

ELT *in* INDIA:

A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY OF
TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE TO
TRIBAL LEARNERS

Dr Bennichan John



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*(Affiliated to the University of Calicut)
Naipunnya Nagar, Pongam
Koratty, Thrissur Dist., Kerala, India - 680 308*

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Author:

Dr Bennichan John

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Dedicated to

Mr. Ouseph John Maramparampil
My beloved father and guiding star in heaven!

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FOREWORD

Languages of all sorts have their irreplaceable roles and significance in the cultural map of the world. We speak of humanity as one, sans geographical and ethnic boundaries. Similarly all languages, by the very fact they are human languages, form a linguistic continuum. As diverse areas of research make further advancements on a daily basis, language studies are not different either. The present study on ELT is a pioneering attempt in this regard.

John Bennichan has ventured into the hitherto unexplored realms of observing and recording the linguistic skills of tribal learners of Wayanad. This study is an objective mapping of the factors that influence the English language development of tribal learners especially with regard to acquiring literacy skills.

Though several studies have been made in the area of tribal literacy skills, this is the first work that focuses solely on the tribes in Wayanad, thereby making it a pioneering study of tribal ELT in Kerala. The book traces the journey of ELT in India and also zooms into the socio-cultural background of tribes. A detailed analytical study of the reading skills among tribal learners is made taking into account the influence of socio-economic background on ELT. The concluding chapters give a creative solution that showcase ELT for tribes highlighting emerging models of tribal ELT and conclude with suggesting a schema for tribal Learners.

The book is a must read for those interested in making a difference to ELT, especially if one intends to focus on developing English language skills of tribal learners.

Dr. V.M. Subramanian

Head, Department of Linguistics
Bharathiar University, Coimbatore

INTRODUCTION

Proficiency in literacy skills, reading and writing, is the basic criterion to academic and social success of any community. In India, even after six decades of planned development as an independent nation, wide gaps are seen in acquiring language skills by the disadvantaged sections of the society, especially the scheduled tribes.

According to census 2011, 1.45% of Kerala's population is tribal, out of which 63% live in the district of Wayanad. English literacy skills among the tribal students of Wayanad are mostly found among the first generation learners, which are despicably low. Majority of tribe students at high school level fail miserably to read and write English. This study addresses the problem of the low level of English literacy among the five major tribal groups Wayanad district, viz. Paniya, Kurichiya, Kuruma, Kattunaicka and Adiya.

This is a new area in English Language Teaching, especially in Teaching English to the Disadvantaged groups. In the Indian context, the tribes, dalits, fisher-folk and such other minorities form vulnerable groups who are often excluded from the mainstream. Tribes in Kerala, though a protected minority, are on the verge of extinction due to various socio-political reasons. Development of India will never be complete without the development and education of these indigenous peoples. Hence the present study, which falls into the category of sociolinguistics of language teaching, addresses an issue that is beyond linguistics and schooling.

A general survey of ELT in India with a focus on education of tribes is the highlight of the first chapter. The second chapter discusses the

identity and characteristics of tribes in India, particularly Kerala. A detailed analysis of reading skills among the tribal students of Wayanad is made in the third chapter. The fourth chapter discusses the socio-economic, cultural and psychological factors behind the low achievement of tribal learners. The fifth chapter attempts at various models of ELT. The discussion leads to the ingredients for an effective ELT programme for the tribal learners.

I am highly thankful to Dr V.M. Subramanian, Head, Department of Linguistics, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, for writing an erudite foreword to this book. Words are limited to express my thanks to Rev. Fr. Baiju Sebastian Ponthempilly and Rev. Dr. Paulachan Kaithottungal of Naipunnya Institutions, who took initiative to publish this book. I also thank my colleagues and students at the Post-Graduate departments of English both at NSM Cherthala and NIMIT Koratty for their academic interest and stimuli.

May this pioneering study be a landmark in the history of ELT in India, especially in the language education of tribal learners!

CHAPTER 1

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN INDIA

English is inevitable for international transactions and communications since it has become the major global language in all fields of human endeavours. Twenty five per cent of the world's population read or understand English. English is the most flourishing language in all estimates, says David Crystal (7). Hence English Language Teaching has become an essential part of education. While English language and literature are being taught as subjects in most places, English has become the medium of instruction in some cases. In the present globalized world, one cannot but learn English, since it has become the 'lingua franca' of contemporary society.

1.1. What is ELT

The British introduced ELT in India more than two centuries ago in order to create an English speaking populace to be employed in the British bureaucracy. Down in the twenty-first century, English has turned out to be the second official national language and the link language pan India. Today English has become a compulsory subject in Indian schools and colleges. In order to understand the position of ELT in Indian school curriculum, it is worthwhile to have a look at the history of ELT in India.

1.1.1. History of ELT in India

India has a history of more than 250 years of ELT (Hussain 92), beginning as early as 1759 by the East India Company. It gained momentum after Macaulay's minutes of 1835, which argued for "a class of persons, Indians in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect" (ibid 94). In 1854, Sir Charles Wood stated that English could be a suitable medium of higher levels of education, because a sound knowledge of English was a prerequisite to seek admission into any established university (Malini 52). Since independence, the need for English has become very demanding for higher education and research, apart from others. Kothari Commission that introduced the three-language formula, recommended English as an essential part of Indian school-college curriculum. Today, English has become an essential component of any educational programme in India.

1.1.2. English as Second/Foreign Language (ESL/EFL)

Language is the medium through which the child acquires the cultural, moral, religious and other values of society. According to Klein (4), a language is 'first' and so its acquisition- if no other language was acquired before; otherwise it is second. Thus the mother tongue which is acquired primarily by a child when his/her language cells are empty is First Language or L1, and the language which is acquired / learnt in addition to L1 is Second Language or L2. L1 is acquired by a child from the members of its family and its surroundings. Foreign Language is a non-native language taught in schools and it has no status as a routine medium of communication in that country.

L1 is introduced in the school as a subject from grade I to X. It is commonly used as a medium of instruction at the school level. It is also used as a medium of expression by the learner in his/her social communication. It is usually the mother tongue or a regional language of the child.

