CHAPTER 3
<u>METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY</u>

3.1. Introduction

One of the most rigorous research designs is experimental research which involves the researcher manipulating one or more independent variables as treatments by randomly assigning subjects to different levels of treatment. The research observes the dependent variables for finding out the effects of the treatments. Understanding the differences between or within learners groups in controlled environments is the main objective of this research. It facilitates strict control over the environment and also, allows for scientific interpretations with a low error rate (Phakiti, 2014).

In the present study, the independent variable was interleaving and blocked practice and the dependent variable was effectiveness of English speaking proficiency with respect to interaction, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary & grammar. The population of the study was tertiary level ESL learners and they were equally distributed in blocked practice and interleaving groups. The results of the data collection were analyzed statistically using quantitative techniques through ANOVA test. An attempt has been made in this chapter to explain the research design, participants, teaching material, design & materials, learner activities, sequence of the language tasks, course questionnaire, scheduled teaching sessions, English speaking test, assessment procedure, teaching platform, and skill selection. The following research questions were kept in mind while preparing the research methodology with a systematic approach:

1. Is there any significant difference between IL and BP in English interaction, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary & grammar performance in the first two rounds of the STSs?

2. Is there any significant difference between IL and BP in English interaction, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary & grammar performance in the final round of the STSs?

3. Is there any significant difference between IL and BP in English interaction, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary & grammar performance during the three rounds of the STSs?

4. Is there any significant difference between IL and BP in their effect on the progression of attitude and motivation of the participants towards learning English during the three rounds of the STSs?

3.2. Sources of the Data

3.2.1. Research Design: True Experimental Research

A true experimental research design was used over three months to provide spoken English sessions. Following the procedure of true experimental research design, the participants were first divided into the experimental (IL) and control (BP) groups in the scheduled teaching sessions (STSs). In all the STSs, the treatments for the participants in both groups were arranged differently. The participants in IL followed a task repetition drill arranged in an interleaved sequence where all the skills were mixed. On the other hand, the participants in BP were treated with task repetition practices arranged in an order of sequence which could be predicted. The English oral proficiency of the participants was evaluated from a recruitment test (RT) which was conducted before the beginning of the STSs arranged for three months. To select the participants for the study, purposive sampling method was used. A few days before the STSs, a pre-test was given to test the participants' English oral interaction. The assessment was done based on the components of English interaction, pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary and grammar. Altogether 4 tests including, a recruitment test, were taken to assess the English-speaking proficiency of the participants throughout the three rounds of the STSs. These tests were conducted before the post-test which was held on the last day of the STSs. During the study, each group received different treatments and a unique set of instructions. The language tasks for the BP group were arranged in a predictable order, whereas the IL group was given task repetition drills that were mixed.

3.2.2. Schedule of Data Collection in the Study

The teaching sessions, tests, and feedback collections in the study were conducted from Department of English, Tezpur University, India in online mode in the autumn semester (July-December) of 2021. The study was completed in 17 weeks

and it was divided into 3 rounds. All these 3 rounds were completed in the autumn semester. There were short pauses of one or two weeks between the rounds for preparation and finalization of teaching material. The necessary official permission for the study was taken from the concerned authority (see Appendix VIII). Since the study involved human subjects, ethical committee approval for the experimentation and the collection of the data was also taken from the local ethical committee at the university (see Appendix X).

As the COVID-19 lockdown hit the country, one-on-one communication was impossible between the instructor and the participants throughout all the rounds of STSs arranged for three months. The first round of the study was conducted from July-August, 2021 (see Table 3.1). This round began with the distribution of learner profile e-questionnaire and needs analysis in the first week. The selection of the participants was also done in this round. The teaching experimentation began in the fourth week after separating the participants into BP and IL. This round comprised 7 weeks of teaching and preparatory activities related to the study. The pre-test was conducted in this round. The second round of the study was conducted in September-October, 2021 (see Table 3.2). The intermediate English speaking test was the first activity in this round. After the completion of the test, the regular teaching sessions resumed in the second week of this round. The total number of weeks spent on the second round was 5 and this round began at the 8th week of the study and continued to the 12th week. The third round of the study was undertaken in November-December, 2021 (see Table 3.3). This round was very significant as the final English speaking test was conducted in this round. There were 4 weeks of regular teaching sessions in this round. The post-test was held in the last week of the round. There were 5 weeks of experimentation in this round and it began in the 13th week of the study and ended in the 17th week. The study was officially closed after the end of the post-test sessions in the 17th week.

Table 3.1

Schedule of Data Collection in Round 1

Schedule (July- August 2021)	Activities for Data Collection	Dates
Week 1	1. Distribution of Learner profile e-questionnaire for needs analysis	02/07/2021
	2. Creation of a WhatsApp group	04/07/2021
	3. RT	05/07/2021
Week 2	1. Needs analysis	18/07/2021
	2. Assessment of RT	20/07/2021- 24/07/2021
Week 3	1. Grouping of the participants	26/07/2021
	2. Creation of 2 separate Google classrooms for the teaching sessions	28/07/2021
	3. PT 1	29/07/2021-30/07/2021
Week 4	1. STSs	02/08/2021-06/08/2021
	2. HA1	07/08/2021
Week 5	1. STSs	08/08/2021-12/08/2021
	2. HA2	13/08/2021
Week 6	1. STSs	14/08/2021-18/08/2021
	2. HA3	19/08/2021
Week 7	1. STSs	20/08/2021-24/08/2021
	2. HA4	25/08/2021

RT Recruitment test, *PT 1* Pre-test, *HA* Home assignment

Table 3.2

Schedule of Data Collection in Round 2

Schedule (September-October 2021)	Activities for data collection	Dates
Week 8	IMT	05/09/2021-07/09/2021
Week 9	1. STSs	13/09/2021-17/09/2021
	2. HA 5	18/09/2021
Week 10	1. STSs	19/09/2021-23/09/2021
	2. HA 6	24/09/2021
Week 11	1. STSs	25/09/2021-29/09/2021
	2. HA 7	30/09/2021
Week 12	1. STSs	01/10/2021-05/10/2021
	2. HA 8	06/10/2021

IMT Intermediate test

Table 3.3

Schedule of Data Collection in Round 3

Schedule (November-December 2021)	Activities for data collection	Dates
Week 13	1. STSs	15/11/2021-19/11/2021
	2. HA 9	20/11/2021
Week 14	1. STSs	21/11/2021-25/11/2021
	2. HA 10	26/11/2021
Week 15	1. STSs	27/11/2021-01/12/2021
	2. HA 11	02/12/2021
Week 16	1. STSs	03/12/2021-07/12/2021
	2. HA 12	08/12/2021
Week 17	PT 2	10/12/2021-12/12/2021

PT 2 Post-test

3.2.3. Participants

To select the participants for the study, purposive sampling method was used. Altogether 52 participants were there in the recruitment test (RT) considered for this experimentation. The instructor asked the participants to respond to some of the questions in the RT and share their views and opinions on English classes. Those questions were posed to assess their proficiency in English speaking skills. However, after their oral responses were analyzed, it was revealed that among those participants, 44 of them used sentence structures simple in form during the conversation. Their choice of vocabulary was neither appropriate nor was their expression flexible. As 8 participants demonstrated some flexibility and choice of appropriate vocabulary on a wide range of topics during their oral responses, the assessors gave them scores between 4 and 5 points. The sentence structures of their oral responses were also complex. Therefore, the participants were considered as outliers and they were not included in the experimentation.

After the assessment, calculations, and analyses were done by considering the scores obtained by the participants in the test. The benchmark score for the selection of the participants was taken from the mean value of the scores in the test. There were 44 participants left for the study and they received scores ranging from 2 to 3 points with a mean score of 3.02 (see Table 3.4). Altogether 44 participants between the ages of 18 and 19 years were chosen from students originally enrolled in different undergraduate programs at the School of Sciences at Tezpur University (see Table 3.5 & Table 3.6). The participants were, then, divided into two groups- 22 participants in BP and 22 participants in IL. Majority of the participants joined from various parts of Assam. 5 participants joined from Andhra Pradesh and 6 participants from Telangana. It is to be noted that the participants did not physically arrive at the university till the completion of the study.

