teaching methods, including practical workshops and peer learning opportunities.

- **Resource Innovation:** Develop and distribute low-cost, contextually relevant oral language activities and materials that can be used even in resource-constrained settings.

- **Community Engagement:** Enhance awareness among parents and local leaders about the value of English proficiency and involve them in supporting school initiatives.

- **Bridging the Digital Gap:** Explore localized, low-tech solutions such as community radio, offline audio resources, or mobile learning vans to provide English exposure where internet access is limited.

Conclusion

Addressing these barriers requires a coordinated, multi-stakeholder approach involving educators, policymakers, communities, and NGOs. Only through sustained, contextually appropriate efforts can the rural-urban language divide be narrowed, empowering rural students to use English as a tool for personal, academic, and social advancement.

Outcome and Result Analysis of the Study

This case study is conducted among 40 students to assess their exposure to English, perceptions of difficulty, learning resources, and preferred pedagogical methods.

1. Frequency and Environment of Language Use

A majority of students (75%) reported using English regularly at school, either daily or several times a week, indicating an encouraging level of exposure. However, a small group reported rarely or never using English in class, suggesting inconsistency in language immersion. When asked how much English they use at home, most students reported only "some" or "very little" use, reflecting that school remains the primary source of English input.

2. Attitudes Toward English

The learners showed a generally positive disposition toward English: over half liked the language, although many admitted to finding it difficult. This was reinforced by the fact that most students felt English is important for their future, yet only a few felt truly confident speaking it in class. Speaking and writing were identified as the most difficult skills, pointing to a need for stronger practice in expressive abilities.

3. Confidence, Mistakes, and Motivation

Low confidence emerged as a theme — while a small number of students felt confident speaking English, many reported feeling nervous or lacking confidence altogether. Interestingly, a majority of students were resilient in the face of mistakes, indicating that while they are hesitant, they are still motivated to improve. Emotional responses like nervousness and frustration were also evident, highlighting the need for a more psychologically safe learning space.

4. Learning Support and Resources

Fifty percent of the students reported having appropriate books and notebooks, while the rest either had insufficient resources or none at all. In terms of support at home, responses were mixed — some students received regular help from family, while others studied alone. This inconsistency in access to material and human resources may influence language outcomes significantly.

5. Teaching Exposure and Understanding

Only 25% students reported that their teachers "always" spoke English in class, while the rest indicated varying frequencies. Likewise, while most students understood classroom English to some extent, some struggled, signaling a need for more scaffolded teacher talk.

6. Reading and Writing

Students' relationship with writing was divided — many found it difficult but were still willing to try. Enjoyment of reading varied too; some students liked reading in English while others found it hard or uninteresting, suggesting that reading levels and material selection need tailoring.

7. Vocabulary Acquisition

Students reported learning new words through a mix of books, teachers, videos, and friends/family. The diversity of sources shows that English learning is not limited to textbooks and can benefit from integrating multimedia and peer interaction.

8. Learning Preferences and Classroom Interaction

A strong preference emerged for fun, visual, and activity-based learning. Students mentioned enjoying games, videos, songs, and pictures. Many also liked group work or were open to it, indicating that social learning environments could boost engagement. The most commonly used English expressions at school were functional phrases like greetings and classroom instructions, revealing a limited but practical vocabulary base.

Summary

The responses paint a picture of students who are interested in learning English and recognize its importance, yet face hurdles in confidence, expressive skills, and resource access. Based on the analysis:

- Speaking and writing require targeted classroom time through structured, supportive exercises.
- Confidence-building strategies like pair work, praise, and low-stakes practice can reduce anxiety.
- Learning materials need to be distributed equitably to ensure all learners are equipped.
- Teachers should increase the use of English in class in a comprehensible manner and use scaffolding where needed.
- Incorporating interactive tools like games, songs, and videos will likely make learning more effective and enjoyable.

Result Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire

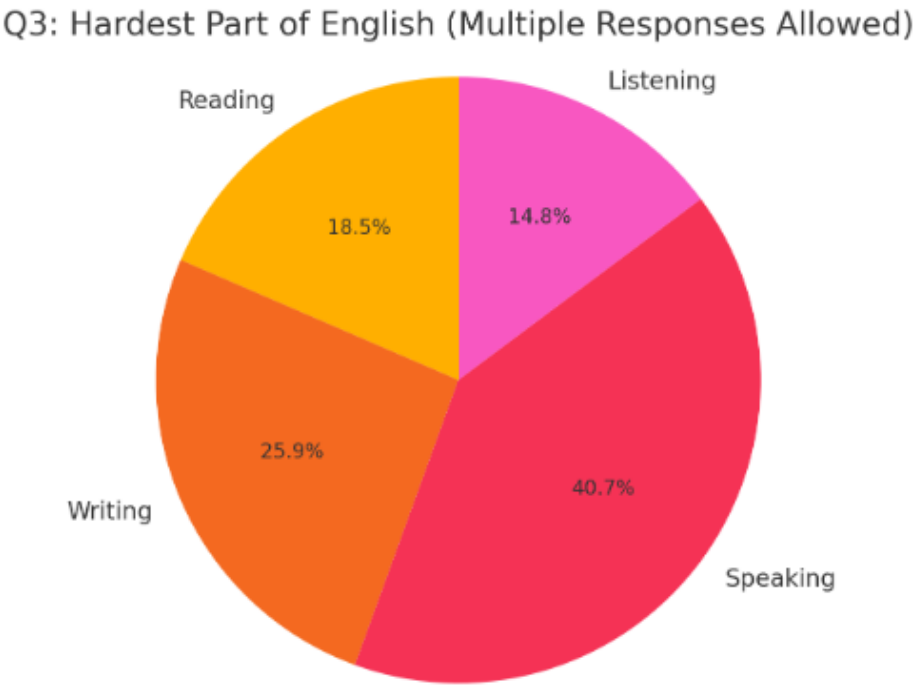
Q. No.	Question Focus	Aspect to be Assessed	Remarks
Q1	Frequency of English use at school	Learning Environment & Support	Indicates level of exposure
Q2	Attitude towards learning English	Learner Attitudes and Motivation	Gauges emotional response
Q3	Hardest part of English	Language Skills	Identifies specific learner difficulties
Q4	Availability of learning materials	Learning Environment & Support	Assesses infrastructural support
Q5	Confidence speaking English in class	Language Skills	Confidence indicator
Q6	Suggestions to make learning fun/easy	Learner Attitudes and Motivation	Useful for pedagogical improvement
Q7	How students learn new words	Learning Strategies	Reveals learning strategies
Q8	Practice of speaking English outside school	Learning Environment & Support	Measures use beyond school
Q9	Language comfort (English vs local)	Learning Strategies	Reveals language preference
Q10	Help at home with English	Learning Environment &	Indicates family