A SL is a non-native language that is widely used for purposes of communication; usually as a medium of education, and as a means of communication in government and/or business. English, for example, has the status of FL in Japan, but SL status in Nigeria and India. It is the language which is introduced compulsorily either at the end of the primary stage or in the beginning of the lower secondary stage after the attainment of sufficient proficiency in the first language by the learner (Chaturvedi and Mohale 21). The main objective of the SL is to enable the speaker for wider participation in society and the nation leading to secondary socialization. The SL is usually the official language of a state or a national language.

The language acquired by a child from the members of its family and from its surroundings is called as "first language" (L1) to that child. Every normal child acquires its first language in its few years of life and language acquisition is intimately connected with the child's cognitive and social developments (Subramanian 1).

For a student in Delhi, Hindi is the first language and English the second. For a student in Madurai, Tamil is the first language and English the second. For a tribal student in Wayanad, her/his tribal language is the mother tongue or first language, while Malayalam is the SL and English is the third language.

1.1.3. Language Acquisition and Language Learning

Language acquisition is an unconscious process and it starts from childhood (Klein 5). It means a language is acquired as a result of natural and largely random exposure to a particular language. The term language learning is used where the exposure is structured through language teaching. Acquisition is a subconscious process by which linguistic competence is developed as a result of using language for real communication, from a particular language environment (Krashen 57). Learning is the conscious process by which knowledge of a language is developed through study.

Children comprehend through actively listening and observing their world. Further, as they experiment in using the language they have heard, a set of rules for all the cuing systems internalises. Although imitation and modelling are involved, the child learns because of interaction (Rekha 101). The growing young child soon actively comprehends and culturally responds to the language used in the environment through careful perception and cultural language interaction with caregivers. To be understood, the child tries to conform to the sounds, structures, and cultural language behaviours experienced. The need to understand and be understood in communication is a very strong drive in the young child.

When children acquire their first language, they also learn a set of social rules for moving in the world. As children learn a language, they are also socialized into the culture and society of the parents and community. Culture is introduced naturally without planning for it.

L1 learning plays an important role in L2 learning. It is a predictor of success in learning a SL (Rekha 103). The knowledge and experiences children develop through learning their first language help them develop cognitive schemas available for use in L2 acquisition.

According to the theory of Critical Period Hypothesis (Birdsong 1), there is a limited developmental period during which it is possible to acquire a language, be it L1 or L2, to normal, native-like levels. Once this window of opportunity is passed, the ability to learn a language declines. There are different views regarding the age limit, however, it is important that language acquisition and learning have to be done to children at the appropriate time (Birdsong 3).

1.1.4. Language Skills

The use of language as a tool for communication for different purposes and different domains require four basic skills viz.

listening, speaking, reading and writing - LSRW. Oracy skills such as listening and speaking in the first language are acquired through natural processes, and reading and writing skills are acquired deliberately. That is, when a child goes to school, s/he may be taught how to read and write in a language (Subramanian 3).

The sender of a message uses spoken or written mode in order to communicate ideas and the receiver of the message utilizes the listening and reading skills in order to interpret the message. The skills used by the sender are productive or active while the skills used by the receiver are receptive or passive. A developed language employs all the four skills in order to perform social activities while an underdeveloped language exploits only two skills (Subramanian 4). Unfortunately, writing alone is tested in most of the examinations at present. Inclusion of other skills of language is also essential for a balanced curriculum.

Any successful ELT programme, according to Dorairaj (110), is founded on four pillars such as teachers and the taught; materials; methodology and evaluation/testing. The target group, which is the learners, influences and determines the other factors and that is the most important of them all.

1.2. Methods followed in ELT

There are many methods used for English Language Teaching from time to time and from place to place. Some of the important language teaching methods are mentioned below.

1.2.1. The Grammar Translation Method (GTM)

The GTM is one of the earliest and most practiced methods of ELT (Richards and Rodgers 5). Though presently considered out-dated in reference of modern methods, it is still useful and constantly applied in schools and colleges in India.

The GTM is a method derived from the classical method of teaching Greek and Latin. GTM, formalized in Germany in the late 18th century, places little or no emphasis on actually speaking or communicating in the target language. Classwork is highly structured, with the teacher controlling all activities. The method focuses on the literature and grammar of the target language, with passages being translated into and from the mother tongue. Consequently it tends to be very much text-based. In GTM classes, students learn grammatical rules and then apply those rules by translating sentences between the target language and the native language. Following are some of the key features of GTM:

- Classes are taught in the mother tongue
- Much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words and translation
- Little or no attention is given to pronunciation
- Long, elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given
- Lessons are teacher-centred
- Practice based on translation of texts to and from MT
- Memorization of grammar rules and vocabulary
- Vocabulary exercises include antonyms and synonyms, definitions etc based on words in reading texts
- Composition exercises based on topics from reading texts
- Class activities or learning games are rarely necessary, as students are translating text to another language directly
- Teachers who are not fluent in English (but fluent in the other language that the students primarily use) can teach English using this approach, as the emphasis is not on the spoken word but on translations.

1.2.2. The Direct Method (DM)

The DM stresses on developing oral and listening skills of English than bookish grammar. Richards and Rodgers (12) present eight principles involved in the DM. They are:

- Classroom instruction is conducted exclusively in the target language
- Only everyday vocabulary and sentences are taught
- Oral communication skills are built up in a carefully graded progression organized around question and answer exchanges between teachers and students in small, intensive classes
- Grammar is taught inductively
- New teaching points are introduced orally
- Concrete vocabulary is taught through demonstration, objects and pictures; abstract vocabulary by association of ideas
- Both speech and listening comprehension are taught
- Correct pronunciation and grammar are emphasised.

This method has a few drawbacks, as it required teachers who are native speakers or who have native-like fluency in the L2. It is largely dependent on the teacher's skill, rather than on textbook, hence not all teachers are proficient enough in English to adhere to the principles of the method.

1.2.3. Structural- Situational Method (Oral Approach)

This method gives importance to language as a system of structurally related elements of phonemes, morphemes, words, structures and sentence types to encode and decode the meaning. The procedures, principles and techniques take a more systematic approach than

DM. In this approach, new language points are introduced and practised situationally. Accuracy in both pronunciation and grammar is regarded as crucial, and errors are to be avoided at all costs (Richards and Rodgers 41).