Table 3.4

English Speaking Performance in the RT

Speaking Skill	Selection cut-off *M*	Sub-skill wise performance *M* (*SD*)	Gender		Age (in years)	
			Male *M* (*SD*)	Female *M* (*SD*)	18 *M* (*SD*)	19 *M* (*SD*)
		44	20	24	19	25
Interaction		3.27	3.26	3.28	3.20	3.32
		(0.93)	(1.13)	(0.76)	(0.68)	(1.12)
Pronunciation		3.04	2.78	3.26	3.22	2.88
		(1.03)	(1.16)	(.89)	(.91)	(1.14)
	3.02	3.05	2.88	3.17	3.30	2.83
Fluency		(1.01)	(1.18)	(.86)	(.94)	(1.07)
Vocabulary & Grammar		2.7	2.55	2.83	2.83	2.59
		(.88)	(1.00)	(.78)	(.76)	(.99)

Table 3.5

Profile of the Learner Participants in IL

Pseudonyms of the participants	Sex	Age	Level of Education	Academic Discipline	Place of Origin
IL1	Female	19	Undergraduate	Science	Telangana
IL2	Female	18	Undergraduate	Science	Telangana
IL3	Female	19	Undergraduate	Science	Telangana
IL4	Female	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL5	Female	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL6	Female	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL7	Female	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL8	Female	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL9	Female	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL10	Female	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL11	Female	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL12	Male	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL13	Male	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL14	Male	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL15	Male	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL16	Male	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL17	Male	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL18	Male	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL19	Male	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL20	Male	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL21	Male	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
IL22	Male	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam

Table 3.6

Profile of the Learner Participants in BP

Pseudonyms of the participants	Sex	Age	Level of Education	Academic Discipline	Place of Origin
BP1	Female	19	Undergraduate	Science	Telangana
BP2	Female	18	Undergraduate	Science	Telangana
BP3	Female	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP4	Female	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP5	Female	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP6	Female	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP7	Female	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP8	Female	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP9	Female	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP10	Female	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP11	Female	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP12	Female	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP13	Female	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP14	Male	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP15	Male	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP16	Male	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP17	Male	18	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP18	Male	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP19	Male	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP20	Male	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP21	Male	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam
BP22	Male	19	Undergraduate	Science	Assam

3.2.4. Material Development and Teaching Experimentation

3.2.4.1. Needs Analysis

To produce the objectives of language teaching required for the experimentation, a needs analysis was prepared for that purpose. The process was done by using the students' inputs that were received when they interacted with the instructor during the oral interaction. The majority of the students expressed their desire to enhance their English speaking skills. This observation was noted as most of them specifically mentioned that they wanted to learn how to speak English during interviews, particularly for job placements. As a result, the teaching experimentation was conducted by identifying 12 major areas related to oral interaction for job placement interviews. These were introduction, hobby, native place, strengths & weaknesses, a favourite subject, internship experience, leadership skills, management, introducing in presentations, describing content, interpretation of results, and conclusion of a presentation. These areas were chosen depending on the suggestions made by the students during the sessions of oral interaction. Considering their interests, the STSs were designed by categorizing twelve key areas of oral interaction in job placement interviews.

3.2.4.2. Identification of Language Tasks (LTs)

After an analysis of the opinions shared by the participants in the RT was done, the language tasks (LTs) were identified for practice in the three rounds of the STSs. Additionally, the analysis of the English-speaking expressions of the participants gathered in the RT also served as the foundation for interaction, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary & grammar rules to be practised in the teaching sessions. These rules were applied in the sentences prepared for the oral exercises associated with the LTs. During the STSs, 12 major topics for LTs were chosen for practice after a needs analysis of the participants was done on the responses of the participants while interacting with them verbally (see Table 3.7). The participants' opinions of the personal and academic information that they were expected to communicate in English during job interviews were the primary focus was to design the topics of the LTs accordingly.

Table 3.7

Samples of Vocabulary and Sentences used in the LTs

LTs	Word samples	Sentence samples	Points of grammar
HIOS	communicator, residing, straightforward, compromise, pursuing	I am a good writer, reader, speaker, listener, thinker, communicator, and table tennis player.	Simple present tense (subject-verb co-ordination)
TAH	obsessed, championship, spare, mindset, aspirations	It's important I give them some of my spare time.	Simple present tense (subject-verb co-ordination)
DONP	seldom, strolling, commute, overcast, rarely	And I enjoy walking around the streets or strolling along the beach.	Present continuous tense (compound sentence)
EOSW	deadline, exceptional, resolving, outstanding, exceptional	I tend to want things to be done quickly in situations where there is a deadline to be met.	Simple present tense (subordinate clause)
DFS	distress, inclined, potential, dedicated, mime	A not-so-academically inclined student, from a humble background, going on to change the way we see the world, is what inspires me about Einstein.	Simple present tense (complex sentence)
TAIE	synthesis, standup, collaborate, delegate, fliers	This synthesis of working styles helped us stay on track, work efficiently, and ultimately get along with one another.	Simple past tense (compound sentence)
LS	stint, overwhelmed, catered, aligned, outlined	After each side had outlined their arguments, I helped them brainstorm the ways in which we could find a compromise.	Simple past tense (complex sentence)
MG	appraisals, comply, turmoil, scouted, resilient	I can always be relied upon to be resilient, innovative, and determined.	Simple past tense (compound sentence)
IP	indebted, facilitated, handouts, endeavour, generous	Please refer to the handouts for a closer look at the data.	Simple past tense (imperative sentence)
DCP	repository, overview, limitation, quantitative, phenomenon	There is a large repository of research available on the subject.	Simple present tense (subject-verb co-ordination)
HIRP	decipher, stance, inclusive, holistic, vivid	Therefore, my study adopted a more inclusive method backed by statistical analysis to revisit the phenomenon.	Simple present tense (complex sentence)
CP	delve, provoking, enriched, implications, highlight	However, we believe that despite our limitations, our study has important implications for further data-enriched studies in this line.	Simple present tense (complex sentence)

HIOS How to introduce oneself, *TAH* Talking about hobbies, *DONP* Describing one's native place, *EOSW* Expressing one's strengths and weaknesses, *DFS* Describing a favourite subject, *TAIE* Talking about an internship experience, *LS* Leadership skills, *MG* Managing a group, *IP* Introducing a presentation, *DCP* Describing the content of a presentation, *HIRP* How to interpret results in a presentation, *CP* Concluding a presentation

These topics served as the base for the different contexts in the LTs for practising English.

The sentences created for the oral exercises related to the LTs used interaction, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary & grammar rules. The following 12 LTs were prepared for the STSs: How to introduce oneself (HIOS), Talking about hobbies (TAH), Describing one's native place (DONP), Expressing one's strengths and weaknesses (EOSW), Describing a favourite subject (DFS), Talking about an internship experience (TAIE), Leadership skills (LS), Managing a group (MG), Introducing a presentation (IP), Describing the content of a presentation (DCP), How to interpret results in a presentation (HIRP), and Concluding a presentation (CP).

Following the general pattern seen in the interview formats, the micro-skill areas were chosen for job placement in private companies. The main objective of writing the lessons was to give the participants as much opportunity as possible to practice the English language. So, keeping in mind the broader scope for language practice no specific attempt was made to figure out the actual pattern in the interview design used in such interviews. However, to boost the motivation of the participants for the session in a more meaningful way, a more precise and accurate portrayal of the actual communication topics in job placement interviews was required.