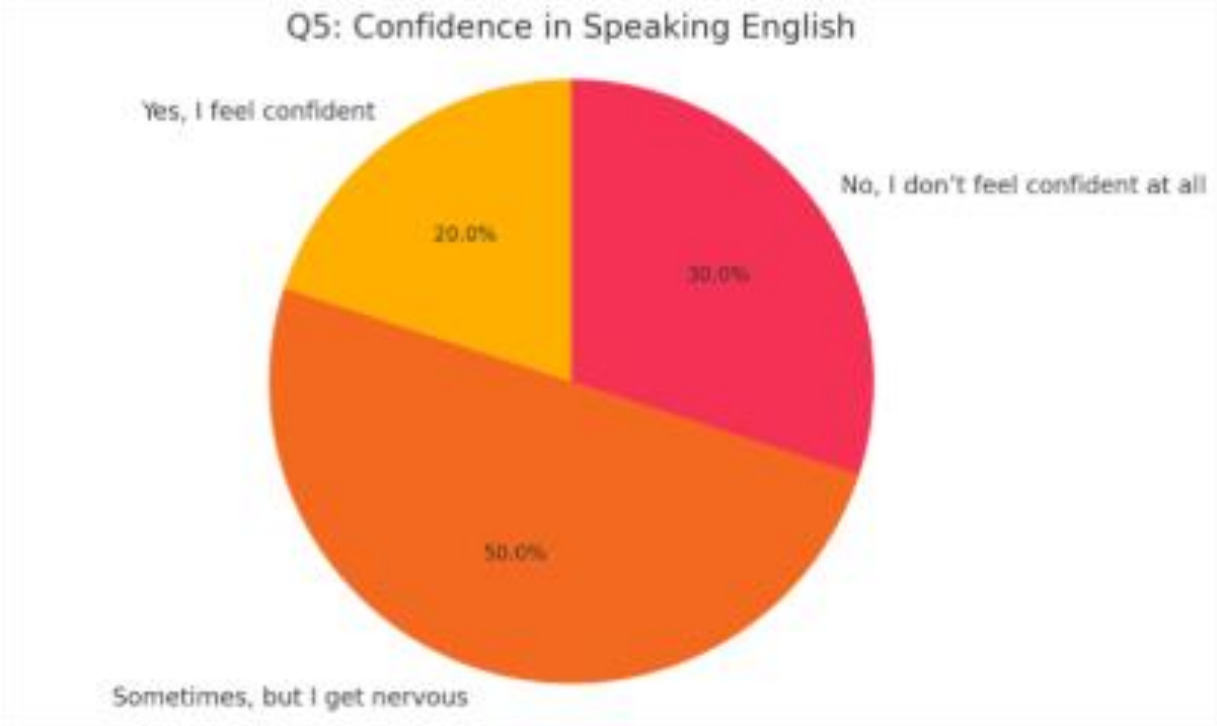
	studies	Support	involvement
Q11	Interest in learning through games or songs	Learner Attitudes and Motivation	Measures creative engagement preference
Q12	Attitude toward writing in English	Language Skills	Perception of writing ability
Q13	How often teacher speaks English in class	Learning Environment & Support	Indicates classroom language environment
Q14	Understanding teacher's spoken English	Language Skills	Assesses listening comprehension
Q15	Interest in reading English stories/books	Language Skills	Assesses interest in reading
Q16	Reaction to making mistakes in English	Learner Attitudes and Motivation	Shows resilience or fear
Q17	Importance of English for the future	Learner Attitudes and Motivation	Perceived relevance for life/future
Q18	English exposure at home	Learning Environment & Support	Measures environmental exposure
Q19	Preference for group work in English learning	Learning Environment & Support	Reveals collaborative learning tendencies
Q20	Most used English phrases at school	Language Skills	Shows practical language use

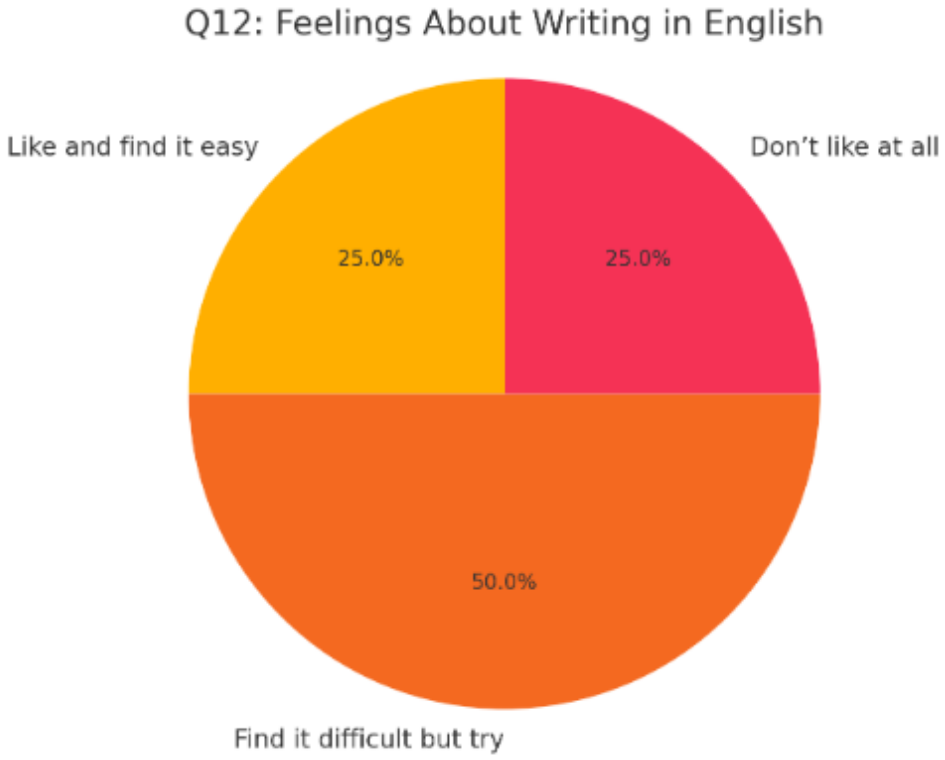
A. Language Skills Assessed

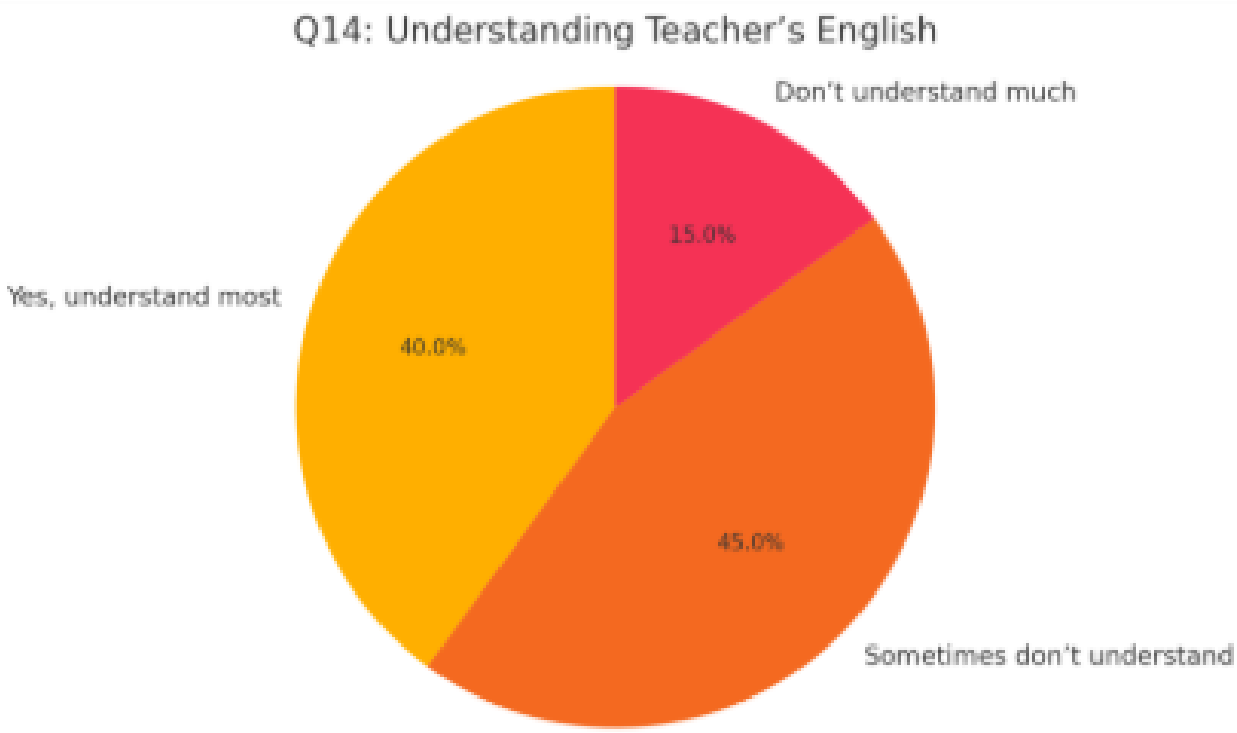
These questions focus on identifying students' proficiency or challenges in different English language areas.