1.2.4. Audio-Lingual Method (ALM)

ALM treats language as a kind of human habit, it is the speech that is supposed to be spoken by language speakers rather than written out by them (Xia 561). So we need to teach language itself, not knowledge. ALM gained attention in the USA during World War II, where it was rooted in the military's need to train large numbers of personnel in disparate languages. The ALM banned the use of mother tongue, prioritizing listening and speaking skills over reading and writing (<https://www.tefl.net/methods/audiolingual.php>). Grammar is prioritized over vocabulary, and accuracy over fluency, giving learners few opportunities to produce errors (Richards and Rodgers 58). Some important features of ALM are:

- Use of target language / some mother tongue
- Teacher-centred
- Mechanical habit-formation activities with little opportunity for mistakes
- Immediate reinforcement of correct responses
- Presentation of new structural patterns and vocabulary through oral repetition and memorization of scripted dialogues
- Oral pattern-drills of key structures from dialogues
- Inductive learning of grammar rules based on dialogues (i.e. no explicit grammar teaching)
- Use of tapes, visual aids and language labs.

1.2.5. Total Physical Response (TPR)

TPR was developed by American psychologist Dr. James Asher based on the experience of how humans learn their first language. When children learn their mother tongue, their parents and carers are actively physically involved in imparting language. They demonstrate and instruct, and the child responds in kind. No one demands or requires very small children to speak at all: only to listen and understand, which is to say, to comprehend (Richards and Rodgers 87). Therefore, the idea of TPR in a nutshell is “to create a neural link between speech and action”. TPR has a lot of benefits, particularly for beginners and young learners.

- The pairing of movement with language is innately associated with effective learning
- Students actively use both the left and right sides of their brains
- It works with both small and large groups
- It sharpens students' listening skills
- Students are not required to speak until they are ready to, therefore creating a “safe zone” that greatly lowers inhibitions and stress
- Students will appreciate the change of pace and potential for humour
- Kinaesthetic learners and visual learners will get a lot out of TPR.
- As no one is called upon individually, TPR is great for introverted students
- Limited materials and planning mean it's simple for teachers to prepare.

1.2.6. The Silent Way

Caleb Gattegno developed an unconventional method known as the Silent Way based upon ideas outlined in his book *Teaching Foreign Languages in Schools the Silent Way*, published in 1963. The emphasis is on the student's learning rather than the teacher's teaching. In the absence of the teacher dominating the lesson, the student takes an active role in the learning process, and their input guides the learning trajectory. The teacher redirects and corrects when necessary, but the teacher grants students greater autonomy and fosters the development of independent problem-solving skills.

The role of the teacher is to direct students' focus, facilitate self-reflection and provide verbal and nonverbal feedback when necessary. Students, on the other hand, are encouraged to speak as much as possible (Richards and Rodgers 99). Most of the traditional tools for language instruction - textbooks, worksheets, verb conjugation tables are completely absent in this method. In their place, instruction takes place through the medium of Cuisenaire rods and charts (<https://www.fluentu.com/blog/educator/silent-way-teaching-method/>).

1.2.7. Suggestopedia

Suggestopedia is a language teaching method originated in the 1970s by Bulgarian psychologist Georgi Lozanov. The name combines the terms "suggestion" and "pedagogy", the main idea being that accelerated learning can take place when accompanied by de-suggestion of psychological barriers and positive suggestion. To this end, lessons take place against a background of soothing music in an emotionally comforting environment, with the teacher actively planting and unplugging thoughts in and from the learners' minds.

Typical features of a suggestopedia lesson are that both the target

language/mother tongue are used, mostly teacher-centred, class rooms are bright, cheerful with comfortable chairs, soothing background music, positive suggestion and negative “de-suggestion” by teacher, new identities for learners with TL names and new occupations, printed TL dialogues with mother tongue translation, vocabulary and grammar notes, rhythm and intonation matched to music, reading of dialogues by teacher and learners, activities including Q&A, games, songs, etc. (<https://www.tefl.net/methods/suggestopedia.php>).

1.2.8. Lexical, Whole Language and Constructivist Approaches

Lexical Approach gives priority to vocabulary and lexical phrases as the building blocks to communicative competence. Whole Language Approach is concerned with teaching and learning in the native language. WLA is closely linked to the Constructivist approach in teaching. Rather than transmitting knowledge to students, teachers collaborate with them to create knowledge and understanding in their mutual social context. Rather than seeking to cover the curriculum, learning focuses on the learners’ experience, needs, interests and aspirations. Always the focus falls on real and natural events and literature, which are ‘authentic’ (Amritavalli 25).

1.2.9. Communicative Language Teaching Method (CLT)

CLT has been one of the most popular methods in ELT since 1960s (Chung 33), and it was first mentioned by Wilkins and Widdowson (Xia 564). CLT is based on the notion of the learners as communicators, naturally endowed with the ability to learn languages. It seeks to provide learners with the target language system. It is assumed that learners will have to prepare to use the target language in orally and written form in many predictable and unpredictable acts of communication which arise both in classroom interaction and in real world (Yalden 61). Language seen as a system for the expression of meaning and the primary

function is to allow interaction and communication. The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses.

The primary units of language are not merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse (Richards and Rogers 161). CLT does not aim at language as a set of linguistic items, but aims at developing communicative competence in the learners. It focuses on the meaning and functions rather than on the form of the language.

1.2.10. The Bilingual Method

This method considers that second language can be learned with the help of learners' mother tongue but it should not be used as word to word translation as in GTM but as a means to achieve the communicative end.

1.2.11. Other Methods

Computer Assisted Language Learning - CALL is popular and effective method used in language teaching today, often used along with other methods. With the advancement of science and technology, language learning has become so easy by using computers and internet. Second Language Acquisition Programme - SLAP and Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach - CALLA are two contemporary trends in language teaching (Rekha 75-90).

There are many other methods being used today, like ELT through games, role play method, rhymes, drama etc. There is no one and perfect method for ELT. What is needed is a mixed and comprehensive approach. No single method can serve the purpose; a mixed approach according to the mind-set of the learners should be employed, depending on the learners and the context.

