

**THE ROLE OF CONTINUOUS INTERNAL EVALUATION (CIE) IN THE
TEACHING/LEARNING OF ENGLISH: AN IMPACT STUDY AT SELECT
GOVERNMENT DEGREE COLLEGES IN HYDERABAD, TELANGANA, INDIA**

Anita Abraham, Associate Professor of English,
Vivekananda, Government Degree College, Vidyanagar, Hyderabad email: anitaabe@gmail.com

Introduction

The present study proposes to assess the influence of Continuous Internal Evaluation(CIE) on the teaching and learning of English at the undergraduate level at Government Degree Colleges in Hyderabad, Telangana. Using select Government Degree Colleges (GDCs) in Hyderabad affiliated to Osmania University, Hyderabad, the study attempts to evaluate the Continuous Internal Evaluation (CIE) and its influence on the teaching and learning English since the introduction of CBCS by Osmania University in 2016- 2017. The study was conducted from 2016- 2017 to 2019- 2020. The study seeks to analyze the relationship between testing, assessment, and teaching practices and students' learning of English and the impact of CIE on the teaching /learning process of English at the tertiary level in Government Degree Colleges in Telangana State. The study uses three Government Degree Colleges in Hyderabad affiliated to Osmania University, namely IPGDC, Nampally, GDC, Khairtabad, and VGDC, Vidyanagar, as representative colleges of the 128 Government Degree Colleges in Telangana to include the rural, semi-rural, semi-urban, and urban undergraduate learner profiles. 72 CIE Question Papers and 36 Assignments are analyzed, using Bloom's taxonomy as a theoretical framework. Teachers and students from the select colleges provide inputs and feedback through interviews and questionnaires to determine how assessment practices influence the teaching and learning process in Government Degree Colleges in Hyderabad, Telangana, and the relationship between CIE and teaching practices students' learning of English.

Background

A review of the General English Curriculum of the six State Universities in Telangana reveals that the thrust area of English language teaching/learning/testing is similar across the universities. Survey shows that undergraduate learners in Government Degree Colleges in Hyderabad consist of students from all over the State and include rural, semi-rural, semi-urban, and urban students. The undergraduate learners in GDCs across Telangana belong to the socio-economically challenged section then of society, often first-generation learners. Survey also shows that English teachers in Government Degree Colleges are trained in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and have taught in colleges in the various districts of Telangana, and are familiar with learner profiles and the General English curriculum and assessment patterns across the State. The study becomes highly relevant in that the English language teaching /learning /testing that happens in GDCs scaffolds the English language skills development of the students, an essential 21st-century skill to succeed in today's world.

**Table 1:Scheme for Analysis of Continuous Internal Evaluation(CIE)
Batch I (2016-17 to 2018-19), Batch II (2017-18 to 2019-20), Batch III(2018-
19 to 2020-21)
Government Degree Colleges (3) – VGDC Vidyanagar, IPGDC Nampally,
GDC Khairtabad.**

Note: General English is a 5 Credit mandatory course in Semesters I, II, III, IV of the 6 Semesters of Undergraduate Programs of Osmania University, Hyderabad, Telangana State since the introduction of CBCS in 2016-17.

- **15 Teachers and 135 Students (3x 45) from the 3 Government Degree Colleges are part of the study.**
- **Each batch consists of 15 students -5 each from B. A, B. Com, B.Sc. for the duration of the Study**

Year	Semester I	Semester II	Semester III	Semester IV
2016-2017	IQP-2 Asgm t-1	IQP-2 Asgmt -1		
2017-2018	IQP-2 Asgm t-1	IQP-2 Asgmt -1	IQP-2 Asgmt- 1	IQP-2 Asgmt-1
2018-2019	IQP-2 Asgm t-1	IQP-2 Asgmt -1	IQP-2 Asgmt- 1	IQP-2 Asgmt-1
2019-2020			IQP-2 Asgmt- 1	IQP-2 Asgmt-1

- **Internal Question Papers(IQP) -24 per College (2 IQPs per semester), (24x3=72)**
- **No of Items Analyzed in IQPs: 1080**
- **Assignments(Asgmt) =1 per semester = 12(12X3=36)**

Need for the Study

Assessments are tools to measure the learner's knowledge, skills, and abilities in the English language. The study seeks to determine:

- The levels of learning tested in the CIE and how it shapes teachers' and students' approaches to English.
- The frequency with which topics/items are selected from the lessons and repeated in CIE influences teachers' and students' decisions to focus on specific topics/lessons.
- Why language teachers need to be competent in language testing and the need for language teachers to select appropriate language tests and the need for language teachers to design and develop appropriate language tests keeping in mind the purpose, context, and the group of test-takers.
- Are assessments influencing teaching and learning at the undergraduate level in Telangana? If so, the implications of the impact of CIE on language teaching and learning.

