

**“Critical Pedagogy” Adopted by High School English Teachers with
reference to Listening Skill of Students in Manipur**

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Abstract

This paper presents the results from a qualitative research study that explores the experiences of high school teachers in the field of pedagogy. The study considers teachers who may not have explicitly learned about or applied innovative practice in teaching English. It investigates how feasible and desirable they find the techniques and pedagogical approaches to be based on their teaching experiences in school with largely upper –middle class students, so the issue of applying pedagogical approaches with affluent students adds a dimension of interest to this study. It was generally expected that school teachers would be implementing several teaching approaches prescribed in NCF-2005 but these pedagogies were found only partially implemented by them at Elementary stage in Manipur. Probably this could be one of the main reasons that the students are not excellent in communicative skill which are emerging demand of English. Therefore, there is a need to address this issue because it may not help future careers of the children in this global market of English.

After the identification of this problem, ten schools (5 Private English medium schools and 5 Government schools) were selected for our study. Among these 5 Private schools, 2 of them were convent schools. Of the 5 Government schools, one is a model school where relatively more facility has been created by the Government. In order to carry out the investigation, questionnaires were administered to the teachers of English, who are working in these ten schools; and their responses were analyzed. In addition, the Heads/Principals were also consulted by the investigator in relation to teaching/learning process, evaluation systems and their administration. We found some discrepancies in methods, approaches and techniques adopted by teachers due to which low achievement in English occurs. We assess listening of the students with some of techniques which could be used as innovative practice in the classroom transaction for developing life skills.

Key words: Pedagogical pedagogy, Elementary stage (Primary +Upper Primary), NCF-2005, Listening skill, Teaching Methodology, Teaching English.

Introduction

The term *Critical Pedagogy* was attached to the work of Brazilian Literacy educator and curriculum specialist Paulo Freire. Pedagogical Approaches or Critical pedagogy brings a new socio-political view of linguistics and language teaching that is beginning to influence the teaching of English to speakers of other languages field. In short, critical pedagogy was started out of the need of reforming education in a way that it would acknowledge the influence of the social and political elements existent in each and every educational context. Teacher and student engagement is critical in the classroom because it has the power to define whose knowledge will become a part of school-related knowledge and whose voices will shape it. Students are not just young people for whom adults should devise solutions. They are critical observers of their own conditions and needs, and should be participants in discussions and problem solving related to their education future opportunities. Hence children need to be aware that their experiences and perceptions are important and they should be encouraged to develop the mental skills needed to think and reason independently and have the courage to dissent. Participatory learning and teaching emotion and experience need to have a definite and valued place in the classroom. While classroom participation is a powerful strategy it becomes an instrument to enable teachers to meet their own ends. True participation starts from the experiences of both students and teachers.

Angelil Carter (1997) states that “research in SLA has been dominated by questions regarding the psychological process of language learning with less concern for the wider social context, the power relations within the context, and their effect on psychological variables” (p. 263) . Therefore, critical pedagogy followers advocate that the field of TESOL should not focus on Linguistics, but also look into the field of education for inspiration and change.

Pennycook (1999) has stated that “critical work in TESOL is an attempt to locate aspects of teaching English to speakers of other languages within a board, critical view of social and political relations”(p 332). Crookes and Lehner (2000) have explained that “Critical pedagogy in ES/FL), then, takes as joint goals the simultaneous development of English communicative abilities together with the ability to apply them to developing a critical. Awareness of the world and the ability to act on it was to improve matters” (p 1).

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Several studies had been conducted to find out the teaching/learning process of English in Manipur. Singh (2002) explored the problem, prospect and status of English in Manipur in his research “A Critical Scrutiny of the Position, Problems and Prospects of English in Manipur”. Devi (2006) explored the difference between the sentence structures in English and Manipuri language in her research “Sentence structure in English and Manipuri Language, A contrastive study”. Sujeta Beishamayum (2010) explored linguistic problems in learning English language in her research “Communication and linguistic problems faced by Meiteiron speakers in learning English language.”

However, there is no study available with regard to the teaching learning process of school teachers at the elementary stage in Manipur. Before we begin the analysis of the problem it is important that we need to understand the methodologies and approaches in the teaching/learning process of English which were recommended in NCF 2005. Since we have not seen much improvement in learning English in schools in Manipur, we will make an attempt to examine teaching learning process adopted by the attitude and competency of the school teachers towards teaching English in Manipur.