1.3. ELT and National Language Policy

According to the 2006 national position paper (NCERT 9-10) on teaching of Indian languages, there are mainly eight objectives for language teaching in schools:

(a) The competence to understand what s/he hears: A learner must be able to employ various non-verbal cues coming from the speaker for understanding what has been said. S/he should also be skilled at listening and understanding in a non-linear fashion by making connections and drawing inferences.

(b) Ability to read with comprehension, and not merely decode: S/he should develop the habit of reading in a non-linear manner using various syntactic, semantic, and grapho-phonemic cues. S/he must be able to construct meaning by drawing inferences and relating the text with her previous knowledge. S/he must also develop the confidence of reading the text with a critical eye and posing questions while reading.

(c) Effortless expression: S/he should be able to employ the communicative skills in a variety of situations. Her/his repertoire must have a range of styles to choose from. S/he must be able to engage in a discussion in a logical, analytical, and creative manner.

(d) Coherent writing: Writing is not a mechanical skill; it involves a rich control of grammar, vocabulary, content, and punctuation as well as the ability to organise thoughts coherently often using a variety of cohesive devices such as linkers and lexical repetitions through synonymy, etc. S/he should be able to use writing for a variety of purposes and in a variety of situations, ranging from informal to very formal.

(e) Control over different registers: Language is never used in a uniform fashion. It has innumerable varieties, shades, and colours, which surface in different domains and in different

situations. These variations, known as registers, should form a part of a student's repertoire. Besides the register of school subjects, a student must be able to understand and use the variety of language being used in other domains such as music, sports, films, gardening, construction work, cookery, etc.

(f) Scientific study of language: In a language class, the teaching approaches adopted and the tasks undertaken should be such that they lead a child to go through the whole scientific process of collecting data, observing the data, classifying it according to its similarities and differences, making hypotheses, etc.

(g) Creativity: In a language classroom, a student should get ample space to develop her/his imagination and creativity. Classroom ethos and the teacher-student relationship build confidence in the latter to use her/his creativity in text transaction and activities uninhibitedly.

(h) Sensitivity: Language classrooms can be an excellent reference point for familiarising students with our rich culture and heritage as well as aspects of our contemporary life. Language classroom and texts have a lot of scope to make students sensitive towards their surroundings, their neighbours, and their nation.

The NCERT document envisages the three-language formula, mother tongue integration, multi-cultural classrooms, multilingual pedagogy etc. The purpose of the curriculum is to develop the learners as independent lifelong learners.

1.3.1. ELT in the Kerala State Curriculum

In 1818 Rev. Mead founded the Nagarcoil Seminary, which was the first institution to offer regular English education in the erstwhile Travancore State (Ahammad 38). In 1884 the proclamation of Maharaja of Travancore stated that those who were educated in English schools were to be given preferences in public services.

Rev. Dawson's work in Cochin (1818) and the Malabar Board's Act (1834) also helped for the establishment of English schools in Kerala. The Cochin Education Code (1911) and the Stathan Committee Report (1933) were some of the milestones in the history of ELT in Kerala (Ahammad 38).

English language has a vital position in the school curriculum of Kerala. It has been made a compulsory subject for all students from class III, keeping in view the fact that all students need English for academic and professional purposes and for social interaction. School curriculum has been designed with this objective so as to enable the learners to acquire skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Although English is a compulsory subject in the Kerala school curriculum from class III onwards with six periods per week, it is English that has been contributing to failure in SSLC Examination to the extent of 50% till recently (Rekha 91, Ahammad 39).

1.4. ELT and Tribal Students of Wayanad

Wayanad is the most backward district in Kerala, in all parameters of development (Swamy 90). It has the largest tribal population in the state (Census 2011). Wayanad is the least populated district of the state, and its population constitutes 2.47 per cent of Kerala's total population and covers 5.5 per cent of land. Tribe communities form the poorest section of the population of the district and they fall behind the rest of the population of Kerala in terms of literacy, income and health (IIMK 7).

According to official statistics (<http://education.kerala.gov.in>), there are 370 schools in Wayanad of which 81 are higher secondary, 10 secondary, 107 UP and 145 LP schools. Besides there are 27 multi-grade learning centres or MGLCs functioning in Wayanad. In the academic year 2014-15, there were 114539 students enrolled in schools of which 28916 (25.24%) were tribes

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(source: DDE Wayanad). In the academic year 2013-14, there were 1771 (1.52%) school dropouts in the non-tribal category; while there were 1368 (4.71%) school dropouts in the tribal category.

Studies have proved that the English literacy levels of tribes in northern districts are very weak (Ahammad 81, Rekha 145). Most tribal learners in high schools are reportedly lacking in basic English skills and their linguistic deficiencies get cumulated over the years (Rekha 4). These deficiencies negatively affect their academic achievements, self-confidence and career opportunities, thereby multiplying the disadvantages in which they are already in.

SOCIO-CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF TRIBES

2.1. Tribes in India

Tribes, who are also known as the adivasis, are the original inhabitants of the forests and hills. India has the second largest tribal population of the world next only to the African countries (Nazer 37). According to the census 2011, the total population of India is 121 crores and the total number of Scheduled Tribes (ST) is 10.43 crores, which is 8.6% of the total population.

Among the Indian states, Madhya Pradesh has the highest number of tribal population (15316784), followed by Maharashtra (10510213), Odisha (9590756), Rajasthan (9238534), Gujarat (8917174), Jharkhand (8645042), Chhattisgarh (7822902) etc.

2.1.1. What is a Tribe?

The word tribe originated from the Latin *tribus* which originally meant each of the three divisions of the Roman people. In English tribe means any aggregate of people united by ties of descent from a common ancestor, community of customs and traditions, adherence to the same leaders etc. (www.dictionary.com).

Majumdar (12) defines the tribe as a collection of families or groups bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and is not usually endogamous though originally it might have been so. A definite area, dialect, cultural homogeneity and unifying social organizations are the features of tribes as social groups. A tribe is a special group possessing a distinctive culture which marks it out from other groups having different cultures.

In short, a tribe is an indigenous homogenous unit, speaking a common language, claiming a common descent, living in a particular geographic area, backward in technology, almost preliterate and loyally observing social and political customs based on kinship.