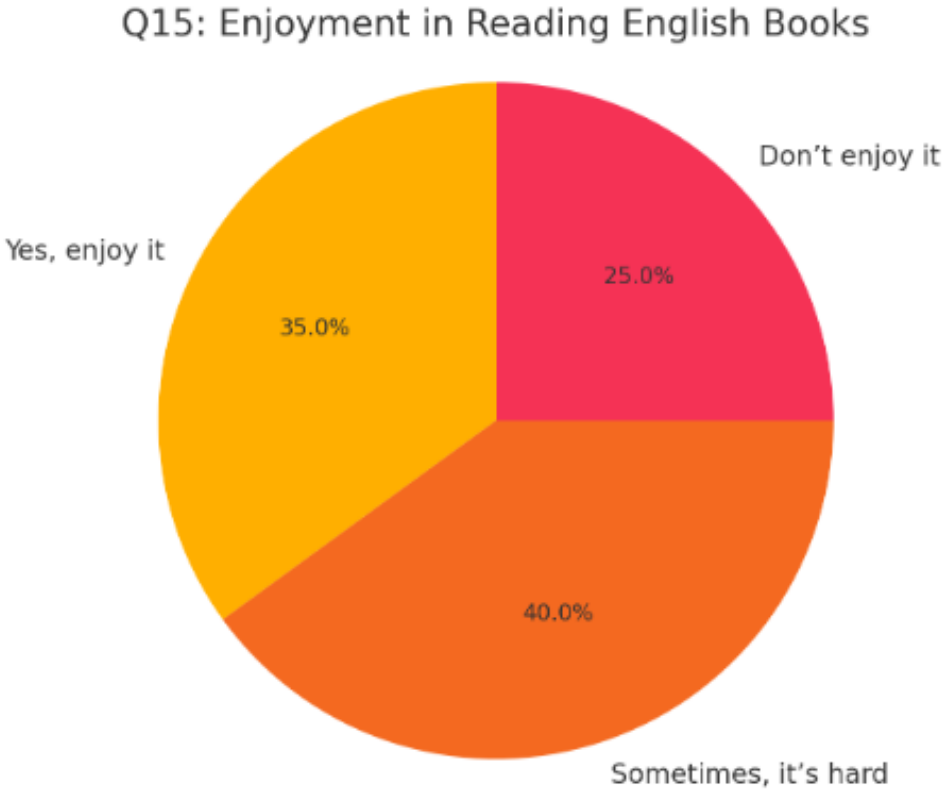
Question No.	Focus Area
Q3	Specific skills difficulty (Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening)
Q5, Q12	Speaking and writing confidence/attitudes
Q14	Listening comprehension
Q15	Reading interest and ease
Q20	Common vocabulary usage

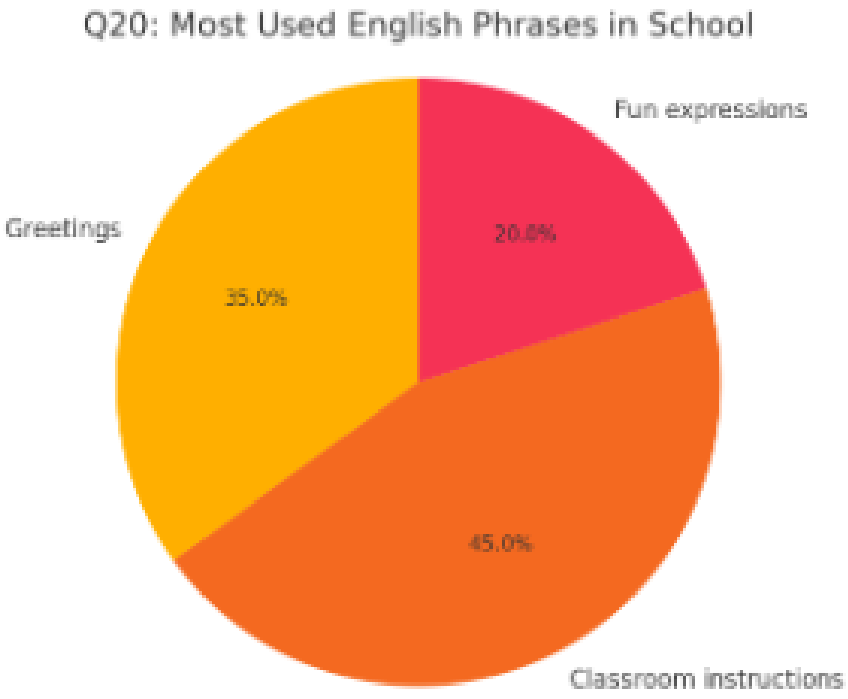



Q5: Confidence in Speaking English
Yes, I feel confident
No, I don't feel confident at all
20.0%
30.0%
50.0%
Sometimes, but I get nervous


Q12: Feelings About Writing in English
Like and find it easy
Don't like at all
25.0%
25.0%
50.0%
Find it difficult but try


Q14: Understanding Teacher's English
Don't understand much
15.0%
Yes, understand most
40.0%
45.0%
Sometimes don't understand


Q15: Enjoyment in Reading English Books
Don't enjoy it
25.0%
Yes, enjoy it
35.0%
40.0%
Sometimes, it's hard

