



## Society for Creation of Opportunity through Proficiency in English

Dr Jayanti Ravi, Chief Executive Officer, the Society for Creation of Opportunity through Proficiency in English (SCOPE), Government of Gujarat, was wondering about the direction that SCOPE had to take now. It was August 2011 and SCOPE was exactly four and a half years old. It had been set up by the Government of Gujarat, a province (state) in India, in February 2007, with the objective of developing English language skills among the youth of the state. In line with this objective, SCOPE operated through two models. It sought to train interested youth in English through a network of training centres, and then offered them a language testing opportunity, so that their skill levels could be benchmarked. This was a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model, which relied on Zonal Training Partners, who coordinated a network of Training Centres, which in turn enrolled students. A second model was called the Only Assessment Scheme (OAS), under which college students could get themselves tested and certified. There was no intermediary between SCOPE and the students in this model.

The PPP model demanded a lot of monitoring and supervision input, since the quality of the training offered by the centres determined the success of the programme. The OAS model had the potential to cover a large number of youth with relatively less effort, since the responsibility for learning the language rested with the test-takers, and SCOPE only offered a certification of proficiency. Both models had their advantages and disadvantages; paying adequate attention to both was becoming difficult—if the model which was likely to afford more benefits could be emphasized, the coverage would be better. Alok Kumar wondered which model should receive more attention.

The approach to the English language that SCOPE took was “*Neither domination of, nor disinclination for, English.*” SCOPE saw English as a key means of tapping into the employment opportunities opened up by the liberalized economy. Thus, by training the state’s youth in English, SCOPE aimed at enhancing their employability. Initially, SCOPE fixed a target of 500,000 youth to be covered within four years. These youth were expected to be trained in business English through a network of training centres. The initial plan was to set up 1000 centres in the first year. However, by February 2011, only about 150,000 candidates had passed through the SCOPE programme and about 425 training centres were functioning.

SCOPE partnered with Cambridge ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) for the testing and certification. Cambridge ESOL was one of the world’s leading certifiers of proficiency in the English language, and its examinations were recognized by various employers, universities and colleges, professional bodies, and official agencies throughout the world. The certification was provided on the basis of an assessment of proficiency levels

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Prepared by Dr. Jayanti S. Ravi, Government of Gujarat, and Professor Vijaya Sherry Chand, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. The authors wish to thank Akash Arun, Manu Dwivedi and Ankit Jalan for their research assistance. Sandeep Sharma, Tushar Patel and Dyuti Vyas assisted in the organization of data.

Cases of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, are prepared as a basis for class discussion. They are not designed to present illustrations of either correct or incorrect handling of administrative problems. Names of individuals and the case location have been disguised.

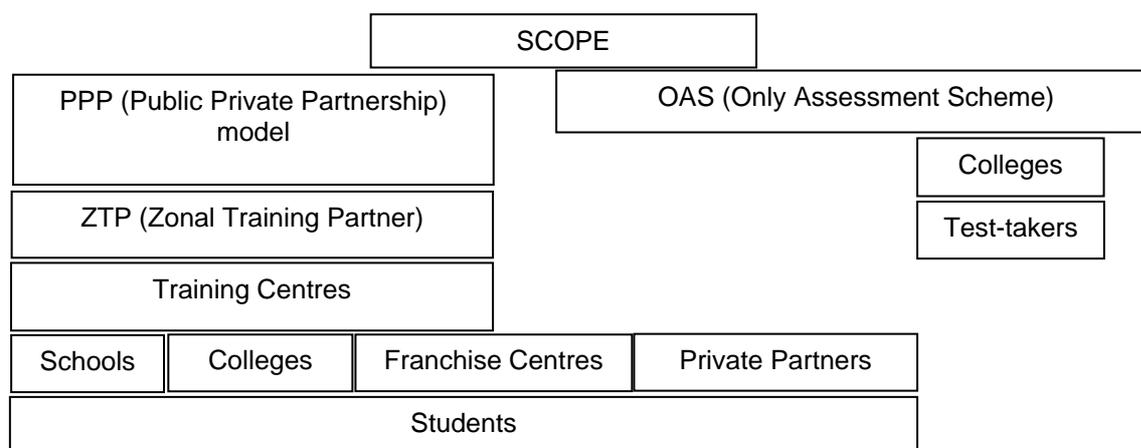
that corresponded to the standards of the *Common European Framework of Reference: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR), of the Council of Europe. The CEFR described six levels of proficiency required to be demonstrated by the people taking various tests; these levels corresponded to the usual division of learners into basic, intermediate and advanced levels: Basic User: A1 and A2, Independent User: B1 and B2, Proficient User: C1 and C2. These levels also corresponded to the standards of the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE), which drew on the CEFR proficiency levels, but used different terminology: A2 and B1 were defined as Waystage User and Threshold User; B2 corresponded to ALTE Level 3, called Vantage Level. The correspondence between CEFR and ALTE was as follows: C2 (ALTE 5); C1 (ALTE 4); B2 (ALTE 3); B1 (ALTE 2); A2 (ALTE 1); A1 (ALTE Breakthrough).