Nazer (2) presents nine characteristics of tribes:

- Tribe is a group of families
- Each tribe has a name
- Members of a tribe speak common language or dialect
- Members of the tribe reside in a common territory
- Members of the tribe observe taboos related to marriage
- Members of a tribe have a common occupation
- Members of the tribe have well developed system of reciprocal exchange
- A tribe has a common culture
- Members of the tribe work together of the time of war.

2.1.2. Distribution of Tribes in India

In India the STs mainly inhabit two distinct geographical areas. More than half of the ST population is concentrated in the Central India

i.e. Madhya Pradesh (14.69%), Chhattisgarh (7.5%), Jharkhand (8.29%), Andhra Pradesh (5.7%), Maharashtra (10.08%), Orissa (9.2%), Gujarat (8.55%) and Rajasthan (8.86%). The other distinct area is the North East (Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh). More than two-third of the ST population is concentrated only in the seven States of the country, viz. Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. The table given below presents the percentage level of ST population across states.

Table: 2.1- ST Population across states

Sl. No.	States	% of STs to total population
1	Madhya Pradesh	14.69
2	Maharashtra	10.08
3	Orissa	9.20
4	Rajasthan	8.86
5	Gujarat	8.55
6	Jharkhand	8.29
7	Chhattisgarh	7.50
8	Andhra Pradesh	5.68
9	West Bengal	5.08
10	Karnataka	4.07
11	Assam	3.72
12	Meghalaya	2.45
13	Nagaland	1.64
14	Kerala	1.45
15	J&K	1.43

16	Bihar	1.28
17	Tripura	1.12
18	Uttar Pradesh	1.09
19	Mizoram	0.99
20	Arunachal Pradesh	0.91
21	Manipur	0.87
22	Tamil Nadu	0.76
23	Himachal Pradesh	0.38
24	Uttarakhand	0.28
25	Sikkim	0.20
26	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0.17
27	Goa	0.14

MTA, Annual Report 2013-14, 32

In 3 States viz. Delhi NCR, Punjab and Haryana and 2 UTs viz. Puducherry and Chandigarh), there is no Scheduled Tribe notified. Among states, Mizoram has the highest proportion of the Scheduled Tribes (94.43). The 20 States and 2 Union Territories have higher percentage of the ST population than the country's average of the 8.6%.

2.1.3. Literacy of Tribes in India

The literacy rate for the total population in India has increased from 64.8% to 73% during the period from 2001 to 2011 whereas the literacy rate among the Scheduled Tribes has increased from 47.1% to 59% (MTA 217). Among ST male literacy increased from 59.2% to 68.5% and among ST female literacy increased from 34.8% to 49.2% during the same period. The ST female literacy is lower by approximately 21 percentage point as compared to the

overall female literacy of the general population. However, the increase in total as well as female literacy among STs is significant.

Literacy rate has increased from 8.53 per cent in 1961 to 59.0 per cent in 2011 for STs while the corresponding increase for total population was from 28.30 per cent in 1961 to 73.0 per cent in 2011.

The percentage of literacy gap between STs and all population varies from 12.4 to 15.2 percentage point during 2011. The States like Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Jammu & Kashmir, Gujarat and Dadra & Nagar Haveli are having more than 14.0 (i.e. literacy gap at all India) percentage gap of literacy rate between STs and the total population during 2011.

Table 2.2- Literacy among STs and all Social Groups

Year	STs			All Social Groups		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1961	13.83	3.16	8.53	40.40	15.35	28.30
1971	17.63	4.85	11.30	45.96	21.97	34.45
1981	24.52	8.04	16.35	56.38	29.76	43.57
1991	40.65	18.19	29.60	64.13	39.29	52.21
2001	59.17	34.76	47.10	75.26	53.67	64.84
2011	68.5	49.4	59.0	80.9	64.6	73.0

MTA 217

2.1.4. Backwardness of Tribes in India

Table 2.3- Percentage of ST population below poverty line: 2009 -10

Sl. No.	State	Rural	Urban
1.	Andhra Pradesh	40.2	21.2
2.	Assam	32.0	29.2
3.	Bihar	64.4	16.5
4.	Chhattisgarh	66.8	28.6
5.	Gujarat	48.6	32.2
6.	Himachal Pradesh	22.0	19.6
7.	Jammu & Kashmir	3.1	15.0
8.	Jharkhand	51.5	49.5
9.	Karnataka	21.3	35.6
10.	Kerala	24.4	5.0
11.	Madhya Pradesh	61.9	41.6
12.	Maharashtra	51.7	32.4
13.	Orissa	66.0	34.1
14.	Punjab	16.1	15.0
15.	Rajasthan	35.9	28.9
16.	Tamil Nadu	11.5	17.6
17.	Uttar Pradesh	49.8	20.2
18.	Uttarakhand	20.0	0.0
19.	West Bengal	32.9	20.6
	All India	47.4	30.4

Planning Commission, MTA 217

State-wise details of STs below poverty line which are given in the table given above show that tribal people are backward educationally, economically and socially. The proportion of STs below the poverty line is substantially higher than the national average (MTA 217).

2.2. Tribes in Kerala

Kerala has a total population of 33,387,677 persons according to Census 2011. Of these 16,021,290 are males and 1,73,61,535 are females. 1.45% (484,839) of Kerala's population is tribal. Original tribal settlements in Kerala are on the Western Ghats and low lying hills in the boundary of the state (Luiz 2, Marykutty 24).

According to census 2011, there are 36 STs in the state of Kerala. Paniya tribe is the largest with 18.24%. Other major tribes in Kerala are Kurichyan (7.25%), Malai Arayan (6.85%), Mavilan (6.37%) Muthuvan (4.9%), Irular (4.89%), Kanikaran (4.38%), Kattunaickan (3.75%), etc. Kochuvelan with 38 members is the smallest among the tribes in Kerala. Kattunaicka, Cholanaickan, Kadar, Koraga and Kurumba are considered primitive tribal groups

The following table gives details about the percentage of tribes in Kerala.