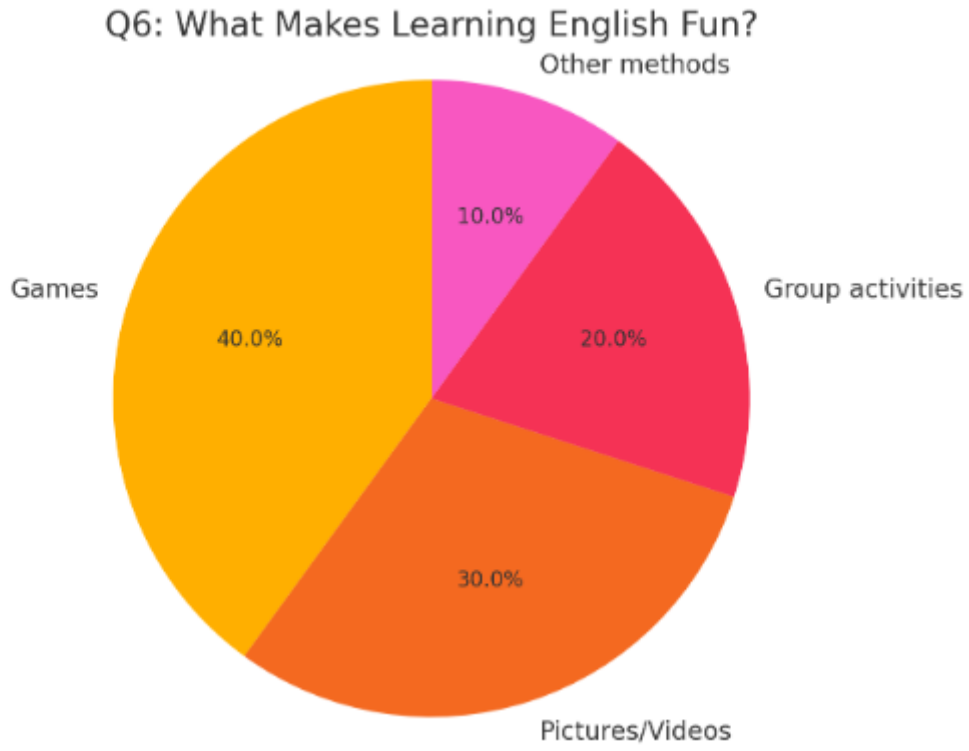


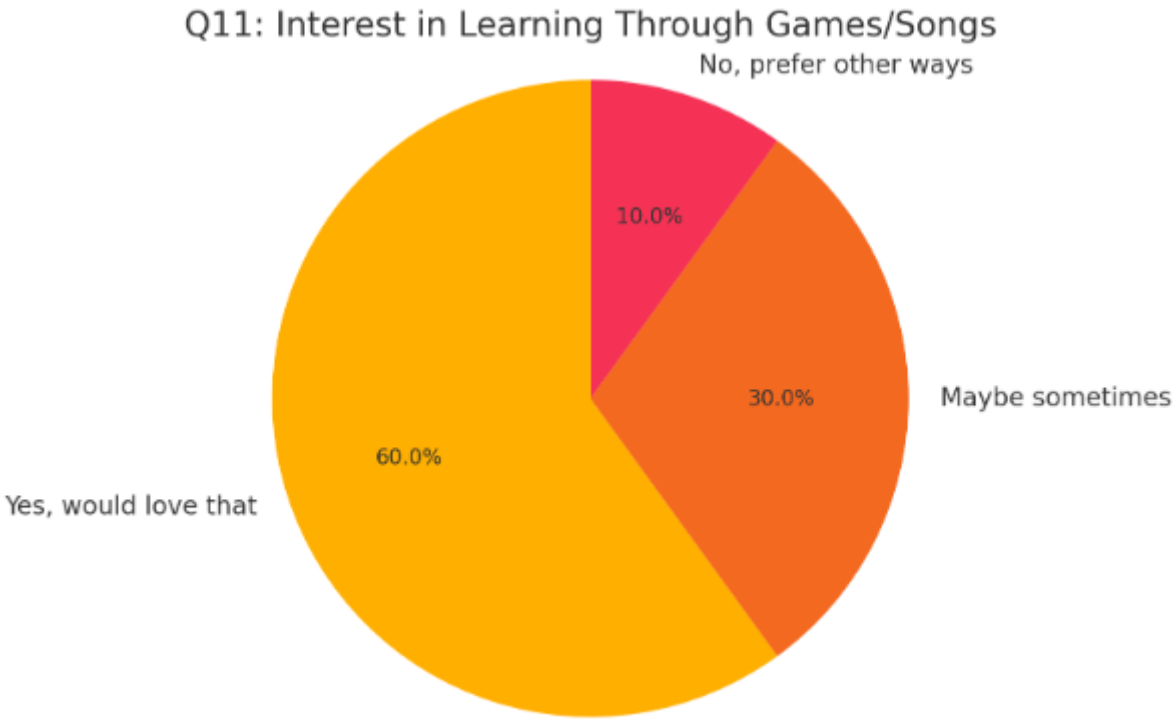
B. Learner Attitudes and Motivation

These questions assess the student's interest, emotional response, and perceived importance of English learning.

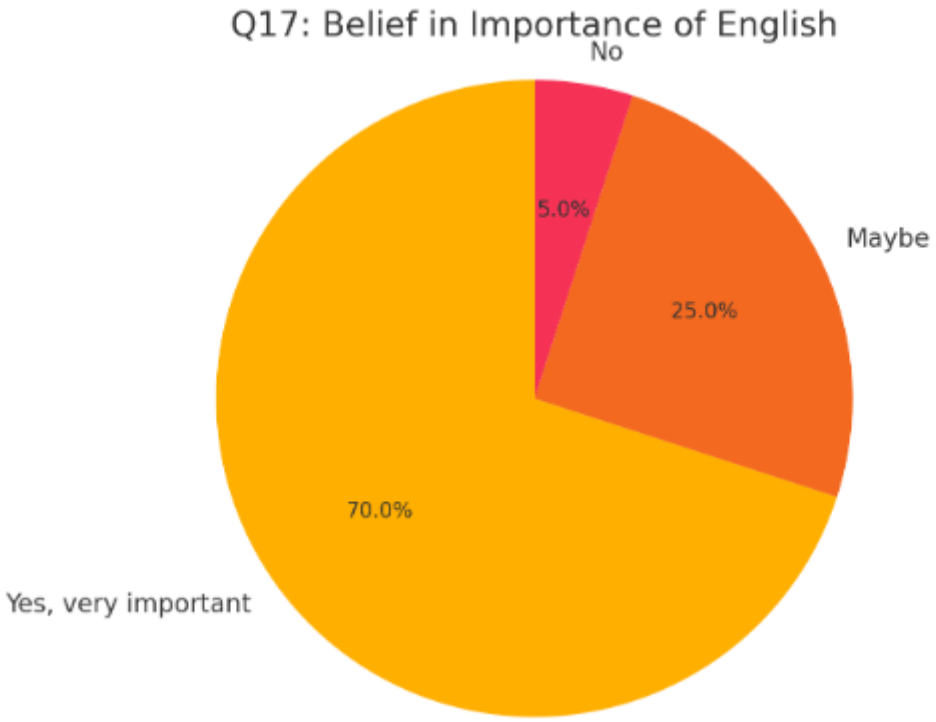
Question No.	Focus Area
Q2	Enjoyment vs. difficulty in learning English
Q6	Suggestions for improvement/engagement
Q11	Learning preferences (games, songs)
Q16	Emotional response to mistakes
Q17	Perceived relevance of English for the future


Q2: Feelings About Learning English
I don’t like it and find it difficult
I like it and find it easy
I don’t like it, but I try my best
I like it but find it hard
10.0%
25.0%
35.0%
30.0%


Q6: What Makes Learning English Fun?
Other methods
Group activities
Pictures/Videos
Games
10.0%
20.0%
30.0%
40.0%


Q11: Interest in Learning Through Games/Songs
No, prefer other ways
10.0%
30.0%
Maybe sometimes
60.0%
Yes, would love that