In the light of the above background, we will investigate critical pedagogy adopted by school teachers with reference to low achievement of language learners at elementary stage in Manipur. The identification of this problem not only helps the teachers to develop their professional careers, but it also could be of use to students too. The findings of this study may be useful to teachers and teacher educators in choosing relevant methods and approaches at the lower and upper Primary stages in Manipur.

The Structure of the Paper

In section 1.1, we will discuss the methodology adopted in the study while section 1.2 deals with the responses of questionnaire from the teachers are examined. In the next section 1.3, analysis of language ability tests: Listening skill, Speaking skill, Reading skill and Writing skill. This is followed by section 1.4, where we discuss the findings of the study conducted. In the section 1.5, we conclude with some of remedial measures in order to enhance the competency of the teachers in teaching English.

1.1. Methodology

For this research, firstly, we take 3 teachers from each school and the total number of teachers we took from ten schools is 30. The questionnaires consisting of 100 questions were administered to the teachers who were teaching English subjects in the respective schools. The responses of the teachers were analyzed. Among 100 questions in the questionnaires, we focused only on 30 main teaching points. Secondly, we planned to take up 400 students of VIII standard, taking 40 students from each school for collection of data. But we could not get the number of students we had stipulated earlier for our study since there was less number of enrollment in some Government schools. The total number of students was 290. It was surprisingly found while collecting data that out of the 5 Government schools we approached only one school in the serial number 10 has got more than 40 students. This school is a model school to which more attention is given by the Government to create facilities, etc. These 290 students are given a language ability test consisting of 8 test items, i.e., Listening skill, Speaking skill, Reading skill and Writing skill. These test items did not cover Phonetic aspect of Listening skill. The proficiency of the students is assessed on the four grade points. If the school attains 85% to 100 % the school is rated as “Excellent”, while the school secures 75% to 84% it is graded “Very good”. It is followed by next grade, i.e., “Good” if the school attains 60% to 74%. Finally, the school which has 40% to 59% is rated as ‘Weak’.

Serial numbers 1 - 5 are Private English medium schools, Number of students in the serial numbers in 1- 5 = 200

Serial numbers 6 - 10 are Government schools, Number of students in the serial numbers in 6-10 = 90

Table A

Sl. No.	Name of the schools	Medium of instruction	Number of the teachers selected	
			Males	Females
1.	Nirmalabas High school (Imphal West)	English		40
2.	St. George High School (Imphal East)	English	20	20
3.	IPS (Imphal West)	English	20	20
4.	Ever Green High School (Thoual district)	English	20	20
5.	Paradise High School (Thoual district)	English	20	20
6.	Ngasi Rastrapili Girl High School (Imphal West)	Manipuri		10
7.	Kwakeithel Girls High School (Imphal West)	Manipuri		16
8.	Thangmeiban Lilasingkhongnangkhong High School (Imphal East)	Manipuri		14
9.	Meitei Mayek high School (Imphal West)	Manipuri		10
10.	Wangkhei High School (Imphal East)	English		40
	Total no. of students		80	210

Table B

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Sl. No	Name of the schools	Medium of instruction	Qualification	Number of the teachers selected	
				Males	Females
1.	Nirmalabas High school (Imphal West)	English	M.A. (English), B.Ed.	1	2
2.	St. George High School (Imphal East)	English	M.A. (English), B.Ed.	1	2
3.	IPS (Imphal West)	English	M.A. (English), B.Ed.	2	1
4.	Ever Green High School (Thoubal district)	English	M.A. (English)	3	0
5.	Paradise High School (Thoual district)	English	M.A. (English)	3	0
6.	Ngasi Rastrapili Girl High School(Imphal West)	Manipuri	B.A.(Political Science)	2	1
7.	Kwakeithel Girls High School (Imphal West)	Manipuri	B.A. (English)	2	1
8.	Thangmeiban Lilasingkhongnangkhong High School (Imphal East)	Manipuri	B. A.	2	1
9.	Meitei Mayek high School (Imphal West)	Manipuri	B.A.	2	1
10.	Wangkhei High School (Imphal East)	English	B.A. (Home Science)	2	1
	Total no. of teachers			20	10