Corresponding to CEFR Levels A1 to C1 (ALTE Levels Breakthrough to ALTE 4), SCOPE specified five levels: Levels I to V.<sup>1</sup> Each level covered the following learning areas: listening, reading, speaking and grammar. Within each learning area, many audio-visual tools and online material were provided so that students could work independently. These resources included audio versions of written texts, dictionary, and other visual aids. Under Listening, the goal was to enhance “students’ comprehension of aural input through exposure to a variety of listening segments (video clips, television shows, radio programs, voicemail messages, etc.)” The Reading section aimed at exposing students to different kinds of text – stories, advertisements, letters) and to various reading strategies: “guessing words from context, identifying main idea, keywords, etc.” The Speaking area had dialogues set in everyday contexts, and focused on functional English. The Grammar section introduced the students to basic grammar. (See Exhibit 1 for details of the CEFR standards.) Each level required 90 hours of study – 60 hours of training and 30 hours of exercises. The learning material for students prescribed by Cambridge ESOL was provided by SCOPE. Additional literature such as a pre-placement kit for students and a training kit for trainers was also provided.

## STRUCTURE

SCOPE operated through two models, the PPP or public-private partnership model and the OAS or Only Assessment Scheme model (Figure 1).<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 1: SCOPE Programme**



<sup>1</sup>In practice, the CEFR terminology was more popular. Thus, A1 was more likely to be used than Level I.

<sup>2</sup>SCOPE operated with very few staff. Apart from the Chief Executive Officer, who was also the Commissioner of Higher Education, and so had to attend to other duties as well, there was a Joint Chief Executive Officer. There were two programme coordinators and a few administrative staff.

## THE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP MODEL

**Zonal Training Partners (ZTP):** These were independent agencies appointed by SCOPE as its partners, for the three zones that the state had been divided into. The appointment was made after a tendering process, which also involved establishing the financial soundness of the applicant. There were four ZTPs as of August 2011.

**Table 1: List of Zonal Training Partners**

Name of the ZTP	Training centres (approximate)
Academy for Computer Training Pvt. Ltd. (ACT)	200
Tripada Multicourse Pvt. Ltd.	110
Dev Kishan Computer Pvt. Ltd.	20
V.S. Shah Institute of Computer Science	75

**Note:** The number of training centres changed from time to time. For instance, in June 2011, there were 425 training centres. The first two ZTPs have been a part of SCOPE from the inception of the programme, while the third and the fourth were appointed in February, 2010.

The ZTP was responsible for selecting the Training Centres and coordinating their work. The training centres were the sites where the actual delivery of the programme took place. The ZTP was also responsible for training the trainers of the centres, whenever required. For their role in the programme, the ZTPs earned a share of the fee paid by the students (described later). There were no clear criteria for selecting the Training Centres, which could be schools, colleges, franchise partners of the ZTP or private training centres. The only condition imposed was that a trainer should be at least two levels above the level he or she taught.

**Training Centres:** The Training Centres (TC) were divided into four categories: schools, colleges, private centres and franchise centres. Some schools and colleges were centres under both the PPP model and the OAS model. Franchises had to pay a sum of ₹10,000 to the ZTP to register and run the SCOPE programme. Private centres were initially charged ₹20,000 to 30,000 by SCOPE for registration, but this policy was dropped soon. Schools and colleges were not charged any registration fees. The TC employed its own trainers.

The TCs were spread all over the state, but their presence was significant in the four major cities of the state. They delivered the programme to the end users, the students. The course was as prescribed by Cambridge ESOL, and the material provided to the enrolled students was also as prescribed by Cambridge ESOL. The TCs were guided and supported by their ZTPs. The TCs did the enrolment of students themselves. Thus, a student enrolling for the PPP model had to register with a TC. The TCs coordinated with SCOPE during the assessment to allot their students to the various test centres. Finally, when the certificates were received from the ZTPs, the TCs handed them over to their graduates. SCOPE provided infrastructural support to many of the better-performing centres: A-grade (see Quality Assurance Agency section below) centres with a minimum enrolment of 60 students were given LCD, projectors and computers for improving the quality of English language training in exchange for a performance guarantee.