Table 2.4. Scheduled Tribes of Kerala

No.	Tribe	Total	Male	Female	%
1	Adiyan	11,526	5,515	6,011	2.38
2	Arandan, Aranadan	283	129	154	0.06
3	Eravallan	4,797	2,362	2,435	0.99
4	Hill Pulaya, Mala Pulayan	2,959	1,461	1,498	0.61

5	Irular, Irulan	23,721	11,766	11,955	4.89
6	Kadar, Wayanad Kadar	2,949	1,454	1,495	0.61
7	Kanikaran, Kanikkar	21,251	9,975	11,276	4.38
8	Kattunayakan	18,199	9,039	9,160	3.75
9	Kochuvelan	38	22	16	0.01
10	Koraga	1,582	778	804	0.33
11	Kudiya, Melakudi	785	403	382	0.16
12	Kurichchan, Kurichiyen	35,171	17,643	17,528	7.25
13	Kurumans, Mullu Kuruman	24,505	12,148	12,357	5.05
14	Kurumbar, Kurumban	283	151	132	0.06
15	Maha Malasar	154	71	83	0.03
16	Malai Arayan, Mala Arayan	33,216	16,622	16,594	6.85
17	Malai Pandaram	2,422	1,227	1,195	0.50
18	Malai Vedan, Malavedan	8,149	3,901	4,248	1.68
19	Malakkuravan	175	88	87	0.04
20	Malasar	3,195	1,607	1,588	0.66
21	Malayan, Nattu Malayan	5,917	2,890	3,027	1.22
22	Malayarayar	1,568	762	806	0.32
23	Mannan	9,780	4,792	4,988	2.02
24	Muthuvan, Mudugar	23,746	11,931	11,815	4.90
25	Palliyan, Palliyar	1,464	736	728	0.30
26	Paniyan	88,450	42,775	45,675	18.24
27	Ulladan, Ullatan	16,230	7,877	8,353	3.35
28	Uraly	11,179	5,602	5,577	2.31
29	Mala Vettuvan	17,869	8,852	9,017	3.69
30	Ten Kurumban	25	10	15	0.01

31	Thachanadan Moopan	1,745	859	886	0.36
32	Cholanaickan	124	72	52	0.03
33	Mavilan	30,867	14,972	15,895	6.37
34	Karimpalan	14,098	6,902	7,196	2.91
35	Vetta Kuruman	739	346	393	0.15
36	Mala Panickar	1,023	474	549	0.21
	All Schedule Tribes	484,839	238,203	246,636	

Census 2011

2.2.2. Distribution of Tribes in the State

The table gives a complete picture of the distribution of tribes in Kerala.

Table 2.5. District-wise distribution of tribes in Kerala

No.	District	Total	Male	Female	%
1	Alapuzha	6,574	3,175	3,399	1.36
2	Ernakulam	16,559	8,349	8,210	3.42
3	Idukki	55,815	27,995	27,820	11.51
4	Kannur	41,371	20,141	21,230	8.53
5	Kasaragod	48,857	23,950	24,907	10.08
6	Kollam	10,761	5,195	5,566	2.22
7	Kottayam	21,972	10,974	10,998	4.53
8	Kozhikode	15,228	7,429	7,799	3.14
9	Malappuram	22,990	11,272	11,718	4.74
10	Palakkad	48,972	24,314	24,658	10.10
11	Pathanamthitta	8,108	3,947	4,161	1.67

12	Thiruvananthapuram	26,759	12,624	14,135	1.33
13	Thirissur	9,430	4,362	5,068	1.34
14	Wayanad	151,443	74,476	76,967	31.24
	TOTAL	484,839	238,203	246,636	100.00

Census 2011

Tribes are found in all the 14 districts in Kerala. Wayanad has the highest (31.24%) percentage of tribes, while Alapuzha (1.36%) has the lowest percentage. Most number of tribes (62.9%) is found in four districts of Kerala viz. Wayanad, Idukki, Palakkad and Kasaragod. All these districts lie on the Western Ghats which form the eastern border of the state.

2.2.4. Literacy Rate of Tribes in Kerala

Kerala has the highest rate of literacy in India (93.47%). The state of Kerala has been adorning this laurel for many years. Literacy rate of tribes in Kerala (75.8) is higher than the national average of STs (63.1%). However, when compared to the literacy level of non-tribes in Kerala (93.91%), there is a gap of 18.11% (Census 2011)

According to scholars (Swamy 64, Khan n.p., IIMK 34, Nithya 727), the celebrated "Kerala model" has failed in the case of tribal population of the state. A look at the literacy rates of tribes in different districts of Kerala is given in the table since 1971 gives an idea about the backwardness of tribes in comparison with the general population.

The table below gives details of literacy levels of STs in Kerala in the past 50 years.

Table: 2.6. Tribal Literacy Rates

(General literacy rate is given in brackets)

1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
25.52(69.75)	31.79(83.28)	57.22(89.81)	64.4(90.86)	75.80(93.91)

Census of Kerala 2001, Directorate of Census Operations, Kerala

2.2.5. Tribal Situation in Kerala

Kerala's achievements in terms of some of the basic indicators of human development are well known and have been much commented upon (Khan n.p.). The life expectancy at birth of over 73 years in Kerala, well beyond what has been attained in the rest of India, compares well with Asian countries like South Korea, Malaysia and China. Importantly, however, these countries, unlike Kerala, were already on a path of economic growth. Kerala's female-to-male ratio, at 1.058, is identical to that of Europe and North America. It is substantially higher than that for China (0.94) or for the rest of India (0.93). Further, Kerala is much ahead of other Indian States in achieving the goal of universalising elementary education. The State ranked first among major Indian States in the Human Development Index (HDI) at the three time points of 1981, 1991 and 2001 (National Human Development Report 2001, Planning Commission 2002).

Number of students enrolled in schools all over Kerala in 2011 was 4351225 while number of tribal students was 78790 i.e.1.81%. Number of students repeated in various classes in the year 2011 was 85370. According to the percentage of population the number of tribal repeaters should have been around 1545 i.e.1.81%. But the number of tribal students repeated classes in that year was 2789 i.e. 3.27% (<http://kerala.gov.in>). In the year 2010 school dropout percentage of Wayanad district was 0.51%, whereas the dropouts among the tribal students were 2.36% (<http://kerala.gov.in>).

It is very clear that the tribal communities in Kerala have been largely left out of the gains of the Kerala model of development (Nithya 728). The basic characteristic of the Kerala Model is the high level of social development and physical and social quality of life disproportionate to its level of economic development (Nithya 733).