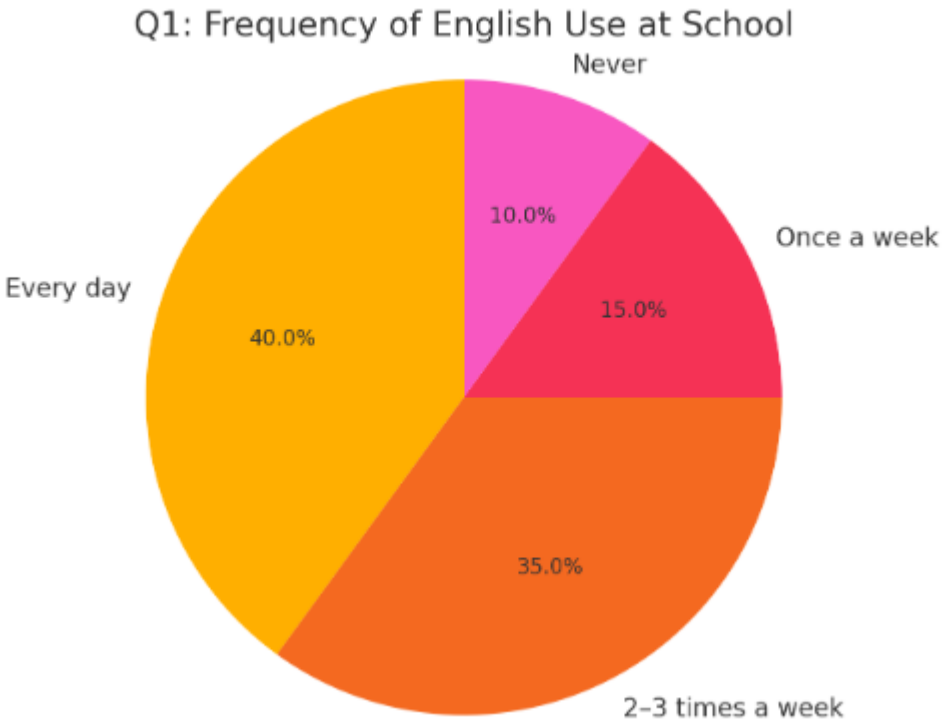

Q16: Feelings After Making a Mistake
Feel frustrated/give up
20.0%
Feel okay and keep trying
50.0%
30.0%
Feel nervous/embarrassed