The fees were “maintained at low levels.”<sup>3</sup> The fees for levels A1 to B2 were ₹1200 (plus taxes) while for C1 the fees were ₹2,000 (plus taxes). The fee included the cost of training, course materials, test coordination, assessment and certification. Of the fee of ₹1,200, ₹100 was passed on to SCOPE, ₹400 was the ZTP’s share and the remaining ₹700 was retained by the TCs. However, the distribution of the amount between the ZTP and the TCs was flexible and could be changed with mutual consent. Out of the C level fee of ₹2000, ₹100 went to SCOPE, ₹500 to the ZTP and the rest was retained by the TC. At present, the number of students at level C is negligible.

**Quality Assurance Agency:** An independent quality assurance agency was appointed by SCOPE to grade the centres every three months. Using various quality parameters (Table 2) and onsite observations of the agency personnel, the quality of the delivery at the centres was assessed; the centres were then graded as A (good), B (medium) or C (poor). Three consecutive Cs meant that the centre would be deactivated by SCOPE.

**Table 2: Criteria for grading Training Centres**

Criteria	Explanation	Weight
1) Qualified Trainer	Availability of trainer at the centre with language proficiency above B1 level	30
2) Enrolment	Enrolment more than 20 in the last session	10
3) Passing percentage	Passing percentage more than 60 in the last session	10
4) Placement test	Administration of placement test - to gauge level of proficiency at the entry point of course	10
5) Candidates material	Providing courseware to candidates on schedule	15
6) Availability of training materials	Availability of trainers’ book, videos, other supporting infrastructure	15
7) Feedback of students	Collection and analysis of feedback on trainer performance	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

### THE ONLY ASSESSMENT SCHEME MODEL

The OAS model was open to college students. Students registering with the OAS model had two options:

- 1) Give the assessment test directly. This was for students who only wanted to get a certification of their proficiency in English.
- 2) Give the assessment test and associate with a DELL (Digital English Learning Lab) for training and material. As of July 2011, there were 193 OAS/DELL colleges in the state participating in the OAS model.

The test fee was only ₹200 for the A level and ₹300 for the B level. Out of the fee charged, ₹125 (A level) and ₹225 (B level) were transferred to SCOPE. The remaining amount (₹75 per candidate) stayed with the college for administration and incidental expenses. Some colleges under OAS were also assessment-cum-training centres if they happened to be DELL labs. In case of Assessment with training at DELL, the level A fee was ₹600; SCOPE’s share was ₹125 and ₹475 was retained by the college. The level B fee was ₹900, with SCOPE’s share being

<sup>3</sup> There was no organization in the state comparable to SCOPE in reach. There were a few privately-run English language teaching centres in major cities, but these had limited reach and charged high fees. For instance, one centre in the largest commercial city of the state charged ₹4500 to 6000 for a basic programme in the language.

₹225 and ₹675 being retained by the college. See Exhibit 2 for administrative details of the scheme.

Dakshin Pradesh had an enrolment of 1.05 million in its higher education system as of 2011-12 (Exhibit 3). This meant that, conservatively speaking, about 0.20 million graduates might be seeking employment every year. Alok Kumar felt that the potential for OAS was great, since a fair proportion of the graduates, at least from the Arts, Commerce, Science disciplines, would benefit from competence in English. He guessed that more students would enrol as time went by and as SCOPE reached out to more colleges. In addition, youth who were not college students might also be attracted to this model.