3.2.4.3. Lesson Plans

There were 48 sessions arranged for the STSs where the LTs were practised for three months. Consequently, 48 lesson plans (Appendix IX) were prepared to assist the instructor in providing appropriate language tasks for practice in these sessions. The lesson plans were prepared keeping the following broad guidelines in mind.

a. General objectives: In an English language training course, general objectives

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act as goals or aims that give a clear sense of direction. It also provides a sense of clarity to both the teachers and the students. With respect to the teaching sessions, the general objectives were designed for the comprehension of the skills, and also for enhancement in the areas of interaction, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary & grammar. These objectives were also helpful in preparing activities for the students.

b. Specific/ Instructional objectives: The students would be able to do once the training sessions were completed. The focal points of the lesson plans were the specific objectives set for each content delivery. It helped to determine what the students would be able to do once the training sessions were completed.

c. Instructional resources: The teaching learning materials were prepared to enhance the learning of the participants in the online sessions. The audio-visual aids helped the participants to learn the skills with ease, perform certain activities and also, in the retention of the information.

d. Teaching methods: The instructor used a particular pedagogical method for delivering the lesson plans, promote learning of the skills, and also to conduct different activities in the teaching sessions. The method of Task-Based Language Teaching or TBLT was used for this purpose.

e. Previous knowledge assumed: Since the participants had more than 12-15 years of experience in English, it was assumed that they had basic listening, speaking, reading and writing abilities in English.

f. Presentation: The part of this lesson plan contained the thorough detailing of the content to be delivered in the online teaching sessions. The activities of the teacher and the students were specifically discussed for each of the sub-skills. Tables were prepared (see Appendix IX) for each day besides the revision sessions for the systematic accommodation of each sub-skills.

i. Sub-skill: The sub-skills were identified prior to designing of the lesson plan. It represented the specific topic that was taught on that particular day.

ii. Specific resources: It included the audio-visual aids that were used for discussing a particular sub-skill. Video clips including YouTube & paragraph videos, PPT slides for effective learning and conducting activities were all part of

the specific resources.

The lesson plans were designed in horizontal and vertical columns for identification and elaboration of the points. The horizontal row of the lesson plan comprised of the following headings:

i. i. Teaching points: The specific vocabulary and grammar points related to each sub-skill were mentioned in the box for specific online sessions. It helped the teacher to prepare herself by noting the meanings of the vocabularies and also the grammar employed in the sentences taught to the students on that day.

ii. Teacher's activity: It gave a brief outline for the instructor to follow the necessary instructions related to a particular sub-skill. It was a roadmap for the instructor as how the students would be prepared for a particular online session by noting the vocabulary & grammar points, the content to be presented in addition to the activities, the evaluation done at the end of the class, and the content to be summarized before the dismissal of the teacher.

iii. Students' activity: The inclusion of the points related to the activities of the students corresponded to the teacher's activity. By referring to the lesson plan, the teacher was able to prepare the students and instruct them for each of the activities such as guessing the topic, noting the points, writing & reading the exercises, role play, and revision at the end of the class.

While, the vertical column comprised of the phase or stage of the content delivery. The following points were identified in this regard:

i. Preparation: The main idea of the preparation stage was to establish connection with the sub-skill and how the English speaking proficiency would be achieved. For a warm-up, the students were presented YouTube videos for guessing the topic to be taught that day in the beginning of each skill. A link was also established between the skill taught in the previous class and the specific sub-skill taught on the particular session which also helped in revision of the sentences.

ii. Presentation: The stage of presentation began with the announcement of the topic to be taught on each online session, the content to be delivered, and how the

audio-visual aids would be utilized in the sessions. The teacher played an active role while delivering the content using the teaching aids and the activities were followed by the students simultaneously.

iii. Evaluation: An essential element of the lesson plan for the teaching-learning process was evaluation. The main activity was role-playing where the teacher acted as the interviewer and the students responded as an interviewee. The teacher provided necessary instructions and feedbacks by listening to the articulation of their speech.

iv. Summarization: The last step was the summarization of the content learnt by the students. For that purpose, the teacher asked the students to revise the sentences several times. She also encouraged the students to practice the sentences before the dismissal of the session. The lesson plans were finalized after obtaining suggestions, modifications, and corrections from two external experts in the field.

3.2.4.4. Sequencing of the Language Tasks (LTs)

The appropriate method of sequencing was followed for the arrangement of the sequences for IL in different patterns and BP (see Figure 3.1). In BP, the sequence of the LTs was arranged in a predictable order. For example, in the first round of the STSs, the sequence in the first 16 days followed the conventionally predictable order of *aaaa*, *bbbb*, *cccc*, *dddd*. Following this order, the LTs of HIOS, TAH, DONP, and EOSW were continuously practised for 4 days in each of the 4 weeks respectively.

For instance, there were 4 HIOS sessions practised by the participants and then four practice sessions followed after that. While in IL, the LTs were used in an interleaved order. For instance, the interleaved order of *abcd*, *abbd*, *aacc*, and *bdcd* was followed for the first 16 days of the first round of the STSs. So, the LTs of HIOS, TAH, DONP, and EOSW were taught following the interleaved order. The order of the LTs was HIOS, TAH, DONP, and EOSW in the first four days of the STSs which was followed by the sequence of HIOS, TAH, TAH, and EOSW

Figure 3.1 indicates the sequence of the lessons practised in BP and IL

Figure 3.1
Sequence of the LTs
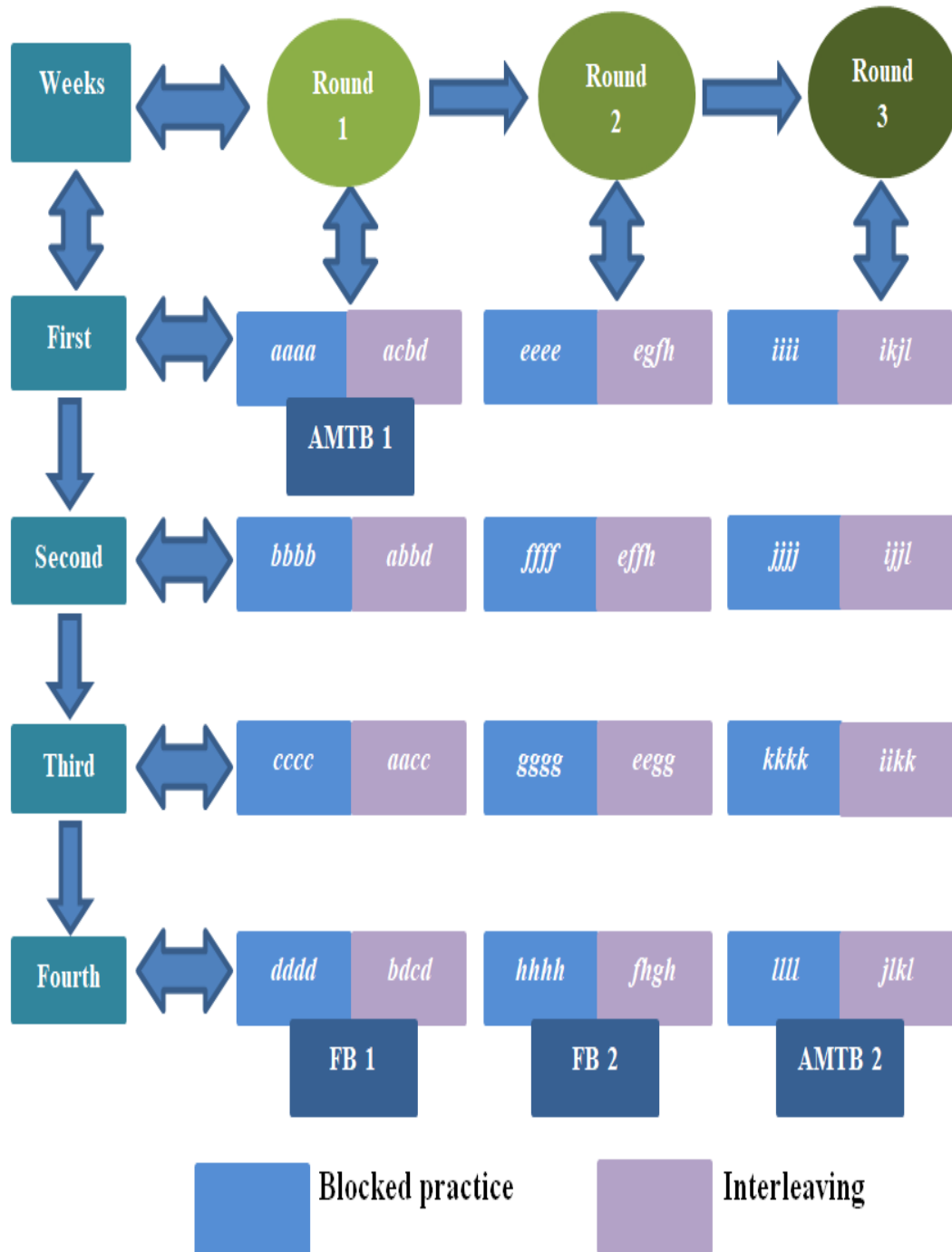
in the following four days of the STSs. Accordingly, the remaining sequences for practising the LTs in BP and IL were set up. There were 12 revision sessions lasting approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes each including the 48 sessions on the areas of specified LTs. The revision sessions comprised the four consecutive teaching sessions which were taken during the first four days of the STSs in the weeks of a given round. The revision sessions which were held on the fifth day served to reinforce the information the participants had learned in the previous four sessions. It was then followed by a one-day break for home assignment on the sixth day.