Table 1

Sl. No	Name of the schools	Medium of instruction	Number of the students selected	
			Boys	Girls
1.	Nirmalabas High school (Imphal West)	English		40
2.	St. George High School (Imphal East)	English	20	20
3.	IPS (Imphal West)	English	20	20
4.	Ever Green High School (Thoual district)	English	20	20
5.	Paradise High School (Thoual district)	English	20	20
6.	Ngasi Rastrapili Girl High School (Imphal West)	Manipuri		10
7.	Kwakeithel Girls High School (Imphal West)	Manipuri		16
8.	Thangmeiban Lilasingkhongnangkhong High School (Imphal East)	Manipuri		14
9.	Meitei Mayek high School (Imphal West)	Manipuri		10
10.	Wangkhei High School (Imphal East)	English		40
	Total no. of students		80	210

Grand total =

80+210 = 290

1.2: Analysis of Questionnaires Administered to Teachers

The questionnaires containing 100 questions were administered to teachers of ten schools in order to find out whether they were following and implementing the guidelines of NCF 2005 and MLL based teaching in the respective schools and whether they have positive attitude towards teaching English in these schools. Among these 100 questions, we focused only 30 important teaching points in view of NCF 2005 and MLL based teaching in the ten schools. The data collected were used to notice which items were followed by the teachers in the class-room transaction.

Based on these 10 teaching point in pedagogy, teachers were grouped into three categories: A, B and C; the teachers following 10 teaching points mentioned in the Table 9 as A (Fully implementing NCF-2005) , the teachers following 10 teaching points mentioned in the Table 10 as B (Partially implementing NCF-2005 and the teachers following 10 teaching points mentioned in the Table 11 as C (Non implementing critical pedagogy in NCF-2005) .

Table 2

10 questions in relation to pedagogy of NCF-2005.

1. Problem Analysis
2. Higher level of questioning.
3. Competency Based Teaching Learning.
4. Constructivist approach to teaching
5. Teaching all the four skill through Innovative techniques.
6. Collaborative teaching.
7. Activity based teaching.
8. Interactive teaching.
9. Question design and blue print based assessment
10. CCE (Continuous And Comprehensive Evaluation).

Table 3

10 questions in relation to partial pedagogy of NCF-2005.

1. Activity based teaching.
2. Answer Question.
3. Higher level of Questioning.
4. Teaching content based teaching.
5. Remedial teaching
6. School based test and assessment.
7. Objective of teaching
8. Question design
9. Blue print
10. CCE (Continuous And Comprehensive Evaluation)

Table 4

10 questions in relation to traditional methods implemented in the class-room.

1. Introduction
2. Teaching aids
3. Lower level of questioning
4. School based evaluation
5. Reading aloud and asking questions.
6. Explanation
7. Content based teaching
8. Lecturer method
9. Grammar teaching
10. Vocabulary teaching

Based on the 10 question each in relation to teaching points in **Table 2, 3 and 4**, teachers were categorized into three group **A (Fully implementing pedagogical approaches in NCF-2005)** , **B (Partially implementing pedagogy in NCF-2005)** and **C (Non implementing pedagogy in NCF-2005)** as shown in **Table 5**. 18 school teachers were in group **B (Partially implementing pedagogical approaches in NCF-2005)** and 12 school teachers were in the group **C (Non implementing pedagogical approaches in NCF-2005)**. Not a single teacher was in the group **A (Fully implementing critical pedagogy in NCF-2005)** .The Private school teachers in the serial numbers 1-5 were found partially implementing critical pedagogy in NCF-2005 in the schools . Whereas Government school teachers in the serial numbers 6 to 9 were in the group **C (Non implementing critical pedagogy in NCF-2005)** . Only 3 Government school teacher in the serial number 10 were partially implementing critical pedagogy in NCF-2005 and it had better performance than the rest of Government school teachers in the serial numbers 6-9.

3 Categories of Teachers Based on the 10 pedagogical approaches of teaching Points in NCF-2005:

Group A = Teachers who fully Implements pedagogical approaches of teaching point in NCF-2005.

Group B = Teachers who partially Implements pedagogical approaches in NCF-2005.

Group C = Teachers who do not Implement pedagogical approaches according to NCF-2005.