## TESTING CYCLE

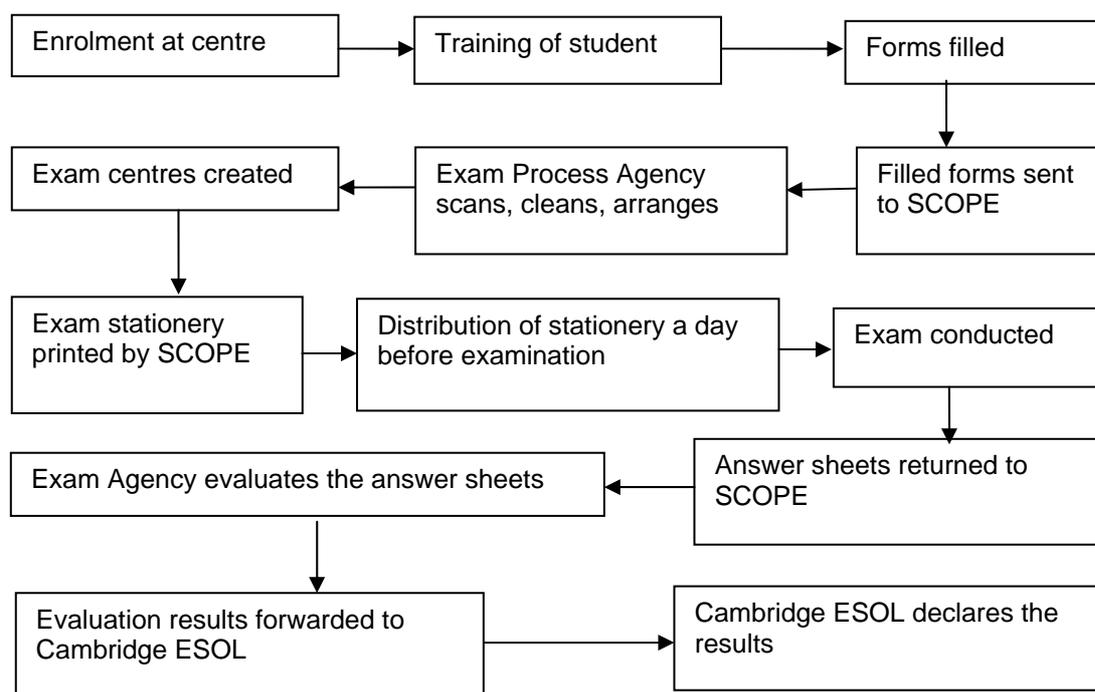
The test for the students registering under either model (PPP or OAS) was the same. SCOPE conducted its tests roughly every four months. The A level exam was held at various locations in the state on a single day. It had a multiple-choice format and employed the OMR format for reading the answers. The B level test was a computer-adaptive test. The Digital Education and Learning Labs established at various colleges were used to conduct this test. Most candidates appeared for the A level exam. In the test round conducted in February 2011, out of the 18,619 candidates who appeared, 16,722 (89.8%) answered the A level tests, and only 1897 (10.2%) answered the B level tests. The distribution of the 18,619 candidates by the model under which they appeared is given in Table 3.<sup>4</sup>

**Table 3: Distribution of February 2011 test-takers**

	Level A	Level B	Total	Share of Grand Total	Share of Level A	Share of Level B
PPP Model	10961	986	11947	64.17%	65.55%	51.98%
OAS Direct	4358	847	5205	27.96%	26.06%	44.65%
OAS DELL	1403	64	1467	7.88%	8.39%	3.37%
OAS Total	5761	911	6672	35.83%	34.45%	48.02%
Grand Total	16722	1897	18619			

SCOPE also started conducting online speaking tests (the BULATS test, Business Language Testing Services test) from the January-February 2011 test round. A total of 14,205 candidates appeared for the online BULATS speaking test in this round. SCOPE officials felt that this was probably the first time in India that such a large number had appeared for an online language test of this kind. SCOPE also set up an 'examination process agency' in 2010-11 to take care of the examination processes. The process flow is presented in Figure 2.

<sup>4</sup> Though data for other rounds of tests are not provided here, discussions with SCOPE officials indicated the following: OAS is becoming more prominent and "the number under this model may show a further increase in the future"—as of February 2011, it accounted for a third of total test-takers and half of Level B test-takers; OAS candidates associated with the DELL colleges account for a small proportion of the test-takers.

**Figure 2: Flow of examination process**

### BRIEF REVIEW OF PPP MODEL, JULY 2011

In an effort to better understand the functioning and performance of the PPP model at the ground level, Alok Kumar got an independent rapid assessment carried out in collaboration with an academic institution, in July 2011. (Exhibit 4 presents a summary of the report.) He noted that teachers and family members were important sources of information about the programme; parents were key decision makers. The students interviewed saw English as a route to personal development and employability.

To his surprise, he noted that most had at least one family member who knew English. Use of non-programme material and peer learning seemed to offer scope for improvement. The training centres seemed to be functioning satisfactorily. The students found the use of audio-visual methods and computers new, but there were many suggestions to improve the contextual relevance of the material supplied. Most of the sampled students were willing to recommend the programme to others.