All these issues raise questions regarding the status of tribes in the state of Kerala. Even though Kerala has the highest levels of literacy, health-indicators, sex-ratio and other multiple advantages, it has not been able to bridge the gap between the general population and the marginalized groups.

A large scale survey conducted by Kerala Institute for Local Administration (KILA) along with the department of tribal welfare, govt. of Kerala, during a span of three years from 2008 to 2011 brought to light the pathetic living conditions of tribes in Kerala (*The Hindu* Dec 1, 2011). Some of the findings of the survey about the tribes are given below:

- About 49 per cent tribal houses in the State do not have toilets
- As many as 24,289 families do not hold ration cards
- There 4614 landless tribal families in the State
- More than 55 per cent live in dilapidated houses. In all, 39,850 houses do not have kitchen and 49 per cent do not have toilets
- Half of the population are deprived of pure drinking water
- 1252 tribal hamlets are not electrified
- More than 1300 tribal settlements face threat from wild animals

- There are 887 unwed mothers and 20,301 widows among ST women. Only 17 per cent of them are getting pension
- Many of the families do not have any access to medical care
- 4,036 are differently-abled and 2386 are mentally challenged
- The community has 40,323 chronic patients
- Many of them drop out from schools at the primary level itself. Poverty and lack of access to educational institutions are the major reasons
- According to the survey, 77,680 people in the age group of 15-59 are unemployed. This includes 2112 graduates, 200 postgraduates and 2066 with professional qualifications
- Almost half the population of the community has taken loans, mostly from private institutions or individual moneylenders.

There are hundreds of instances of infant mortality, death due to poverty and malnutrition (*The New Indian Express*, Nov.13, 2014) in Kerala, despite the welfare measures adopted by the government of Kerala.

2.3. Tribes in Wayanad District

The name Wayanad is derived from vayal nadu which means the land of paddy fields. Wayanad district has the highest concentration of tribes in Kerala i.e. 31.24%. The district which accounts for 5.48% of Kerala's total land area, is known for its evergreen forests, plantations, wildlife, mist-clad mountains and valleys. Forests, rich in resources, cover 37% of the total area of the district.

The district is segmented into four community development blocks viz., Kalpetta, Panamaram, Mananthavady and Sulthan Bathery. The district has 25 Panchayats and one statutory town, which is Kalpetta, the district headquarters. The district has three revenue divisions (Taluks) namely, Vythiri, Sultan Bathery and Mananthavady under which there are 48 revenue villages.

Figure-2.1. Map of Wayanad district

(<https://images.app.goo.gl/gMMvjzN5wPMdeVvPA>)



The district has a mixed population of Hindus, Christians and Muslims. Malayalam is used as the common language in the District. Till the arrival of settler peasantry from plains, Wayanad was essentially tribal (IIMK 26). However, today tribes form only 17 % of the total population of the district.

2.3.1. Tribes in Wayanad

Major tribe or adivasi communities of Wayanad are Paniyan, Mullu Kuruman, Kurichian, Kattunaickan, Adiyian and Urali Kuruman. Based on their occupation they can broadly be categorized into

three viz., agricultural labourers, marginal farmers and forest dependants (Mathur 7).

Paniyan and Adiyan communities who were traditionally bonded labourers and Urali Kuruman, traditionally artisans, constitute the major part of agricultural labourers. They form nearly 55% of the total tribal population of the district. Kattunaickan who have been classified as "Primitive Tribal Groups" almost entirely depend on forest for their livelihood either as forest labourers or as collectors of forest produces. They constitute nearly 9 % of the total adivasi population of Wayanad. Kurichian and Mullu Kuruman are traditionally agricultural communities forming 35% of the total tribal population. By and large they are marginal farmers. Other tribes form nearly 1% of the total tribal population.

2.3.1.1. Paniyan

Paniyans are the single largest tribal community, forming 43.63% of the total tribal population of the district i.e. 18.24% of Kerala state. The community is found living in all the three blocks of the district and adjacent areas in Kozhikode, Kannur and Malappuram districts. They are also found in Gudallur Taluk of Nilgiri district in Tamil Nadu (IIMK 35-36).

The name Paniyan is derived from the word pani which means work. Paniyan is the man of work for others (Bindu 204, Luiz 218). Paniyans were bonded labourers attached to local landlords (Nair 56). There are references that they were bonded laborers even to land holding families of Mullu Kuruman and Kurichian tribes of Wayanad (IIMK 36). Traditionally they were involved with paddy cultivation and were living in hill slopes and paddy fields adjacent to the land belonging to the landlords (Nair 58-59). It is said that they were even sold by local landlords when land transactions were made. Even after the abolition of bonded labour, they were depending on their former landlords for support and employment (Velappan 36, Panoor 27).

With the arrival of coffee plantations in Wayanad by 19th century, they were used as labourers for clearing forests, and developing land (Luiz 219). However, despite being the largest tribal community, they do not form a major labor force in the plantation sector of the district today (Velappan 38). Their involvement was mainly with paddy cultivation (Bindu 205) but the conversion of paddy fields for other crops has reduced employment opportunities among them.

Rachael Santhosh (67) writes, "the Paniyan of Wayanad had witnessed the system of bonded labour even before the times of British Raj till eight decades ago. A kind of bonded labour system found be practiced in various parts of India, was seen only in Wayanad in Kerala and was called as Kundalpani or Nippupani. Kundalpani was actually a system of slavery under which the Paniyan and Adiya tribal were compelled to work for a particular Nair or Gounder or any other community".

Paniyans are one of the most vulnerable sections of tribal communities of Wayanad. This community has been detribalized considerably with traditional community structure declining over the years. Though Paniyans are the largest Adivasi community of the State/district they do not have adequate representation in the local bodies, in the leadership of local political parties and in government services. Tribal rehabilitation projects of the Government, intended mainly for the former bonded labourers, have not provided much benefit for the Paniyans.

2.3.1.2. Kurichiyan

Kurichiyans are found mainly in Mananthavady and Kalpetta Taluks of the district. They form the second largest (16.57%) tribal population of the district. Kurichiyans are settled agriculturists. They own land holdings and agriculture is their principal economic activity. Till recently the Kurichiyans were following joint family system and community heads had much authority over its

members. It still occupies an important role ceremonial aspect of community life.