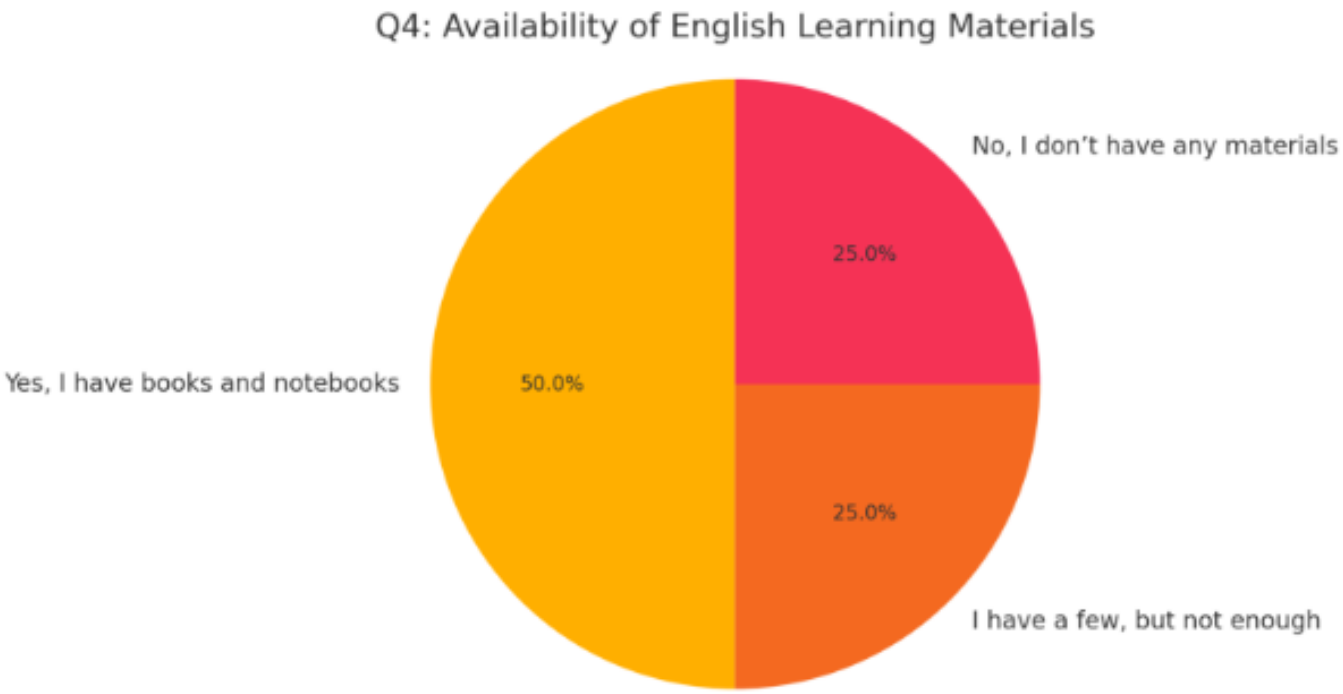


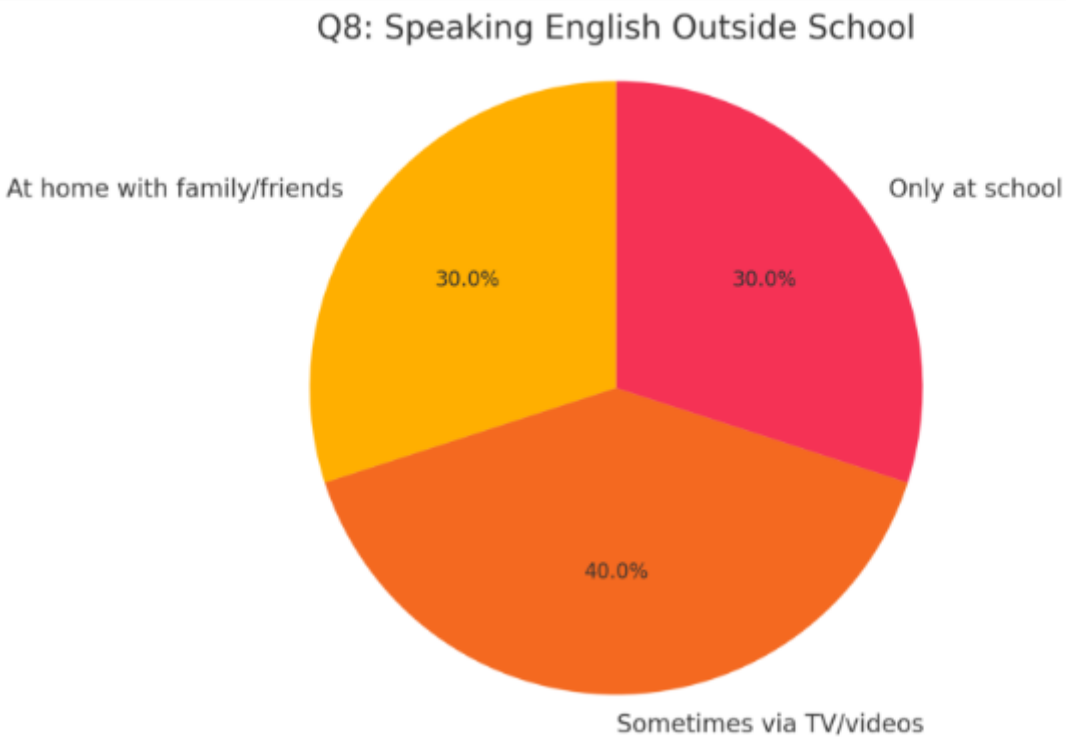
C. Learning Environment & Support

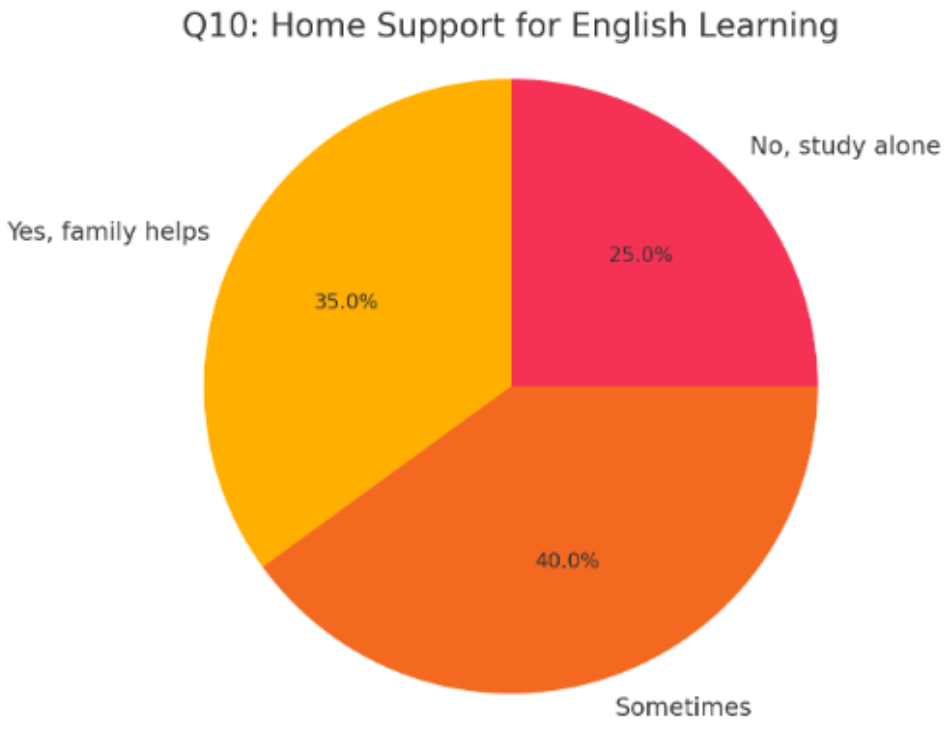
These focus on the external factors influencing the student's learning.

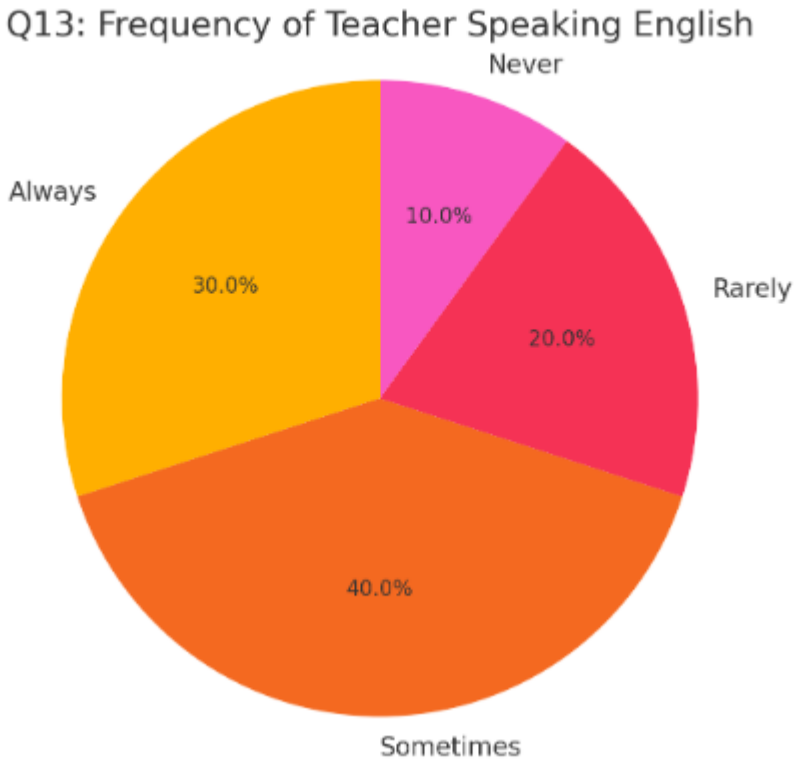
Question No.	Focus Area
Q1, Q13, Q18	English exposure in school and home
Q4	Availability of learning materials
Q8, Q10	Practice outside school and home support
Q19	Preferences for individual vs. group learning

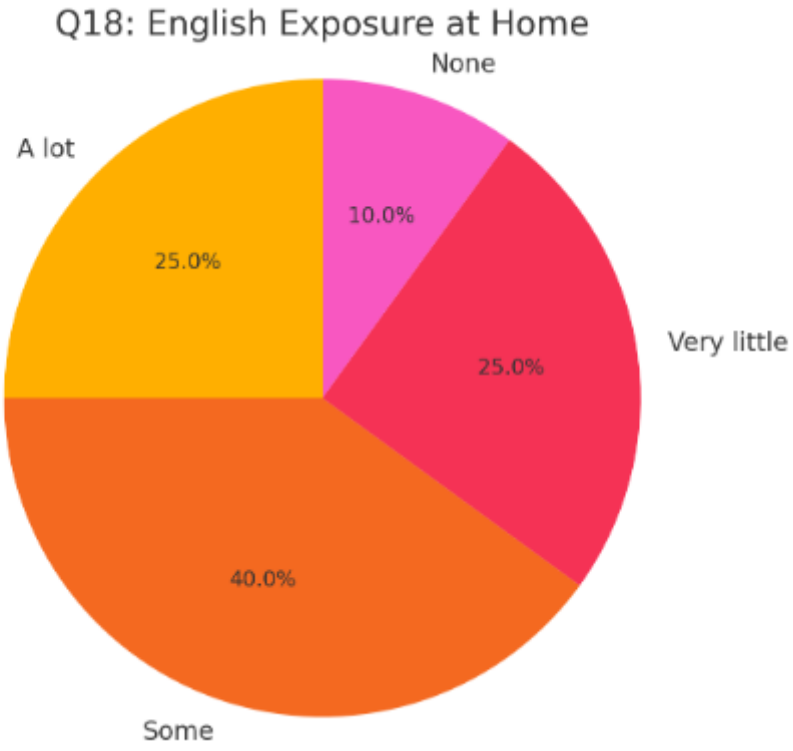

Q1: Frequency of English Use at School
Never
10.0%
Once a week
15.0%
Every day
40.0%
35.0%
2–3 times a week