3.2.5. Teaching Experimentation

3.2.5.1. Scheduled Teaching Sessions (STSs)

A selection of 12 LTs was done considering the needs analysis. The total number of teaching sessions conducted in the study was 60. Out of which 48 were new lessons on the 12 LTs. The rest of the 12 lessons were revisions of these sessions at various stages of the STSs. Altogether, 20 sessions were conducted in the first round (see Table 3.8). 20 more sessions were conducted in the second round excluding the sessions for the first English speaking test (see Table 3.9). The third round constituted of 20 more sessions in addition to the intermediate and post-test sessions (see Table 3.10).

In the first type of schedule, the participants were instructed to practice various LTs every day. In scheduling the second type, the same LT was put into practice for two consecutive sessions between a different LT on the first day and another different LT on the fourth day. Scheduling the third type involved repetition of the practice of using two LTs continuously for just two days. The fourth type of arrangement was created by positioning two LTs for practice between the two sessions of a specific LT. For example, with regards to IL during the first four days of practice, the LTs were arranged by beginning with LT *a* on the initial day.

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Table 3.8

Sequence of the LTs Round 1 in BP and IL

Days	BP Lesson sequence	IL Lesson sequence	Duration of the sessions
1	*a1*	*a1*	1 hour (approx.)
2	*a2*	*c1*	1 hour (approx.)
3	*a3*	*b1*	1 hour (approx.)
4	*a4*	*d1*	1 hour (approx.)
5	BPRevision1 (*a1,a2,a3,a4*)	ILRevision1 (*a1,c1,b1,d1*)	1 hour 30 mins (approx.)
6	*b1*	*a2*	1 hour (approx.)
7	*b2*	*b2*	1 hour (approx.)
8	*b3*	*b3*	1 hour (approx.)
9	*b4*	*d2*	1 hour (approx.)
10	BPRevision2 (*b1,b2,b3,b4*)	ILRevision2 (*a2,b2,b3,d2*)	1 hour 30 mins (approx.)
11	*c1*	*a3*	1 hour (approx.)
12	*c2*	*a4*	1 hour (approx.)
13	*c3*	*c2*	1 hour (approx.)
14	*c4*	*c3*	1 hour (approx.)
15	BPRevision3 (*c1,c2,c3,c4*)	ILRevision3 (*a3,a4,c2,c3*)	1 hour 30 mins (approx.)
16	*d1*	*b4*	1 hour (approx.)
17	*d2*	*d3*	1 hour (approx.)
18	*d3*	*c4*	1 hour (approx.)
19	*d4*	*d4*	1 hour (approx.)
20	BPRevision4 (*d1,d2,d3,d4*)	ILRevision4 (*b4,d3,c4,d4*)	1 hour 30 mins (approx.)

a1, a2, a3, a4 (HIOS), b1, b2, b3, b4 (TAH), c1, c2, c3, c4 (DONP), d1, d2, d3, d4 (EOSW)

Table 3.9

Sequence of the LTs Round 2 in BP and IL

Days	BP Lesson sequence	IL Lesson sequence	Duration of the sessions
21	*e1*	*e1*	45 mins (approx.)
22	*e2*	*g1*	45 mins (approx.)
23	*e3*	*f1*	45 mins (approx.)
24	*e4*	*h1*	45 mins (approx.)
25	BPRevision5 (*e1,e2,e3,e4*)	ILRevision5 (*e1,g1,f1,h1*)	1 hour (approx.)
26	*f1*	*e2*	45 mins (approx.)
27	*f2*	*f2*	45 mins (approx.)
28	*f3*	*f3*	45 mins (approx.)
29	*f4*	*h2*	45 mins (approx.)
30	BPRevision6 (*f1,f2,f3,f4*)	ILRevision6 (*e2,f2,f3,h2*)	1 hour (approx.)
31	*g1*	*e3*	45 mins (approx.)
32	*g2*	*e4*	45 mins (approx.)
33	*g3*	*g2*	45 mins (approx.)
34	*g4*	*g3*	1 hour (approx.)
35	BPRevision7 (*g1,g2,g3,g4*)	ILRevision7 (*e3,e4,g2,g3*)	1 hour (approx.)
36	*h1*	*f4*	45 mins (approx.)
37	*h2*	*h3*	45 mins (approx.)
38	*h3*	*g4*	45 mins (approx.)
39	*h4*	*h4*	45 mins (approx.)
40	BPRevision8 (*h1,h2,h3,h4*)	ILRevision8 (*f4,h3,g4,h4*)	1 hour (approx.)

e1, e2, e3, e4 (DFS), f1, f2, f3, f4 (TAIE), g1, g2, g3, g4 (LS), h1, h2, h3, h4 (MG)

Table 3.10

Sequence of the LTs Round 3 in BP and IL

Days	BP Lesson sequence	IL Lesson sequence	[a]Duration of the sessions
41	*i1*	*i1*	45 mins (approx.)
42	*i2*	*k1*	45 mins (approx.)
43	*i3*	*j1*	45 mins (approx.)
44	*i4*	*l1*	45 mins (approx.)
45	BPRevision9 (*i1,i2,i3,i4*)	ILRevision9(*i1,k1,j1 ,l1*)	1 hour (approx.)
46	*j1*	*i2*	45 mins (approx.)
47	*j2*	*j2*	45 mins (approx.)
48	*j3*	*j3*	45 mins (approx.)
49	*j4*	*l2*	45 mins (approx.)
50	BPRevision10 (*j1,j2,j3,j4*)	ILRevision10 (*i2,j2,j3,l2*)	1 hour (approx.)
51	*k1*	*i3*	45 mins (approx.)
52	*k2*	*i4*	45 mins (approx.)
53	*k3*	*k2*	45 mins (approx.)
54	*k4*	*k3*	1 hour (approx.)
55	BPRevision11 (*k1,k2,k3,k4*)	ILRevision11 (*i3,i4,k2,k3*)	1 hour (approx.)
56	*l1*	*j4*	45 mins (approx.)
57	*l2*	*l3*	45 mins (approx.)
58	*l3*	*k4*	45 mins (approx.)
59	*l4*	*l4*	45 mins (approx.)
60	BPRevision12 (*l1,l2,l3,l4*)	ILRevision12 (*j4,l3,k4,l4*)	1 hour (approx.)

i1, i2, i3, i4 (IP), j1, j2, j3, j4 (DCP), k1, k2, k3, k4 (HIRP), l1, l2, l3, l4 (CP)

For the rest of the three days of the practice sessions LTs *b*, *c*, and *d* followed after LT *a*. Therefore, in the IL, the 12 LTs were arranged as follows: *abcd*, *abbd*, *aacc*, *bdcd*, *efgh*, *effg*, *eegg*, *fhgh*, *ijkl*, *ijjl*, *iikk*, and *jlkl*. The majority of the LTs consisted of practising sample sentences in oral form associated with a task that was designed to improve English speaking proficiency. The participants were required to complete a variety of language tasks including role-playing, fill-in-the-gap exercise, scrambled sentence exercise, role-playing, etc. during these LTs.

3.2.5.2. Teaching Platform

The learning system was managed in online mode for experimentation as the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in lockdowns including partial lockdowns. As a consequence, the higher educational systems in India remained closed for an indefinite period starting from March 2020. There were 44 students where the experimental group (IL) classroom had 22 students and the control group (BP) classroom had 22 students. The learning management system adopted in the online platform was designed primarily for group communication and for providing the teaching materials required during the days of revision by uploading those. These were managed through the following:

i. A Gsuite-based Google classroom was created at the host institution for conducting the classes and also for the personal requirements and convenience of the instructor.

ii. A Google Classroom was created which was common to all the participants for choosing the learners who participated in the experiment.

iii. Following the interaction, the instructor created two new Google classrooms. The participants were added to these classrooms as per their division into two groups- IL and BP.

iv. For immediate communication, two WhatsApp groups were created to communicate among the participants of both groups for immediate need. As the sessions were kept live, the Google Meet links were generated daily before the sessions. It was then sent to the respective groups using the WhatsApp group. The moderation of the teaching sessions was done by the instructor and the video clips

and PPTs were shown to the participants. Only a few questions about some unfamiliar words and the teaching materials were answered by the instructor. Except that, there was nothing in the teaching materials that specifically required the instructor to clarify to the participants. The audio-visual aids used in the teaching sessions were used as examples of oral communication related to job placement interviews. The best option available in such a circumstance was thought to be the audio-visual method of teaching in order to enhance the English speaking skills of the participants in a job placement interview.