On the issue of raising fee levels, opinion seemed to be divided. The trainers who had been interviewed had some suggestions to motivate students to advance to higher levels of certification since many students seemed to be happy just with the lowest level of proficiency. However, Alok Kumar found the enthusiasm of the students to become language-skill entrepreneurs very interesting.

As he reflected on the report, Alok Kumar wondered whether he should strengthen the PPP model, which would need strong managerial support. The OAS model seemed to offer some advantages since more youth could be covered. The study also threw up the idea of a language-skill entrepreneurship approach. Or perhaps both these models needed to be stressed. Given the original targets of the programme and the need to accelerate the coverage of the state's youth, Alok Kumar wanted to know what kind of strategy he should adopt.

**Exhibit 1: Common European Framework of Reference: Learning, Teaching, Assessment, Proficiency Levels**

Proficient	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
User	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
User	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
User	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

**Source:** [http://www.coe.int/t/DG4/Portfolio/?L=E&M=/main\\_pages/levels.html](http://www.coe.int/t/DG4/Portfolio/?L=E&M=/main_pages/levels.html), accessed July 18, 2011.

### **Exhibit 2: Only Assessment Scheme**

The Only Assessment Scheme is meant for college students of Gujarat. This exhibit presents extracts from the scheme details document circulated to the colleges by SCOPE.

1. Every college student can take SCOPE assessment by getting registered with the college for the same.
2. SCOPE will nominate a Special Administrative Agency (SAA) to coordinate the examination related work with these colleges.
3. The College will have to get itself registered with SAA appointed by SCOPE.
4. The College can charge from student a maximum of Rs. 200/- for A level examination and Rs. 300/- for B level examination, inclusive of the SCOPE fees.
5. SCOPE will interact through SAA and not with individual colleges.
6. The College will form a committee of two persons, principal and coordinator, for managing and administering this scheme at the college level.
7. The College committee will be responsible for:
  - 7.1. For collection of examination forms from SAA.
  - 7.2. For distribution of examination forms to students and getting them duly filled for SCOPE assessment.
  - 7.3. For collection of filled up candidate examination forms from students.
  - 7.4. For verification of the filled up candidate examination forms.
  - 7.5. For submission of filled up candidate examination forms to SAA appointed by SCOPE.
  - 7.6. For collection of Hall tickets from SAA.
  - 7.7. For distribution of hall tickets to students.
  - 7.8. For collection of results and certificates from SAA.
  - 7.9. For distribution of results and certificates to students.
  - 7.10. For any activity which is necessary for smooth conduct of examination process.
8. The Committee will collect fees and submit candidate exam forms along with cheques / Demand drafts totalling to Rs 125 per candidate exam form for A level and Rs 225 per candidate exam form for B level to SAA. Cheque / Demand draft should be payable to 'CEO SCOPE'.
9. The college may arrange for teaching sessions and charge a token additional fee which will not be more than Rs. 400.
10. The college may utilize this amount to offer remuneration to the coordinator and other teachers, assistants.
11. The student who is already enrolled under SCOPE programme and wants to appear in SCOPE assessment under this scheme, can appear by paying charges as mentioned above, but he/she will not be eligible for refund of SCOPE programme fee from SCOPE centre.
12. To support the candidates, who wish to register only for exam, Special telecast will be arranged through BISAG.
13. For further support to such candidates recorded CD's of the telecast will be made available on a 'no profit no loss' basis, after the telecast from SCOPE office.
14. Recommended course books are as follows :  
 Language in Use Book -1 by Cambridge University Press  
 World Link Book -1 by Thompson Press  
 English Fluency Step -1 by Macmillan  
 (any of the books can be used)  
 ....
17. The Committee will collect fees and submit candidate exam forms along with cheques / Demand drafts totalling to Rs 125 per candidate exam form for A level and Rs 225 per candidate exam form for B level to SAA. Cheque / Demand draft should be payable to 'CEO SCOPE'.
18. If a centre wants to reduce the fee for any course, it can be reduced only from the college revenue part. No centre is permitted to charge more than the fees prescribed.
19. The exams for both A and B level will be conducted as per SCOPE examination pattern.
20. On appearance in SCOPE examination a candidate will get certificate from SCOPE in association with Cambridge ESOL.
21. The College will keep record of all the activities listed above and they shall share it as and when asked or directed in format by SCOPE.