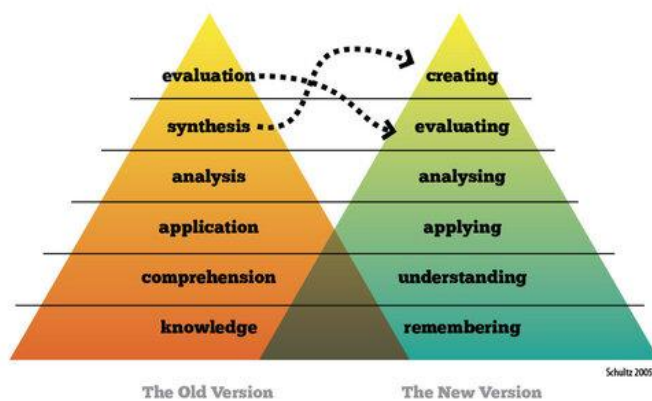
Analysis and Interpretation of CIE at the three affiliated Government Degree Colleges in Hyderabad, Telangana

The study uses three Government Degree Colleges in Hyderabad affiliated to Osmania University, namely, IPGDC, Nampally, GDC, Khairtabad and VGDC, Vidyanagar, to evaluate the Continuous Internal Evaluation (CIE) and its impact on teaching and learning since the introduction of CBCS by Osmania University, Hyderabad, Telangana in 2016- 2017.

The study adopts a Mixed Method (Quantitative and qualitative) approach. The study uses material analysis (Question Papers of CIE), questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observation to gather information and document the Continuous Internal Evaluation(CIE) impact. A total of 72 Internal Assessment Question Papers (1080 items), 36 Assignments are reviewed, and 15 teachers and 135 students from the three Government Degree Colleges in Hyderabad affiliated to Osmania University are included in the study. The study period is four years from 2016- 2017 to 2019- 2020, i.e., the four semesters of General English Course of 2016-2017 to 2018-2019,2017- 2018 to 2019-2020 and 2018 -2019 to 2020-2021 batch of undergraduate study.

The study uses Bloom's learning taxonomy as a theoretical framework to evaluate the assessment process.

Bloom's Taxonomy



The CIE uses a range of test items to assess students' language skills, such as multiple-choice questions (MCQs), Gap-fill, short answers, true/false, matching, constructed response questions (CRQs). Each test item in the CIE is examined to establish (1) the learning level needed by learners to respond to test items, (2) the frequency with which items occur in the various semesters, (3) which lessons from the prescribed General English Textbooks the test items are selected. The data gathered during the study were analyzed using the Pivot Table. The analysis reveals (a) how high and low-order learning is prioritized in CIE, (b) the frequency with which topics occur in various semesters, and (c) the frequency in which the lessons from the General English Textbooks are prioritized in the CIE.

The mandatory Continuous Internal Evaluation (CIE) for General English Course requires two Internal Assessments (IA) (average of two IA- 15 marks), each Internal Assessment has 15 test Items and one assignment (5mark) each semester for 20 marks each. The Continuous Internal Evaluation (CIE) is conducted according to the almanac provided by the University each Semester. 1080 test items and 36 assignments were examined for the level of learning required by students using the framework of Bloom's Taxonomy.

The pattern that emerged from the analysis of the CIE of the three GDCs was that lessons 1 and 2 are tested in IA 1, and lessons 3 and 4 are tested in IA 2 in Semesters 1 and 2. In IA 1 of Semester 3, lessons 1 and 2 are assessed, and IA 2 tests lessons 3,4 and 5. In Semester 4, lessons 6 and 7 are tested in IA 1, and lessons 8,9, and 10 are assessed.

Conversation and Reading are practiced in the English classrooms in the three GDCs. Analysis of Semester 1 and Semester 2, IA1, and IA 2 reveal that Value Orientation, Conversation Skills, soft skills, Writing Skills, and the Reading Passages were not tested in the two Internal

Assessments. However, teacher interviews and student questionnaires reveal that Value Orientation and Soft Skills are tested through the Assignment of the CIE. Conversation and Reading are practiced in the English classrooms in GDCs.