3.2.5.3. Language Instructor

The English-speaking training sessions were conducted by an instructor who was a Research Scholar and was actively pursuing PhD in the Department of English at Tezpur University. Her research specialization focused on English Language Teaching, with a specific emphasis on examining the impact of various language teaching methods on L2 speaking proficiency. She had gained valuable experience through her involvement in a DST-sponsored project for one year, which enriched her understanding and enhanced her skills in research-related tasks such as teaching material preparation, lesson planning, online classroom management, and statistical analysis. This hands-on experience laid the foundation for her research activities.

Prior to her current role, the instructor earned her M.A. degree from Cotton University. Additionally, she completed a two-year B.Ed program at Tezpur University and served as a teacher-trainee during this period. Her internship at Kendriya Vidyalaya-Central University, Tezpur, involved teaching English to students across various grade levels, ranging from VII to XII. This practical teaching experience allowed her to grasp the theoretical underpinnings of English Language Teaching in a practical way. Additionally, it provided her with insights into the diverse needs and learning styles of students at different levels and helped identify their individual differences which were valuable in her subsequent research at the tertiary education level. It is to be noted that the instructor was not a

native English speaker.

3.2.5.4. Teaching Procedure

The teaching materials comprised 5 major components which were used to teach the 12 LTs chosen for the teaching experimentation. These components included YouTube videos, video clips and/or paragraph videos displaying the English sentences, PPT slides that showed each sentence separately, PPT slides that contained exercises, and video clips with background music that displayed the exercise for revision. The major spoken skill areas were introduced using YouTube videos to start the practice of the sessions. In the first teaching sessions of introduction, hobby, native place, and strengths & weaknesses, the YouTube videos "Meeting someone for the first time", "Talking about hobbies and free time activities", "Talking about the native place", and "Know your character strengths" were downloaded and shown to them in the first round of teaching sessions-introduction, hobby, native place, and strengths & weaknesses respectively. The participants were prepared for the English-speaking sessions in the relevant speaking skill area by using these videos in the teaching sessions. Four additional teaching materials were created in addition to the YouTube videos. These were: video clips of the sentences shown in a paragraph by adding a voice-over, PPT slides showing the sentences individually, PPT slides with fill-in-the-gaps/ scrambled sentence exercises, and video clips accompanied with background music showing the sentences for revision of the sessions. All the sentences that needed to be learned by the participants during a particular session were shown together in a single video clip. These single video clips had voice-over that was approximately on average 1 minute 30 seconds long. In a single video clip, four to seven sentences were shown together which were read aloud in the form of a voice-over. To help the participants concentrate on the sentences carefully, the PPT slides containing the sentences were shown with each sentence displayed on separate slides. In addition to that, it also helped in the memorization of specific sentences related to a particular micro skill area. The PPT slides with the exercises prepared the students for the role-playing game thereby providing them a chance to

practice speaking the sentences before that game. The only purpose of playing the exercise videos was to reinforce the language input given to the participants during a specific session. To make the practice more interesting and entertaining, background music was added to the exercise video.

The instructor prepared the video clips using video editing software and recording equipment. While using the video editing software, the sentences were first of all written on PPT slides. It was then converted to image files and put in the software. Similarly, this video editing software was used to add the audio file to the video of the sentences after the audio of the sentences was recorded by the instructor using a recorder device. There were a total of 48 of these video clips which correspond to the 48 STSs. It was important to compile all the video clips used in the sessions of revision into a single file. This compilation helped in the revision of all the sentences that had been practised throughout the earlier 4 sessions at once. The same video editing software was used to make the exercise video clips with the same process followed earlier. For the preparation of the PPT slides, the Microsoft PowerPoint in the Windows 10 version was used. The sentences chosen for the teaching sessions were shown separately on 48 PPT sides to the participants for the 48 STSs. The PPT sides from the previous 4 sessions were compiled together and presented to the participants. It helped in revising the sentences during the revision sessions. The instructor also prepared the PPT slides which contained the exercises and delivered them to the participants in the same method.

The related e-content was presented by beginning the practice sessions of the LTs related to English speaking. For example, in the sessions on the LTs of HIOS, TAH, DONP, and EOSW, the e-contents of greeting someone (Cake English, 2021), speaking about hobbies (Easy English, 2019), describing a native place (Pocket Passport, 2020), and character strengths (Confident Kids Program, 2018) were played respectively. These e-contents were 3-4 minutes long videos and the examples of English conversation presented through those materials were primarily for beginners. To get the students ready for the specific English-speaking

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exercises, the videos were played at the beginning of the sessions.

Following the presentation of the e-contents, there were video clips of the sentences that needed to be practised in the sessions. These videos were 3-4 minutes long as well. The instructor told the participants to watch, listen, and take notes as they were played multiple times to practice them. In the case of practising the sentences over and over again, different PPT slides with the same sentences were presented in order. These sentences were revised orally several times and after that, the participants completed two writing exercises: fill-in-the-gap and scrambled sentences. To learn the proper usage of certain words as well as grammatically sound constructions, the instructor asked the participants to perform these exercises. After the writing exercises, the participants took part in a role-playing interview game. The instructor asked those questions connected to the LTs and the participants responded accordingly. They verbally answered the instructor's questions using the sentences they practised the same day. When each session came to an end, the participants were required to revise their sentences several times.

3.2.5.5. Learner activities

During the sessions on HIOS, TAH, DONP, and EOSW, the instructor showed the YouTube videos to the participants (see Table 3.11). The participants were required to watch the YouTube videos to introduce them to a new area of micro-skill. The themes of the YouTube videos had to be recognized by the participants so that they could mentally prepare themselves for the oral exercises based on the relevant theme. When it was found that the themes were correctly understood by the participants, the video clips of the sentences played by the instructor related to the relevant micro-skill area. The instructor asked the participants to watch the video clips which were played three times consecutively without any interruption. They had to listen to the voice-over of the sentences very carefully that were read out. In the third task, the instructor read aloud the sentences individually to the participants. The instructor referred to the PPT slides that were projected on the

screen. The instructor asked the participants to focus on the sentences displayed on the PPT slides. They were also requested to pay close attention to the instructor while the sentences were being read. During this activity, the participants got the scope for revising the sentences multiple times so that they could prepare themselves for the exercises.

There were mainly 2 types of exercises: fill-in-the-gaps and scrambled sentence exercises (see Table 3.11, Table 3.12, and Table 3.13). There were 32 lessons with fill-in-the-gap exercises and 11 lessons with scrambled sentence exercises required to be practised by the learner participants. Additionally, there were 5 lessons in which both types of exercises were used. The traits of the sentences used for practice determined the selection of the oral exercise. The fill-in-the-gaps exercises were selected for practice if the sentences bore a considerable amount of personal information. By practising the exercises the participants were offered the chance to practice by providing their details. However, some sentences used for practice lacked personal information because the relevant contents were general and also, suitable for everyone. So, in a situation where fill-in-the-gaps exercises could not be executed, the use of scrambled sentence exercises was required.

While practising the sentences, the participants had to write down the sentences first and then they had to fill their responses. The participants were given 3-5 minutes to fill out their responses. The instructor randomly chose the order of the participant's responses. Each participant in the learning process needed to read their response aloud to the class. While the participants gave their responses, the instructor gave feedback on each participant's response when it was necessary.