Table 5

Sl. no	Teachers in the schools	Group A	Group B	Group C
1	Nirmalabas High School, Imphal West		Partially Implementing pedagogical approaches in NCF- 2005.	
2	St. George High School Impal East		Partially Implementing pedagogical approaches in NCF 2005	
3	IPS Imphal West		Partially Implementing pedagogical approaches in NCF 2005	
4	Ever Green Flower High School, Thoubal		Partially Implementing pedagogical approaches in NCF 2005	
5	Paradise High School, Thoubal		Partially Implementing pedagogical approaches in NCF 2005	
6	Ngasi Rastralipi High School, Imphal West			Non Implementing pedagogical approaches in NCF- 2005.
7	Kwakeithel Girls' High School, Imphal West			Non Implementing pedagogical approaches in NCF- 2005.
8	Meitei Mayak High School, Imphal East			Non Implementing pedagogical

				approaches in NCF-2005.
9	Lilashing Khongnangkong High School, Imphal East			Non Implementing pedagogical approaches in NCF- 2005.
10	Wangkhei Girl High School, Imphal East.		Partially Implementing pedagogical approaches in NCF 2005	

1.3: Test items of Listening skill of students in ten schools given in table 1:

Table 6.

Sl. No.	Name of the skills	Test Items	Purpose
1.	Listening skill	(i) Colouring Boxes (ii) Family tree (iii) Road Mapping (iv) Story telling (v) Dialogue	Inferring the speech based information.

Result of Listening skill tests displayed in the following tables (7 to 11):

In the first test item of Listening skill, “Colouring boxes” as shown in the table 7 below, 40% to 55% of Private English medium school students responded correctly and 45% to 60 % of Private school students gave incorrect responses. All the students have not fared well scoring only weak grade. Even the reputed school in 1st serial could score only 55% of the students correct. Similar result have been obtained by Wangkhei High school serial in 10th serial number in the table, followed by St. George school High school securing 50% of the students’ correct and the lowest being the school in 6th serial number while the remaining schools are in between the scores of 20% and 40% . Here in this test surprisingly the performance is very low as none of schools could secure even “good “grade.

Table 7.

Sl. no.	Name of the schools	No. of the students	Given text (Passage)	Mode of questioning (choosing the right option)	No of correct responses	No of Incorrect responses	Performance in percentage (%)	
							Correct responses	Incorrect responses
1	Nirmalabas High School	40			22	18	55%	45%
2	St.George High School, Imphal West	40			16	24	40%	60%
3	IPS, Imphal West	40			16	24	40%	60%
4	Ever Green School, Thoubal	40			14	26	35%	65%
5	Paradise High School, Thoubal	40			14	26	35%	65%
6	Ngasi Rastrapili High School, Imphal West	10			2	8	20%	80%
7	Kwakeithel Girl's High School, Imphal West	16			4	12	25%	75%
8	Meitei Mayak High School, Imphal East	10			3	7	30%	70%
9	Lilashing Khongnangkhong High School, Imphal West	14			4	10	29%	71%
10	Wangkhei High School, Imphal East.	40			16	24	50%	50%

In the 2nd test item of **Listening skill**, “**Family Tree**” in the **Table 8** of tracing relationship, it is observed that the comprehensive response given by the students of the Private schools ranged from 35% to 50% while 15% to 50% of the Private school students gave their incorrect response. The performance of Government schools except the one in the serial number 10 has extremely low ranging from 20% to 29%. What we can see from the test of tracing relationship is, even though some individual students have performed well however, the overall performance of the school is very poor and categorized in the weak grade as the maximum performance given by the school (Nirmalabas High School) in the serial number 1 is only 55% achievement with regard to this list. The Government

school (Wangkhei Girl’s High School) in the serial number 10 though it comes under the weak grade, has followed the school (Nirmalabas High School) in the serial number 1.

Table 8.