**Source:** SCOPE Office

**Exhibit 3: Dakshin Pradesh, Enrolment in Higher Education, by Courses, 2011-12**

	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
Arts, Commerce, Science	262847	230853	493700
Engineering / Technology, Architecture	199950	46365	246315
Medicine (Modern/Indian)	17953	15335	33288
Agriculture, Dairy Science, Veterinary Science, Fisheries, Forestry	3632	776	4408
Management	29754	15053	44807
Education / Teacher Training	39952	48316	88268
Physical Education & Yoga	658	110	768
Journalism / Mass Communication	199	125	324
Law	7576	4467	12043
Others	99643	22544	122187
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>662164</b>	<b>383944</b>	<b>1046108</b>

**Source:** SCOPE Office

**Exhibit 4: PPP Model: A Brief Review, July 2011**  
**Extracts from the Report, SCOPE**

A rapid review of the PPP model was completed in July 2011 through visits to selected training centres and meetings with/ surveys of students and trainers. The views of 115 students and 14 trainers provided the basic input for the review; 93 of the 114 students were at A level. Three of the 14 trainers had more than 10 years of experience in education, five of them had between two and five years of experience, and the rest had less than two years of experience.

**Decision Makers**

The Government advertised the SCOPE programme through newspapers, pamphlets, brochures, hoardings, cable TV, radio jingles, and printing SCOPE-related information on the mark sheet folders of the state Board's Class X and XII graduates. The survey indicated that teachers in their own institutions and family members were the most important sources of information about SCOPE for the students (Table E3.1).

**Table E3.1: Main source of information about programme, Students**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Newspapers	2	1.7
SCOPE pamphlet	5	4.4
Teachers	67	58.8
Family members	22	19.3
Old students of SCOPE	7	6.1
New media like SMS	5	4.4
Others	6	5.3
Total	114	100.0

The key person in deciding whether a student joined SCOPE seemed to be the parent (Table E3.2). Of course, quite a number of students cite themselves as the key decision maker. But the fees still seem to come from the parents and family (Table E3.3). All these factors put together indicate that the family still plays a key role in the final enrolment in SCOPE.

**Table E3.2: Decision maker: Joining the programme, Students**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Self	37	32.5
Parents	75	65.8
Relatives	1	.9
Friends	1	.9
Total	114	100.0

**Table E3.3: Person paying the fees, Students**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Self	11	9.7
Family	100	88.5
Government scheme	1	.9
Borrowing for fee	1	.9
Total	113	100.0

How is English going to help the students? Of the 114 students who responded, most cited English as a route to personal development (97, 85%); the rest (17, 15%) indicated a mix of benefits: route to

better employment, preparation for higher studies or competitive examinations, and certification. Only six of the 113 (5.2%) who responded were employed, as teachers. This investment in developing personality as a base for future prospects seemed to be an important feature that could possibly figure in attempts to reach out to prospective candidates.

The sample indicates that very few (only seven out of 110, Table E3.4) hail from families in which none of the family members speaks English. But, out of the 103 who do have family members with whom it is possible to communicate in English, six (5.8%) do not do so, and 12 (11.7%) do so rarely (Table E3.5).

**Table E3.4: Number of family members who can communicate in English, Students**

Number of others in family who can communicate in English	Number of respondents	Percentage
0	7	6.4
1	30	27.3
2	46	41.8
3 and above	27	24.5
Total	110	

**Table E3.5: Frequency of communication in English with family members, Students**

	Frequency	Percent
No	6	5.8
Often	85	82.5
Rarely	12	11.7
Total	103	

The trainers seemed to be divided in their assessments regarding the motivation of the students to put in the effort demanded by SCOPE: six of them rated the motivation poor, six good, and the remaining two rated the motivation average. However, 11 of the 14 said that the desire to learn English among the students was high, with two being unsure, and one saying the desire is missing. Taking motivation and desire to learn into consideration, the trainers are equally divided in their assessment of the overall response to the programme of the students: good (4), average and poor (5 trainers each).

### **Study Material and Other Sources of English**

There was a strong tendency among the sample students (about half of them) to rely only on SCOPE material for their main learning matter (Table E3.6). However, many students tried to read English newspapers (103 out of 114, 90.4%). Out of 102 who reported the name of the newspaper, 91 (89.2%) read the Times of India. The newspapers cited by the others include The Indian Express, DNA and a couple of others.