Table 3.11

Activities and Teaching Materials in Round 1

LTs	STSs	Learner activities	Teaching materials
HIOS	Introducing oneself (HIOS 1)	1. Watching the YouTube video (lessons 1, 6, 11 and 16 for BP and lessons 1-4 for IL).	1. YouTube videos on "Meeting Someone for the First Time." (lesson 1 both for BP and IL), "Talking About Hobbies and free time Activities" (lesson 6 for BP and lesson 3 for IL), "Describing your hometown_talking about where you live" (lesson 11 for BP and lesson 2 for IL) and "Know your character strengths" (lesson 16 for BP and lesson 4 for IL).
	Providing educational information (HIOS 2)		
	Introducing the family (HIOS 3)	2. Revision of the previous session. (Excluding lesson 1, 6, 11, and 16).	
	Brief personality information (HIOS 4)	3. Watching the video clips related to the LTs.	
TAH	Speaking about a principal hobby (TAH 1)		
	Speaking about fitness concerns (TAH 2)	4. Reading the individual sentences.	
	Speaking about reading habits (TAH 3)	5. Fill-in-the-gaps exercises (lessons 1-4, 6, 11-14, 16-19 for BP and lessons 1-4, 6,9,11-14, 17-19 for IL) / scrambled sentences exercises (lesson 7-9 for BP and lesson 7,8 and 16 for IL).	
	Speaking about time with relatives (TAH 4)		2. Video clips of the related LTs.
DONP	Describing the location (DONP 1)		3. PPT slides containing the individual sentences in the video clips.
	People's occupation (DONP 2)		
	Speaking about the climate of the place (DONP 3)		4.PPT slides with fill-in-the-gaps (lessons 1-4, 6, 11-14, 16-19 for BP and lessons 1-4, 6,9,11-14, 17-19 for IL) / scrambled sentences (lesson 7-9 for BP and lesson 7,8 and 16 for IL) exercises.
	One's personal impression of the native place (DONP 4)	6. Reading the answers.	
		7. Roleplaying.	
EOSW	Speaking about one's qualities in general (EOSW 1)	8. Revision of the sentences using the fill-in-the-gaps/scrambled sentences exercises.	5. Video clips of the exercises containing background music for revision.
	Highlighting one principal quality (EOSW 2)		
	Giving examples of other related qualities (EOSW 3)		
	Confessing a weakness (EOSW 4)		

Table 3.12

Activities and Teaching Materials in Round 2

LTs	STSs	Learner activities	Teaching materials
DFS	Talking about your favourite subject (DFS 1) Interest in the subject (DFS 2) Earning potential in choosing a career (DFS 3) Speaking about other subjects in general (DFS 4)	1. Watching the YouTube video (lessons 21, 26, 31 and 36 for BP and lessons 21-24 for IL). 2. Revision of the previous session. (Excluding lesson 21, 26, 31, and 36). 3. Watching the video clips related to the LTs. 4. Reading the individual sentences. 5. Fill-in-the-gaps exercises (lesson 21-24, 26, 27, 29, 33 for BP and lesson 21, 23, 26-27, 31, 32, 36for IL) / scrambled sentences exercises (lesson 31, 32, 34, 36- 39 for BP and lesson 22, 24, 29, 33, 34, 37-39 for IL). In lesson 28 (BP & IL) they performed both exercises. 6. Roleplaying. 7. Revision of the sentences using the fill-in-the-gaps/scrambled sentences exercises or both the exercises.	1. YouTube videos on "What's your favourite subject" (lesson 21 both for BP and IL), "How to tell about past work experience in English" (lesson 26 for BP and lesson 22 for IL), "Leadership and effective collaboration" (lesson 31 for BP and lesson 23 for IL) and " Types of Managers: Autocratic, democratic, laissez faire" (lesson 36 for BP and lesson 24 for IL). 2. Video clips of the related LTs. 3. PPT slides containing the individual sentences in the video clips. 4. PPT slides with fill-in-the-gaps exercises (lesson 21-24, 26, 27, 29, 33 for BP and lesson 21, 23, 26-27, 31, 32, 36for IL) / scrambled sentences exercises (lesson 31, 32, 34, 36- 39 for BP and lesson 22, 24, 29, 33, 34, 37-39 for IL). In lesson 28 (BP & IL) both exercises were used. 5. Video clips of the exercises containing background music for revision.
TAIE	Speaking about one's internship experience (TAIE 1) One's interest in a particular company (TAIE 2) Speaking about teamwork (TAIE 3) One's personal experience working on a project/ assignment (TAIE 4)		
LS	Speaking about one's leadership skills (LS 1) Handling disagreements in teamwork (LS 2) Making a difficult decision (LS 3) Overcoming a leadership challenge(LS 4)		
MG	Speaking about one's management skills (MG 1) Sharing one's experience of making a quick decision (MG 2) Handling a crisis (MG 3) Speaking about one's success in an interview (MG 4)		

Table 3.13

Activities and Teaching Materials in Round 3

LTs	STSs	Learner activities	Teaching materials
IP	Greeting and addressing the audience (IP 1) Introducing oneself in a presentation (IP 2) Introducing the topic of the presentation (IP 3) Acknowledgements (IP 4)	1. Watching pre-recorded videos (lessons 41, 46, 51 and 56 for BP and lessons 41-44 for IL). 2. Revision of the previous sessions (Excluding lesson 41, 46, 51, and 56).	1. Pre-recorded videos on "Introducing a presentation" (lesson 41 both for BP & IL), "Describing the content of a presentation" (lesson 46 for BP & lesson 42 for IL) , "How to interpret results in a presentation" (lesson 51 for BP & lesson 43 for IL), and
DCP	Overview of the presentation (DCP 1) Explaining the topic of presentation (DCP 2) Defining the topic of the presentation (DCP 3) Giving background information on the topic (DCP 4)	3. Watching the video clips related to the LTs. 4. Reading the individual sentences. 5. Fill-in-the-gaps exercises (lesson	"Concluding a presentation" (lesson 56 for BP & lesson 44 for IL). 2. Video clips and paragraph videos of the related LTs.
HIRP	Justifying the topic of the presentation (HIRP 1) Presenting the data (HIRP 2) Explaining the data to the audience (HIRP 3) Presenting findings & analysis (HIRP 4)	42-44, 46-49, 51, 52, 54, 56, 57 for BP and lesson 42-44, 46-49, 51, 53, 56, 57 for IL). In lesson 41 (BP & IL), 52 (IL), 53 (BP), 54 (IL), 58 (BP), 59 (BP & IL) they performed both exercises.	3. PPT slides containing the individual sentences in the video clips. 4. PPT slides with fill-in-the-gaps exercises (lesson 42-44, 46-49, 51, 52, 54, 56, 57 for BP and lesson 42-44, 46-49, 51, 53, 56, 57
CP	Further discussion of the findings & analysis (CP 1) Concluding the presentation (CP 2) Answering questions posed by the audience (CP 3) Acknowledging a question/ suggestion from the audience (CP 4)	7. Roleplaying. 8. Revision of the sentences using the fill-in-the-gaps exercises or both the exercises.	for IL). In lesson 41 (BP & IL), 52 (IL), 53 (BP), 54 (IL), 58 (BP), 59 (BP & IL) both exercises were used. 5. Video clips of the exercises containing background music for revision.

This activity helped the participants to prepare themselves for the most crucial activity of oral practice in the STSs which was, role-playing. In this activity, the role of the interviewer was played by the instructor while the participants had to act as interviewees of a job placement interview. As the instructor acted as the interviewer, a question was posed to the participants. They provided their responses by using the sentences they practised in that session. In this activity too, the instructor chose the order of the participants at a random order and the order was changed after each session. Generally, while responding to the question asked in the interview, the participants had to respond without looking at their notebooks.

However, when it was found that a participant faced challenges while answering the question, the instructor was permitted to use the notebook in such a situation. The final activity in the session was playing the exercise videos with music in the background for the revision of the sentences. The participants had to speak complete sentences aloud when the video was played by the instructor. The repetition of this activity was done thrice and the instructor made sure that every participant took part in the revision activity. Except for the four revision sessions (see Tables 3.11, 3.12, 3.13), all the sessions were usually concluded after this activity where an additional task in the form of a home assignment was provided to the participants. The designing of the home assignments was done based on the 4 sessions before the revision session where the participants were required to answer a question and record their response. The responses had to be uploaded to the Google Classroom's page created for class work that was used for the sessions.