Sl. no.	Name of the schools	No. of the students	Given text (Passage)	Mode of questioning (choosing the right option)	No of correct responses	No of Incorrect responses	Performance in percentage (%)	
							Correct responses	Incorrect responses
1	Nirmalabas High School	40			22	18	55%	45%
2	St.George High School, Imphal West	40			16	24	40%	60%
3	IPS, Imphal West	40			16	24	40%	60%
4	Ever Green School, Thoubal	40			14	26	35%	65%
5	Paradise High School, Thoubal	40			14	26	35%	65%
6	Ngasi Rastrapili High School, Imphal West	10			2	8	20%	80%
7	Kwakeithel Girl’s High School, Imphal West	16			4	12	25%	75%
8	Meitei Mayak High School, Imphal East	10			3	7	30%	70%
9	Lilashing Khongnangkhong High School, Imphal West	14			4	10	29%	71%
10	Wangkhei High School, Imphal East.	40			16	24	50%	50%

In the third test item of listening skill, “**Road Mapping**” as shown in the **table 9** below, 40% to 55% of Private English medium school students responded correctly and 45% to 60 % of Private school students gave incorrect responses. All the students have not fared well scoring only weak grade. Even the reputed school in 1st serial could score only 55% of the students correct. Similar result have been obtained by Wangkhei High school serial in 10th serial number in the table, followed by St. George High school securing 50%; the lowest being the school in 6th serial number while the remaining schools are in between the scores of 20% and 40% . Here in this test surprisingly the performance is very low as none of the schools could secure even a good grade.

Table 9.

Sl. no.	Name of the schools	No. of the students	Given text (Passage)	Mode of questioning (choosing the right option)	No of correct responses	No of Incorrect responses	Performance in percentage (%)	
							Correct responses	Incorrect responses
1	Nirmalabas High School	40			22	18	55%	45%
2	St.George High School,Imphal West	40			16	24	40%	60%
3	IPS, Imphal West	40			16	24	40%	60%
4	Ever Green School, Thoubal	40			14	26	35%	65%
5	Paradise High School, Thoubal	40			14	26	35%	65%
6	Ngasi Rastrapili High School, Imphal West	10			2	8	20%	80%
7	Kwakeithel Girl’s High School, Imphal West	16			4	12	25%	75%
8	Meitei Mayak High School, Imphal East	10			3	7	30%	70%
9	Lilashing Khongnangkhong High School, Imphal West	14			4	10	29%	71%

10	Wangkhei High School, Imphal East.	40			16	24	50%	50%
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In the 4th test item of **Listening skill**, “**Story telling**” in the **Table 10** of tracing relationship, it is observed that the comprehensive response given by the students of the Private schools ranged from 35% to 50% while 15% to 50% of the Private school students gave their incorrect response. The performance of Government schools except the one in the serial number 10 has extremely low ranging from 20% to 29%. What we can see from the test of tracing relationship is, even though some individual students have performed well however, the overall performance of the school is very poor and categorized in the weak grade as the maximum performance given by the school (Nirmalabas High School) in the serial number 1 is only 55% achievement with regard to this list. The Government school (Wangkhei Girl’s High School) in the serial number 10 though it comes under the weak grade, has followed the school (Nirmalabas High School) in the serial number 1.

Table 10

Sl.no.	Name of the schools	No. of the students	Given text (Passage)	Mode of questioning (choosing the right option)	No of correct responses	No of Incorrect responses	Performance in percentage (%)	
							Correct responses	Incorrect responses
1	Nirmalabas High School	40			20	20	50%	50%
2	St.George High School, Imphal West	40			18	10	45%	55%
3	IPS, Imphal West	40			16	24	40%	60%
4	Ever Green School, Thoubal	40			16	24	40%	60%
5	Paradise High School, Thoubal	40			14	26	35%	65%

6	Ngasi Rastrapili High School, Imphal West	10			2	8	20%	80%
7	Kwakeithel Girl's High School, Imphal West	16			4	12	25%	75%
8	Meitei Mayak High School, Imphal East	10			2	8	20%	80%
9	Lilashing Khongnangkong High School, Imphal West	14			4	10	29%	71%
10	Wangkhei High School, Imphal East.	40			20	20	50%	50%

In the 5th test item of **Listening skill**, “ **Dialogue** ” in the **Table 11** of tracing relationship, it is observed that the comprehensive response given by the students of the Private schools ranged from 35% to 50% while 15% to 50% of the Private school students gave their incorrect response. The performance of Government schools except the one in the serial number 10 has extremely low ranging from 20% to 29%. What we can see from the test of tracing relationship is, even though some individual students have performed well however, the overall performance of the school is very poor and categorized in the weak grade as the maximum performance given by the school (Nirmalabas High School) in the serial number 1 is only 55% achievement with regard to this list. The Government school (Wangkhei Girl's High School) in the serial number 10 though it comes under the weak grade, has followed the school (Nirmalabas High School) in the serial number 1.