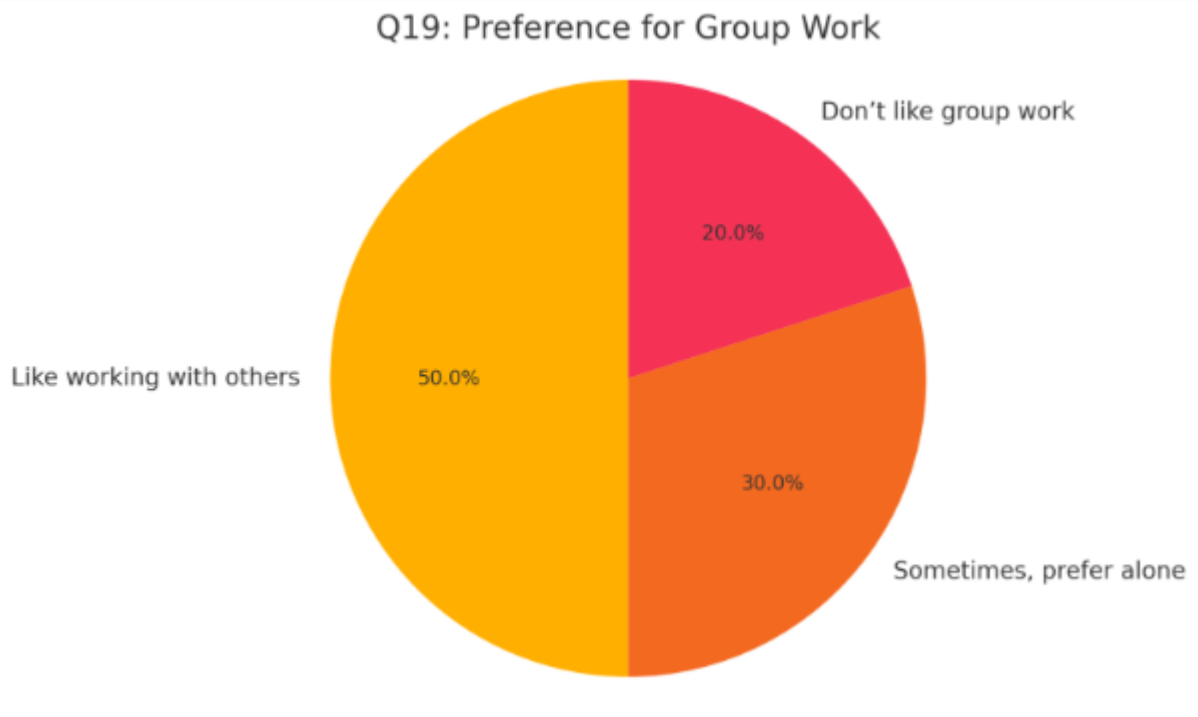

Q4: Availability of English Learning Materials
No, I don't have any materials
25.0%
Yes, I have books and notebooks
50.0%
25.0%
I have a few, but not enough


Q8: Speaking English Outside School
At home with family/friends
Only at school
30.0%
30.0%
40.0%
Sometimes via TV/videos


Q10: Home Support for English Learning
No, study alone
Yes, family helps
25.0%
35.0%
40.0%
Sometimes


Q13: Frequency of Teacher Speaking English
Never
Always
Rarely
10.0%
30.0%
20.0%
40.0%
Sometimes

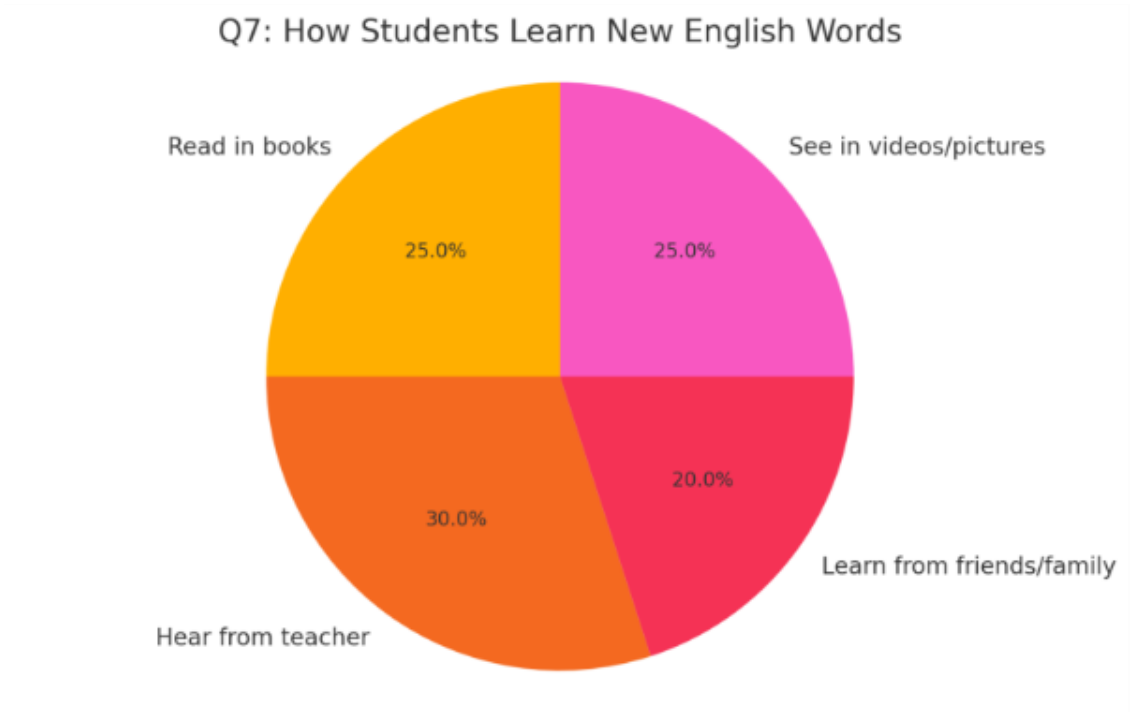

Q18: English Exposure at Home
None
A lot
Very little
10.0%
25.0%
25.0%
40.0%
Some

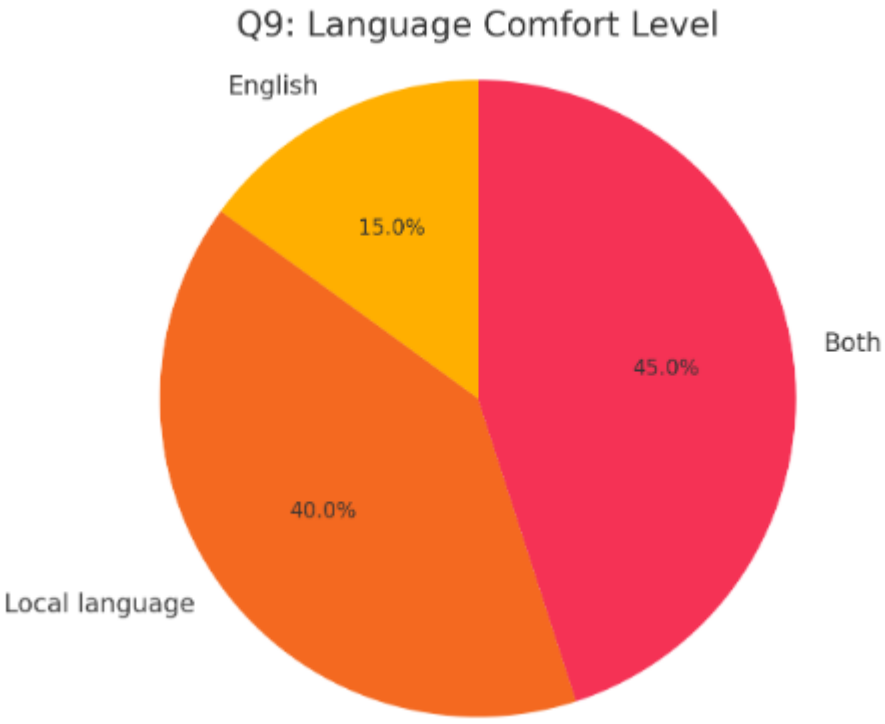


D. Learning Strategies

These address how students learn new words or use language.

Question No.	Focus Area
Q7	Vocabulary learning methods
Q9	Language comfort (English vs. local language)


Q7: How Students Learn New English Words
Read in books
See in videos/pictures
25.0%
25.0%
20.0%
30.0%
Learn from friends/family
Hear from teacher


Q9: Language Comfort Level
English
15.0%
45.0%
Both
40.0%
Local language

Conclusion

This outreach initiative stands as a compelling example of how small, strategically designed interventions can generate meaningful educational transformation in underserved rural communities. Through the collaborative engagement between the School of Humanities and local government schools, the programme served as a vital bridge—connecting academic expertise with the lived experiences and aspirations of rural learners.