3.3. Methods of Data Collection

3.3.1. English Speaking Test

In the current research, altogether 4 speaking proficiency tests were taken out of which 1 was a recruitment test(1) and the rest of the 3 were formative tests: a pre-test (PT1), intermediate test (IMT), and a post-test (PT2) (see Table 3.14). The 3 formative tests were designed in the study because the participants' English

proficiency had to be assessed using their speech discourse. These tests helped to measure the proficiency level of the participants as they were learners whose level of learning English was advanced and who had 12-15 years of experience in learning the language. During the tests, the instructor asked the participants to speak about their life particularly, particularly their academic ones about the topics of LT. So, they were required to respond orally for approximately 5-6 minutes in reply to the questions of the instructor related to their academic life rather than choosing a set of L2 words and sentences for testing (e.g., Miles, 2014; Nakata & Suzuki, 2019; Suzuki et al., 2022). The purpose of the RT was to gather information about the participants' needs and their speaking proficiency. Therefore, three open-ended questions were posed to them. These were-"Introduce yourself", "Tell us about your locality", and "What do you want to learn in an English-speaking training program?". Likewise, open-ended questions, "Tell us about your favourite game", "Who are there in your family?", "What do you want to share about your family with us?", and "Please introduce yourself and the topic of your presentation" in PT 1, IMT, and PT 2 were asked by the instructor (see Table 3.14). It was assumed that the issues of test validity and reliability would be relatively unneeded in these three tests as the main goal of the open-ended questions was to encourage the participants to speak about a particular topic related to their lives or areas of expertise in order to collect speech data at various stages of the STSs.

For the assessment purpose, four assessors were involved in the evaluation of the participants' oral responses on the spot that had experience in English teaching for some years. The assessors accomplished the task of evaluation employing a descriptor of criteria for English-speaking assessment by the Central Board of Secondary Education, India (see Figure 3.2). The descriptors adopted for English speaking assessment included 4 components of speaking skills which were: interaction, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary & grammar.

Table 3.14

Details of the Three Tests

Test	LTs	Vocabulary & Grammar	Question Examples
Pre-Test	No specific LT	-Basic vocabulary related to personal life -8 grammar points to be practiced VGSs	(name of the student), Do you like to play games? Tell us about your favourite game.
Intermediate test	HIOS TAH DONP EOSW	-Vocabulary practiced in the first 4 EGVTs -Simple present tense (Subject-verb co-ordination)	(name of the student), Who are there in your family? What do you want to share about your family with us?
Post-test	DFS TAIE LS MG IP DCP HIRP CP	-Vocabulary practiced in the 8 EGVTs -Simple past tense (conditional) Simple present tense (sub-ordinate clause) Simple past tense (compound sentence) Present continuous tense (conditional) Simple present tense (complex sentence) Simple future tense (sub-ordinate clause) Simple present tense (conditional)	(name of the student), Please introduce yourself and the topic of your presentation.

HIOS How to introduce oneself, *TAH* Talking about hobbies, *DONP* Describing one's native place, *EOSW* Expressing one's strengths and weaknesses, *DFS* Describing a favourite subject, *TAIE* Talking about an internship experience, *LS* Leadership skills, *MG* Managing a group, *IP* Introducing a presentation, *DCP* Describing the content of a presentation, *HIRP* How to interpret results in a presentation, *CP* Concluding a presentation

3.3.1.1. Assessment Procedure

Three major tests were designed to assess the English-speaking proficiency of the participants (see Table 3.14). These tests were: a pre-test (PT 1), an intermediate test (IMT), and a post-test (PT 2). The purpose of the oral tests was to evaluate the responses of the participants to the questions asked by the instructor about their personal as well as academic life. The participants were given 5-6 minutes to respond to the instructor's questions. It was considered that a test based on speech discourse would be suitable rather than using test items that were specific in addition to the compilation of English words and sentences which were limited in nature (e.g., Miles, 2014; Nakata & Suzuki, 2019; Suzuki et al., 2022). It was assumed that testing the speech discourse of the participants might reveal the accuracy of their speech proficiency in English because the participants had the experience of learning the English language for 12-15 years as stated in the previous section. A collection of the oral responses of the participants was done during the four tests and recording, transcription, and assessment of those responses were done accordingly. It is to be noted that the assessment of the variation in the participants' use of L2 interaction, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary and grammar spoken discourse was not only restricted to only a set of English speaking rules. The main purpose of the assessment was to examine if the rules of English speaking during the STSs prompted any alteration in their oral discourse or not.

For evaluation, the assessment tool (CBSE, 2012) which rated the oral responses of the participants distributed the interaction, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary & grammar performance in English into 5 categories. In an attempt to assess the participants' English interaction performance, the performance scale ranged from having very little initiative in starting a conversation and engagement in very little interaction (point 1), to being passive as the conversation developed, and contributions frequently having no bearing on those of the other speaker (point 2), to establishing interactions properly, thereby making only a small effort to start a conversation additionally requiring constant prompting to take turns (point 3), to

interaction properly established and developed yet, requiring little encouragement (point 4), and being able to take turn appropriately and can start a conversation and logically develop it about well-known topics (point 5).
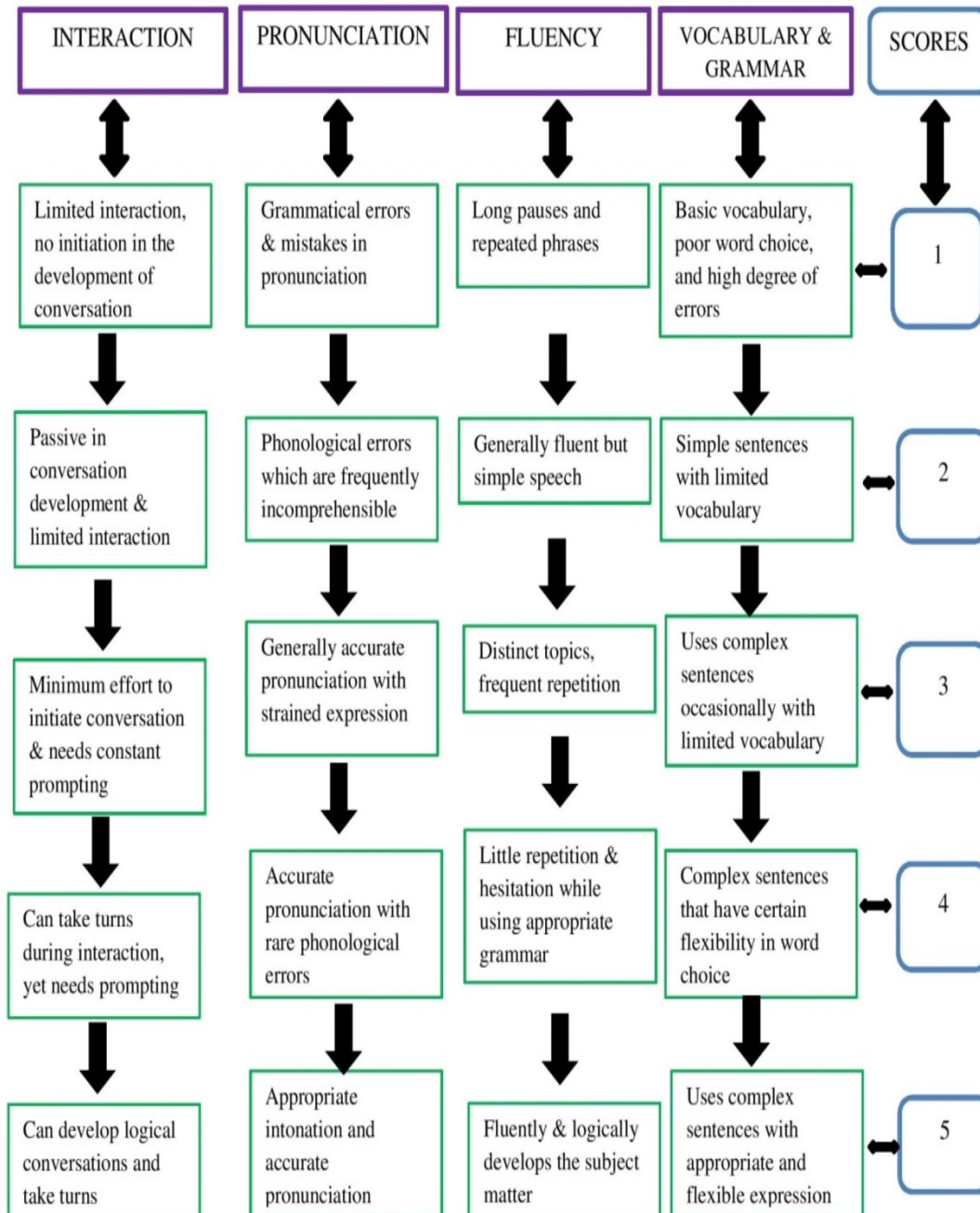
With regards to the pronunciation component, the scale ranged from poor pronunciation accuracy due to which communication is significantly hampered (point 1), to frequent phonological mistakes, incomprehensible articulations, and serious communication issues (point 2), and largely correct pronunciation with a few occasional errors, yet having some stressful expressions without compromising the spoken language (point 3), to clear articulation and pronunciation with very few phonological errors and can be understood most of the time (point 4), and pronunciation with appropriate intonation, can speak clearly, and always understandable (point 5).