Interpretation of the Internal Assessments of Semesters 3 and 4 reveal that no topic from lessons 1 to 5 (Semester3) and lessons 6 to 10 (Semester 4) is left untested.

Assignments are a mandatory component of the CIE each semester. Each student has to write an assignment for 5 Marks during the semester. The topics are given at the start of each semester so that students read, gather information, analyze it, and exhibit higher levels of learning like Evaluating or Creating. Analysis of the Assignments topics shows that in Semesters I and 2 at the three GDCs Soft Skills and Value Orientation topics from Lessons 1 to 4(Semester1) and Lessons 5 to 8(Semester2) assessed the L5, Evaluating learning level of the learners. During the document analysis, the study made an important observation that Value Orientation was never tested, and only a few soft skills topics were tested in the End Semester Exams. Teachers ensured that students were taught and assessed these topics by giving assignments in the CIE.

Analysis of the topics of Assignments shows that in Semesters 3 and 4 at the three GDCs, Essay Writing and Report Writing from Lessons 4 and 5 (Semester3) and Review Writing and CV Writing from Lessons 9 and 10 (Semester4) assessed the L6, i.e., Creating learning level of the Bloom's Taxonomy. During the document analysis, the study made an important observation that though Essay Writing, Report Writing, Review Writing, and CV Writing were tested in the 3rd and 4th End Semester Exams, teachers still consolidated higher-order learning by assessing through assignments in CIE.

The review of test items of CIE reveals during the study period (2016 to 2020) showed:

- Internal Assessments test L1(Remembering)/L2 (Understanding)/L3(Applying) through a range of test items to assess students' language skills.
- Assignments assess the learning levels L5(Evaluating)/L6 (Creating) of the learners through writing tasks

Teachers who are also the test developers in Government Degree Colleges acknowledge the importance of assessing students' lower and high order learning skills. The desk review CIE of the four semesters from 2016 to 2020 of the three GDCS suggests that students are expected to "remember," "recognize," "comprehend," "interpret," "apply" "analyze," "exhibit conceptual understanding," "compare," "contrast," "evaluate," and "create" in tests designed to exhibit their language proficiency. Appropriate teaching methodology and specific assessment strategies ensure that the learners' language capabilities are properly measured to the extent possible in the large heterogeneous undergraduate classrooms in Government Degree Colleges in Hyderabad, Telangana.

Teacher and Student Perspectives on CIE

Fifteen Teachers and 135 Students from the three Government Degree Colleges were part of the study. All the fifteen teachers varied in age profile and teaching experience and were question paper setters and examiners of CIE of English in their respective colleges. While choosing the student participants, the maximum variation sampling technique was followed to represent the mixed ability English Classrooms in GDCs in Telangana.

Forty-five students (15 each from BA, B. Com, B.Sc.) from each batch of the three colleges were part of the study for all four semesters of their undergraduate course of study. In the sample of 45 students per college, each batch of 15 students had five students per course; two rural and one each from urban, semi-rural, and semi-urban settings.

Inputs from language teachers from Government Degree Colleges and a cross-section of undergraduate students helped document the nature of test impact on teaching and learning English and examine how it works on areas like the content of teaching, teaching methodology, ways of assessing achievement, the attitude of teachers and learners and the extent of presumed impact – positive or negative.

One of the study's most significant findings was that teachers did not teach the test. Several studies reveal teachers narrowed the syllabus contents. The findings did not match studies conducted in other contexts where test preparation and test-focused teaching-learning were predominant.

Interviews with teachers of the Government Degree Colleges in Telangana reveal that using a judicious mix of lower and higher-order learning items in the CIE is need-based. It helps cater to heterogeneous English undergraduate classrooms in Telangana. Teachers from GDCs in Telangana revealed no anxiety about completing the syllabus each semester. The University Almanac schedules the CIE at the beginning of each semester. External factors do not unduly pressure them as they adhere to the guidelines laid down by the University and CCE and are monitored by the Academic Cell of the respective colleges.