**Table E3.6: Reliance only on SCOPE material, Students**

	Frequency	Percent
No	55	50.5
Yes	54	49.5
Total	109	100.0

There were attempts to watch English media like news channels on television (Table E3.7), though the frequency of such watching was poor (Table E3.8).

**Table E3.7: Watching English media, Students**

	Frequency	Percent
No	6	5.3
Yes	108	94.7
Total	114	100.0

**Table E3.8: Frequency of watching English media, Students**

	Frequency	Percent
Once a month	57	52.8
Once a week	13	12.0
A few times a week	33	30.6
Daily	5	4.6
Total	108	100.0

### Practice and Learning Groups to Facilitate Learning

In contrast to just unplanned communication in English, communication with intent to practice may be important in determining the rate of progress. More than half of the sample students seemed to rely on their friends inside SCOPE circles (Table E3.9).

**Table E3.9: Communication with intent to practice English, Students**

	Frequency	Percent
Friends inside SCOPE class	64	56.1
Friends outside class	11	9.6
Family	16	14.0
Distant friends	19	16.7
Others	4	3.5
Total	114	100.0

However, communication with intent to practice seemed to be driven by individual initiative; only 15 out of 110 reported some form of a learning group, which had some sort of structure (Table E3.10). A third of these groups did not meet regularly or frequently. About 86 percent try to communicate in English in SCOPE classes (Table E3.11). Only seven of the 14 trainers report interacting with the students outside the class.

**Table E3.10: Membership in any form of group designed to support learning, Students**

	Frequency	Percent
No	95	86.4
Yes	15	13.6
Total	110	95.7

**Table E3.11: Communication in English in class, Students**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	99	86.8
Rarely	15	13.2
Total	114	100.0

### Training Centre Experience

Most of the students (110 out of 112) rated the preparedness of the teacher good; only two rated preparedness poor. Also, 112 out of 114 students rated the communication of the teachers good, with

the other two rating it poor. On the whole, the students' ratings of the teachers seemed to be good. The average number of hours at the training centre worked out to two hours a day. "Effort" hours (the number of serious practice hours of work as reported by the students) worked out to 5.5 hours per week (109 respondents).

### Course Material

Most trainers (13 out of 14) felt the course material was sufficient and adequate; 10 out of 14 felt that the material provided was suitable for the testing objectives (two trainers each were unsure or thought the material was not suitable).

### Assignments and Exercises

Almost all the students (105 out of 106) reported the use of assignments and exercises, either based on the prescribed material or outside the material. The nature of these assignments/ exercises is described in Table E3.12. Most of the exercises seemed to be carried out once a week (Table E3.13).

**Table E3.12: Kinds of assignments/ exercises, Students**

Assignment/ Exercise	Number	Percent
Group Discussion	43	33.1
Role plays	54	41.6
Conversation exercises	9	6.9
Short speeches	5	3.8
Debates	14	10.8
Others like telephone talking, interview, word games	5	3.8
Total (106 respondents, including a few multiple responses)	130	100.0

**Table E3.13: Frequency of assignments, Students**

	Frequency	Percent
Once a month	10	8.9
Weekly	86	76.8
A few times a week	6	5.4
Daily	10	8.9
Total	112	100.0

Most students (112 out of 114, 98.2%) noted that tests were taken regularly in the classes. The feedback from such tests was reported to be good by most students (100 out of 112).

Most of the trainers (11 out of 14) assigned homework regularly, while two assigned homework, but not regularly. However, 9 out of 14 rated the student response to homework poor; two rated it average and three trainers rated the response good.

### Training Centre Infrastructure

The trainers seemed to be happy with the support and infrastructure provided by their training centres: 10 rated it good, three average and only one rated it poor. The study environment at the centres was also appreciated, with 12 rating it good. The infrastructure and staff support, the conduct of examinations and coordination in issuing certificates, were particularly noted as the strongest features of ZTP support. The perceptions of the trainers were corroborated by the students. In addition, 109 out of 113 students (96.5%) noted that audio-visual aids are used regularly.

### New Features of Methodology and Website Visits

Thirty two students identified the most innovative and new feature that they found in SCOPE (Table E3.14).

**Table E3.14: Novel features of SCOPE teaching methods, Students**

Audio-visual methods and computers	17
Interesting reading material and books	3
Activities during learning	2
The focus on reading and listening	4
The focus on conversation	4
The interactive and question/answer mode	2
Total	32

While 60 percent of the students visit the SCOPE website once a week or a few times a week, there are about nine percent who have never seen the site (Table E3.15).