To assess the participants' fluency, the scale ranged from long and noticeable pauses, slow speech, occasional repetition or self-correction, and use of simple sentences (point 1), to simple speech with frequent pauses and slow speech, and topics only partially developed (point 2), to hesitation and self-correction, apparent repetition, and mainly developed but typically not logically concluded topics (point 3), and speech with barely noticeable effort with some repetition and self-correction, and also hesitation when trying to find the right words (point 4), to fluency in speech almost without repetition and hesitation (point 5). The scale of performance while assessing their vocabulary and grammar ranged from lack of flexibility and struggle for appropriate words using basic vocabulary (1 point), to limited flexibility and appropriacy in the choice of vocabulary communicated through rare and less complex forms of sentence structures (2 points), and limited vocabulary for description and expression of views in the occasional use of complex forms of sentence structures (3 points), to some flexibility and appropriacy in the choice of vocabulary on most topics demonstrated through the frequent use of complex forms of sentence structures (4 points),

Figure 3.2 indicates the scores and descriptors of the assessment criteria used for
performance in interaction, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary & grammar

Figure 3.2

Scores and Descriptors of the Assessment Criteria

INTERACTION	PRONUNCIATION	FLUENCY	VOCABULARY & GRAMMAR	SCORES
Limited interaction, no initiation in the development of conversation	Grammatical errors & mistakes in pronunciation	Long pauses and repeated phrases	Basic vocabulary, poor word choice, and high degree of errors	1
Passive in conversation development & limited interaction	Phonological errors which are frequently incomprehensible	Generally fluent but simple speech	Simple sentences with limited vocabulary	2
Minimum effort to initiate conversation & needs constant prompting	Generally accurate pronunciation with strained expression	Distinct topics, frequent repetition	Uses complex sentences occasionally with limited vocabulary	3
Can take turns during interaction, yet needs prompting	Accurate pronunciation with rare phonological errors	Little repetition & hesitation while using appropriate grammar	Complex sentences that have certain flexibility in word choice	4
Can develop logical conversations and take turns	Appropriate intonation and accurate pronunciation	Fluently & logically develops the subject matter	Uses complex sentences with appropriate and flexible expression	5

and some flexibility and appropriacy in the use of vocabulary on a wide variety of topics expressed in the frequent use of complex forms of sentence structures (5 points).

3.3.2. L2 Attitude and Motivation Questionnaire

The participants' L2 attitude and motivation were monitored throughout the study using the two modified versions of Gardner's (1986) Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). To collect the responses of the participants, the AMTB that was selected for the study was based on Schumann's (1998) description of the SA sub-checks which represented the items of AMTB. Only 75 items were chosen for rating purposes in the first and fourth rounds out of the 104 items based on a 6-point Likert scale in the AMTB. While only 20 of the 104 items were chosen for use in the second and third rounds of data collection (see Table 3.15). The AMTB was chosen as a primary tool for measuring the SA criteria because it included the related significant assessment items that were understood as cumulative measures of assessment variables (Schumann, 1998). The approach to stimulus appraisal which is characterized by attitude and motivation was well-suited to Gardner's AMTB which measured respondents' opinions of the various activities of L2 learning, agents, and objects (Schumann, 1998). Due to the inherent nature of stimulus appraisals, which include both attitude and motivation, Gardner's tool for measuring attitude and motivation is well-matched with this approach. The definition of attitude and motivation was also given by Gardner (1985) as an evaluative response to some referent that is guided by beliefs and perceptions.

The number of items was reduced in the second and third rounds of data collection because of the frequency of distribution of the items in the questionnaire. So, the modified version- FB 1 and FB 2 of the 20-item AMTB questionnaire was circulated to the participants every week for two months. A shorter questionnaire was simpler for the participants to respond to it regularly than a longer one.

Table 3.15

Instrument Elaboration

SA criteria	Item count in AMTB	Item count in FB	Examples of items
Novelty (N)	15	4	I cannot be bothered trying to understand the more complex aspects of English.
Pleasantness (P)	15	4	I enjoy the activities of our English class much more than those of my other classes.
Need Significance (NS)	15	4	I wish I could read more newspapers and magazines in English.
Coping Potential (CP)	15	4	I do not get anxious when I have to answer a question in my English class.
Self/ Social Image (SI)	15	4	I wish I could have many native English-speaking friends.

The five criteria in the SA- need significance (NS), pleasantness (P), novelty (N), coping potential (CP), and self/social image (SI)- were represented by the 75 items in the first modified version of the AMTB which were- AMTB 1 and AMTB 2 including the 20 items in the second modified version. Before distributing the first modified version of the AMTB in the first round of the STSs, the instructor explained to the participants the meaning of the English-sentence items in the questionnaires. The activity of distributing the questionnaire was started after it was confirmed through an interaction with the participants that the items in the questionnaire had been correctly understood.

The modified AMTB versions used for data collection are referred to here as AMTB 1, FB 1, FB 2, and AMTB 2 for convenience in referencing the time of distribution. In the present study, the data collection process was divided into four different stages, with AMTB 1, FB 1, FB 2, and AMTB 2 representing the first, second, third, and fourth stages respectively. Descriptive and inferential statistics in SPSS 26.0 were used to analyse the mean values of the responses against AMTB 1, FB 1, FB 2, and AMTB 2 which were calculated individually for BP as well as IL. A repeated measures ANOVA test was used for the statistical comparison and analysis as the data on how L2 attitude and motivation differed between BP and IL at various points at the time of the three-month-long study. Accordingly *p*-values, *F*-values, degrees of freedom, and effect sizes were calculated.

3.4. Methods of Data Analysis
3.4.1. Analysis of the English Test Scores
Prior to the beginning of the STSs, the participants' oral responses were collected in another RT. The test was administered for selecting and distributing the participants into two groups- IL and BP. The recording, transcription, and assessment of the participants were done by the four assessors from their oral responses. The oral responses were collected from the 3 formative tests which

were taken during the study. A comparison was done to compare the effectiveness of blocking and interleaving on the interaction, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary & grammar performance between the participants of the two groups. Their mean values were calculated and analysed separately with the help of descriptive and inferential statistics in SPSS 26.0. These mean values were obtained from their performance scores in the different tests which were administered at various phases of the STSs. Moreover, for a comparison of the progression rate in all the four sub-skills, a calculation of the mean values and the standard deviation was done from the scores of the pre-test, the intermediate tests, and the post-test in a repeated measures ANOVA test.

3.4.2. Assessors and Inter-rater reliability

The assessment of the oral responses was done by four assessors. These assessors were a postgraduate degree holder in English and they had at least 5 years of experience in English language education. Before the beginning of the assessment process, the assessors had explained the descriptors of the assessment tool. In the first round of evaluation, each oral response was evaluated separately and at this point, the inter-rater reliability was found to be 72%. During the second round of assessment, the assessors sat together in a meeting and discussed the areas of disagreement. After a thorough checking of their assessment biases, the finalization of the score sheet was done and prepared. When the modification was done in the meeting, a similarity percentage of 94% was found by the four assessors.

3.4.3. Analysis of Attitude and Motivation Data

An analysis was done using descriptive and inferential statistics in SPSS 26.0 and the calculation of the mean values of the responses of the participants were done separately against AMTB 1, FB 1, FB 2, and AMTB 2 for BP as well as IL. The variation in L2 attitude and motivation was studied in different points of time over the course of three months. This difference in the data was compared and measured by doing a statistical analysis with the help of a repeated measures

ANOVA test. The calculation of the corresponding F-values, p-values, degrees of freedom, and effect sizes were measured too.

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