Table 11

Sl.no.	Name of the schools	No. of the students	Given text (Passage)	Mode of questioning (choosing the right option)	No of correct responses	No of Incorrect responses	Performance in percentage (%)	
							Correct responses	Incorrect responses

1	Nirmalabas High School	40			20	20	50%	50%
2	St.George High School, Imphal West	40			18	10	45%	55%
3	IPS, Imphal West	40			16	24	40%	60%
4	Ever Green School, Thoubal	40			16	24	40%	60%
5	Paradise High School, Thoubal	40			14	26	35%	65%
6	Ngasi Rastrapili High School, Imphal West	10			2	8	20%	80%
7	Kwakeithel Girl's High School, Imphal West	16			4	12	25%	75%
8	Meitei Mayak High School, Imphal East	10			2	8	20%	80%
9	Lilashing Khongnangkong High School, Imphal West	14			4	10	29%	71%
10	Wangkhei High School, Imphal East.	40			20	20	50%	50%

Discussion

Based on the 10 questions each in relation to teaching points in **Table 2, 3, 4 and 5**, ten school teachers were categorized into three group **A (Fully implementing Critical Pedagogy)**, **B (Partially implementing Critical Pedagogy)** and **C (Not implementing Critical Pedagogy)** as shown in **Table 12**. **18 teachers are in group B; they are partially implementing Critical Pedagogy in schools and**

12 teachers are in group C. None of the teachers in the schools are totally implementing Critical Pedagogy. One of the probable reasons for this incompetency of school teachers could be that teachers have not fully understood or they were not aware of the critical pedagogy recommended in NCF-2005, even though Government imparted training to Government school teachers through SSA, School Education Department and SCERT, Government of Manipur. It was also found that there were no teachers specifically appointed for teaching English in the Primary and Upper Primary Government schools (Elementary schools). For example, teachers of Mathematics and Science were found teaching English in the Government schools. We could see an ad hoc policy in teaching English that head teachers/Principals deputed the teachers of Mathematics and Science to attend the training programmes in English.

According to the results displayed in the **Tables 7 to 11**, performances of students varied from individual to individual and from school to school in different test items. None of the students could get ‘Excellent’ ‘Very Good’ and ‘Good’ in listening skill”. The students in the serial number 1 secured the highest number in all the tests among students. The students in the serial number 6 secured the lowest number in almost all the tests among students in ten schools. We can now come to conclusion that overall the students of Private schools had higher level of proficiency than that of Government schools except one Government school which is model school. It is apparent that the Private schools take well care of the students, even though the teachers did not follow and implement the guidelines of NCF-2005 and MLL bases teaching. The students of the Government school in the serial number 10 had higher level of proficiency than the rest of Government schools. It may be because Government gives more facility and attention to the school.

Conclusion

Knowing all these facts, some remedial measures may be taken up to improve critical pedagogy of the teachers in class room transaction. Government should appoint teachers of English from the candidates who have completed B.A. English Honours at least. The teachers should be sensitized participatory approach of teaching English. They need to be trained how to transact English class in terms of skill based teaching; apart from that, they should be oriented frequently about the ways of teaching English. In activity based method wherein full participation of students should take place. Further, they should be motivated very often by higher authority to take up innovative practice based on student participation. Books on innovative methods and techniques of teaching English should be provided in the library. These English teachers should be assessed every year and their salary should be

increased according to their performance. And the students should also be motivated by a wide range of awareness about usefulness of English in this global market of English.

Abbreviations

L1: First language.
L2: Second language.
CP: Critical Pedagogy.
LT: Language teaching
ELT: English language teaching.
LSRW: Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing.
CBTL: Competency Based Teaching Learning.
MLL: Minimal level of learning.
NCERT: National council of Education and Research and Training.
MHRD: Ministry of Human Resource Development.
ELT: English language teaching.
NCF: National Curriculum Framework.
MHRD: Ministry of Human Resource Development.
CCE: Continuous And Comprehensive Evaluation.
SSA: Sarva Shiksha Avhiyan
SCERT: State Council Of Educational Research and Training.
NCF: National curriculum Framework.

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