**Table E3.15: Frequency of visiting SCOPE website, Students**

	Frequency	Percent
Daily	2	1.8
A few times a week	24	21.4
Once a week	45	40.2
Once a month	31	27.7
Never visited	10	8.9
Total	112	100.0

### Features of SCOPE

Most students (110 out of 115) were willing to recommend the programme to others. Apart from the utility value of the programme, students saw certain features as defining SCOPE identity—these include its mission and the methodology (Table E3.16).

**Table E3.16: Strong features of SCOPE identity, Students**

Features	Students	Percent
Quality of material	10	18.6
Learning methodology and teachers	19	35.2
Affordability	3	5.5
SCOPE's mission to teach English	19	35.2
Promoting testing and certification	3	5.5
	54	

### Features Needing Strengthening

The main features which were pointed out by the students as needing strengthening were: more material that is more in tune with local contexts; some students were quite vocal about this, pointing out that the accents are difficult to follow and the social contexts not easy to understand. A few others, perhaps from their traditional understanding of the Indian education system, pointed out “the examination is not based on the course material given; it is completely different from what we learn from the prescribed books.”

Yet others pointed out that the scope for raising the fee is high: “When we join we know the fee is low and so believe the quality will also be low; later we realize that the benefits are high. Fees can definitely be increased.” But overall, the position was not so clear cut. More than half of the students are not sure.

**Table E3.17: Would you have joined if fee had been higher? (Students)**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No	28	24.6
Yes	26	22.8
Unsure	60	52.6
Total	114	100.0

**Improving the Pedagogical Aspects of the Programme: Students**

1. More audio and writing material that can be used by students on their own, outside the class
2. Contextualization of the learning material, and introduction of local features in the learning situations (at the moment the material is perceived by many as contextually foreign)
3. Increase in the scope for speaking and listening practice
4. Increase in the instruction time
5. Material like videos and CDs to be given to students to be taken home and studied at leisure
6. Making the material more related to the examination test paper
7. Introduction of more workbooks

**Improving SCOPE: Trainer Discussions**

Some of the current problems identified by the trainers, and suggested solutions, included the following:

1. Low awareness about SCOPE, as a result of inadequate publicity, especially in semi-urban and rural areas.
2. Very few students opt for higher levels B or C; a 'combo-pack' with overlapping levels, may be explored, since students have a feeling that one level is enough and leave after one level, which is usually the lowest.
3. The fee levels may be too low; a higher fee may attract more motivated students.
4. The stress on listening and speaking is weak; more audio-visual teaching aids, charts and models need to be supplied. The listening CDs are also difficult to follow because of the accent; material with a local or a "neutral" accent may be developed. A few trainers suggest that video CDs may be provided to the students for personal use.
5. The involvement of schools and colleges, and local communities is perceived to be poor; some student counselling initiatives are felt to be necessary.
6. It is felt that study material should reach students as soon as they pay the fees; many students receive the material after one month, thus reducing the time they have to prepare.
7. Some note that the study material is based on social situations, whereas the exams are based on business contexts. Some practice tests to overcome this contextual gap are felt to be necessary.
8. Assignment books for writing practice may be introduced.
9. Some skill improvement workshops for the trainers are also seen as necessary.
10. Teachers at present do not get feedback about the problems faced by students during testing, and so some suggest they could be allowed to observe the examination procedures.

**Employability-related Activities**

SCOPE has provided training to candidates registered with the Department of Employment and Training; the candidates received a stipend from the department. More than 12000 candidates have been trained under this scheme. SCOPE also trained more than 1000 teachers and students of Industrial Training Institutes at a subsidised rate of just Rs. 700. The training centres welcomed this since they were sure of receiving students and fees—some informally reported that they even taught the students first, and kept the certificates with them till they got paid when the government disbursed the stipends.

In recent times, SCOPE has tried to extend the forward linkages by exploring placement opportunities for its graduates. A small beginning was made when SCOPE signed an MoU with Azure Knowledge Corporation, a business process outsourcing organization. Under this agreement, SCOPE graduates

will be exempted from the first round of interviews; Azure is expected to provide some work to about 12000 youth every year.

SCOPE also offers scope to spin off English language teaching entrepreneurs. The willingness of the students to take up this role is indicated in Table E3.18.

**Table E3.18: Willingness to work as language skills entrepreneur, Students**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No	6	5.3
Yes	97	85.1
Unsure	11	9.6
Total	114	100.0