Teacher interviews elicited teachers' understanding of the English curriculum and its objectives. Teachers do not alter their classroom teaching practices as the assessment objectives align with the learning objectives. Their awareness of the relationship between curricular objectives and test objectives relates to test paper analysis in the study. The study showed that most teachers have adequate knowledge of assessment practices at the tertiary level. Teachers in GDCs are the test designers, developers, and users of language assessments. Hence, they have to be proficient in the effective use of language assessment.

However, the study found that inadequate language assessment literacy in younger teachers can have a negative washback in the teaching and learning of English. For example, there is no scope for testing speaking and listening skills in the CIE and End Semester Examinations. Since the less experienced teachers lack adequate language assessment literacy, they teach the skills, but they do not test them. They follow the question formats of CIE and End Semester Examinations English examinations. They do not employ alternative assessment techniques. Hence, students' learning may remain confined to those areas focused on the test items. Students' questionnaires also showed that their younger, less experienced teachers did tasks involving speaking and listening in the classrooms; they were never tested on these skills as it was not part of CIE and End Semester Examinations.

The study found that teachers and students had a positive attitude towards the English CIE, encouraging teachers to focus on the language learning process rather than teach the tests. Teachers' attitudes towards the assessment process shape multiple aspects of teaching and learning. The study showed that the teachers' positive attitudes reflected the positive perception towards the test that the students too have. Teachers believe the existing assessment practices are suitable for assessing the learning outcomes and achieving the objectives of the English curriculum, assuming its implementation in totality. They see a slight mismatch in the classroom practice of communicative language teaching and assessment practices. There is no scope for formal testing of speaking and listening skills, and no marks are allocated for these skills in all four semesters of the General English curriculum. This practice demonstrates a negative washback of CIE and End Semester Examinations at Government Degree Colleges in Hyderabad, Telangana.

Teacher interviews, student questionnaires, and classroom observations, which formed part of the study, recognized teachers' attitudes as enabling factors for their students' language learning. The teachers expressed that they were under no pressure to teach the test. However, the study found that both teachers and students suffered anxiety and stress because of the high stake CIE and End Semester Examinations to ensure high scores considering the test-dominated culture in Telangana and India.

Teacher interviews and student questionnaires reveal that most teachers concentrated on language learning activities in the classrooms. Teachers did teach students test-taking strategies for the CIE and End Semester Examinations just before the assessments, which teachers and students feel is the natural consequence of a test-orient context. When learners have a positive approach towards assessments, it encourages them to spend more time learning than preparing for tests. The study shows that students develop linguistic, grammatical, and communicative competence. They learn two skills: Reading and writing, which is the focus of the CIE. The curriculum teaches listening and speaking skills. However, listening and speaking skills are not tested in the CIE and End Semester examinations. There was no allocation of marks for these skills. The study reveals that all the teachers engage their students in practicing these skills in the classroom. Teacher interviews and student questionnaires reveal most teachers assess and give feedback on the learners' progress in speaking and listening skills. Questionnaires of students reported that most of the teachers involved

them in practicing listening and speaking English. They were also taught test-taking strategies to get high scores in the assessments.

The study indicates that the CIE has a positive washback on English teaching-learning in Government Degree Colleges. It results from alignment between objectives of the curriculum, an understanding of the curriculum, and assessment practices by the teachers. The positive washback also results from the teachers' and students' attitudes towards assessment practices, despite the test-oriented nature of the context of the current study. The study demonstrates how positive washback could be generated in teaching-learning contexts. The CIE is aligned with curricular and learning objectives, ensuring beneficial washback on the teaching and learning process in the English classrooms in GDCs in Telangana

Conclusion

In recent years, many assessment researchers have felt the need to examine the crucial role of assessment in teaching and learning. "Assessment for learning" or CIE is an essential pedagogical strategy for developing student achievement. Teachers, the classroom practitioners are responsible for ensuring effective classroom assessment practices to ensure adequate student learning. Classroom assessment processes must be valid, reliable, and assist students' learning. Assessment impacts teaching and learning, and language teachers must receive support in developing their assessment knowledge and skills. Assessment is a continuous process, and teachers must make time to do it correctly by establishing relationships with learners and sharing assessment data with learners about strengths and areas for progress in their English language acquisition journey.

Limitation of the Study

The study does not include Government Degree Colleges from various districts in Telangana affiliated with other State Universities. However, the homogeneity and centralization of Government Degree Colleges in Telangana imply that even if the findings are specific to the present study context, other Government Degree Colleges in Telangana is expected to experience the same phenomena.

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