By incorporating interactive, student-centered learning activities such as spelling bees, Word Bingo, vocabulary challenges, and memory games, the initiative fostered an inclusive and participatory learning environment. These activities not only made English learning more accessible and enjoyable but also significantly enhanced students' confidence and oral communication skills—areas often neglected in traditional classroom models.

Crucially, the project reaffirmed the immense potential, resilience, and eagerness to learn displayed by the students, even in the face of infrastructural and socio-economic challenges. The contributions of faculty members, including Dr. Ambika Bhatnagar, Dr. Aditi Priya, and Dr. Padmani Koul, were instrumental in analyzing the educational context, facilitating engagement, and designing sustainable interventions tailored to community needs.

Aligned with the values of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4)—which promotes inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all—the initiative demonstrates the School of Humanities' commitment to social responsibility and educational equity. It provides a replicable model of community-university collaboration, grounded in mutual respect and shared purpose.

Ultimately, this initiative exemplifies how academic institutions can play a transformative role in rural development, not by imposing solutions, but by listening, co-creating, and

walking alongside communities to ensure that no learner is left behind—regardless of their geography, language, or socioeconomic status.

Recommendations

Based on the observations and findings from the field assessment, several actionable recommendations are proposed to strengthen English language learning—particularly oral proficiency—within resource-constrained rural school settings. These recommendations aim to be realistic, scalable, and rooted in the specific challenges identified during the study.

1. Capacity Building for Teachers

To bridge the gap in pedagogical proficiency, especially among non-specialist English teachers, it is essential to implement regular, structured training programmes:

- Organize workshops and refresher courses on communicative English language teaching (CELT) techniques, with a special focus on developing students' listening and speaking skills.
- Facilitate peer mentoring or collaborative learning models, where English faculty from universities partner with rural schoolteachers to co-design lesson plans and demonstration classes.
- Provide access to simplified resource toolkits, including pronunciation guides, oral language activities, and low-prep games that teachers can adapt into their daily instruction.

2. Introduction of Low-Cost Learning Aids

In environments with limited infrastructure, the introduction of low-cost, high-impact teaching aids can significantly enrich language instruction:

- Use flashcards, picture dictionaries, posters, and story charts to support vocabulary acquisition and visual learning.
- Introduce interactive and kinesthetic learning tools, such as spelling bees, memory games, and Word Bingo, which foster both engagement and retention.
- Encourage recycled material innovation—creating games and visual tools from cardboard, newspapers, and other easily accessible items to ensure sustainability.

3. Follow-Up Interventions and Continuous Monitoring

Sporadic engagement often limits the impact of outreach efforts. To ensure long-term progress:

- Implement periodic follow-up visits and assessments to measure improvement in oral proficiency and adjust interventions based on ongoing feedback.

- Use case study-based documentation to track individual learner journeys, offering insights into what works, for whom, and under what conditions.
- Build feedback loops involving teachers, students, and parents to promote shared ownership of learning outcomes and support targeted improvements.

References

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"English Language Teaching in Rural Areas." *ERIC*, EJ1127201, 2017, https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1127201.pdf.1

"Challenges and Solutions in English Language Teaching (ELT) in Rural Settings: A Case Study in India." *RESEARCH REVIEW International Journal of Multidisciplinary*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2024, pp. 75–82. https://doi.org/10.31305/rrijm.2024.v09.n01.010.6

"Assessing the Development of Primary English Education Based on Teachers' and Students' Perspectives: An Empirical Study in Hunan Province, China." *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 15, 2024, Article 11212853. https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11212853/

Photographs







Photo: Students Participating in Word Bingo Competition



Photo: Students Participating in Spelling Bee Competition



Photo: Group Photo



Photo: Student participating in Spelling Bee Competition

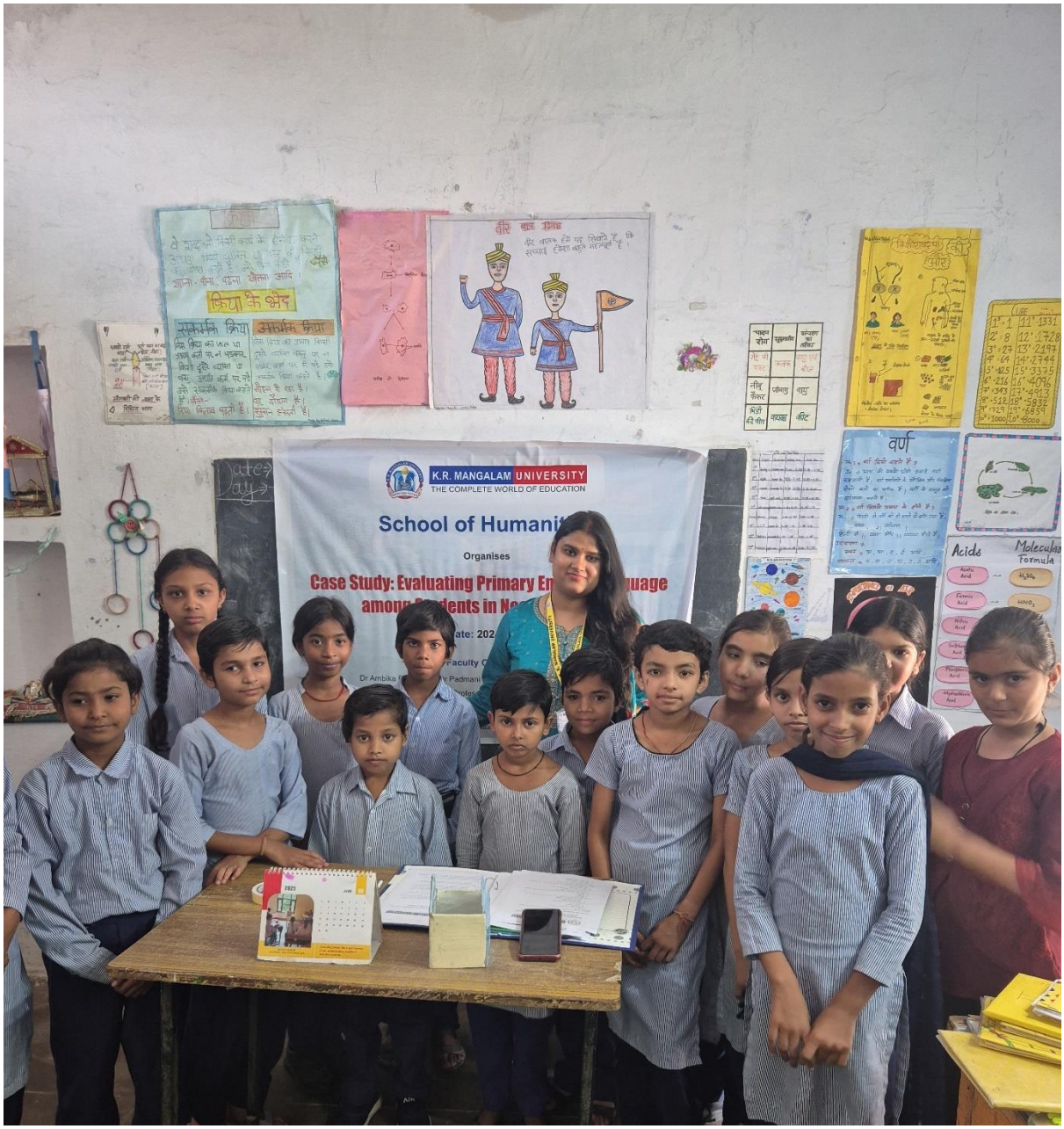


Photo: Group Photo



Photo: Prize Distribution

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