Kurichiyans are handsome and light-skinned. They are called Brahmins among the tribes (Marykutty 29). They are very exclusive and practice untouchability and pollution. They bathe whenever an outsider intrudes in their midst (Marykutty 29). They are the aristocrats among the tribes occupying the highest social and economic position among the Wayanad tribes (Isac 95). The community claims a higher status over the rest of the tribe communities in Wayanad.

The community is known for its martial tradition (IIMK 36). They were in forefront in the anti-British struggle led by the Pazhassi Raja of Kottayam dynasty in 19th century (Isac 93). They are skilled bowmen (Marykutty 29). Many of the Kurichiyans who were independent farmers, owing substantial acreage of lands, have reasonably good representation in local decision-making bodies. Ms. P.K. Jayalashmi, the former minister for tribal welfare and youth affairs in the UDF government in Kerala, belongs to the Kurichiya tribe. Many of the community members are actively involved in party politics and have strong political affiliations.

2.3.2.3. Kuruman (Mullu Kuruman)

Mullu Kurumans are found mainly in Sultan Bathery Block. They form 15.58 % of the total tribal population of Wayanad. This Malayalam speaking community is believed to be the descendants of Vedas, the ancient rulers of Wayanad (IIMK 36). A majority of them are marginal farmers. Agriculture or agriculture labour is their predominant economic activity.

Mullu Kuruman has remarkably benefited from the welfare programmes of the state (IIMK 36). Many of the community members are active in the public life of Wayanad. The community has accepted modernity to a great extent and has detribalized fairly.

In comparison with other adivasi communities of Wayanad, they have better representation in the local leadership of the political parties, elected bodies and in government services.

The community is also found in adjoining areas of Gudallur Taluk of Nilgiri District of Tamil Nadu.

2.3.2.4. Kattunaickan

Kattunaickans constitute 9.63% of the total tribal population of the Wayanad. They are mainly found in the Sultan Bathery Block of the district. This community is classified as "Primitive Tribal Group" by the Government considering their relative isolation from other communities. The community, also known as Then Kurumba, was traditionally hunters and gatherers.

Till the beginning of the last century the community was leading more or less an independent life, depending on the forest resources. Even today collection of forest produces is their major economic activity. The community inhabits mainly within the forests or in the fringes. Those living within the forest cultivate in the areas allocated to them by the forest authorities. Shrinking forest resources and lessening opportunities in agriculture sector have substantially affected the community, making them one of the most vulnerable sections the Adivasi communities of the State (IIMK 37).

Owing to their relative isolation, the tribal structure of the community is fairly intact with very little outside influence. The community speaks a dialect of Kannada- Kattunaicka bhasha but younger generation can converse in Malayalam. In comparison with the other Adivasi communities of Wayanad, they are the least exposed to 'modernity'. Rajiv Gandhi Model Residential Higher Secondary School Noolpuzha is opened by the government exclusively for Kattunaicka students.

2.3.2.5. Adiyani

The Adiyani community forms 7.26% of the total tribal population of Wayanad (Census 2011). They are found mainly in Mananthavady block of the district. Luiz (27) reports that the name Adiyani derived from 'aru' (six) 'adi' (feet) to be kept away from other communities to avoid pollution from the Adiyas. Ethnographic accounts on Adiyans reveal that traditionally they were slaves to local landlords and later bonded labourers attached to these families (Luiz 27). Even in the seventies, bonded labour in its residual form existed among this community and community members had a "patron-client" relationship with their erstwhile landlords (Luiz 30, Nair 56). Adiyans do not have adequate representation in government services. They form one of the poorest sections of the Adivasi communities of Wayanad/Kerala. Majority of them are land-less.

Like most of the Adivasi communities of the Kerala, Adiyans also are being detribalized as a response to socio-economic transitions that the region is undergoing. Community members interact freely with the non-tribes in the locality and are receptive to their food habits, dress, habits, religious practices, language, etc. C.K. Janu, a prominent leader of the tribal movement in Kerala, hails from Adiya community.

Till the middle of the last century, traditional community leadership had played a very important role in Adiyani community. The role and functions of these traditional authorities have changed remarkably in recent years. Except for their symbolic role in the ritual/ceremonial life, they do not have significant influence on community members. Political leadership of the parties active in the community has taken up most of roles once performed by the traditional authorities.

2.3.2.6. Other Tribes

Urali Kurumans, (Uralis) form 2.41% of the total Adivasi population in Wayanad. They are found mainly in Sultan Bathery and Mananthavady Blocks of the district. Traditionally they were artisans involved with basketry and pottery. However, today most of the community members are agricultural labourers.

Other tribal communities in Wayanad include Tachanad Mooppan (1.07%), Wayanad Kadar (0.43%) and Karimpalan (0.11%), all three were recently included in the Scheduled Tribes list of Kerala. Majority of them are marginal peasants or agricultural labourers.

2.3.3. Comments about the Tribal Groups in Wayanad

Adiyans, Paniyans, Kattunaickans and Urali Kurumans form two third of the total tribal population of Wayanad. These are the most vulnerable sections of the adivasi communities of the district. July-August is the season of extreme poverty for all the communities, since there will not be any income from agricultural labour. To a significant section of these communities, free ration provided by the government is the only means for survival in the lean season (IIMK 40).

Though government provides free medical facilities, in most cases, these are not adequate enough to meet the health needs of the community. A vast majority of the tribes still have many unresolved problems especially landlessness in their traditional homeland and lack of means to an assured livelihood. Largest numbers of school dropouts belong to these communities. Similarly they lag behind in terms of health, education, income etc. Conditions of traditionally settled cultivators like Kurichiyans and Mullu Kurumans are relatively better than the rest of the Adivasi communities of the District. In terms of developmental indicators, they remain much ahead of the other Adivasi communities of Wayanad and are almost in par with general population of the district.

Like early settlers of Wayanad, there were instances in which Kurichiyans and Mullu Kurumans had patron-client relationship with Paniyas and Adiyas. Today Kurichians and Kurumans follow the agricultural practices of other settler farmers in Wayanad and cultivate new crops that include coffee, pepper and other crops common in Wayanad.

2.4. Existential Issues of Tribes in Wayanad

Social anthropologist M. Kunhaman (5) remarks that benevolent monarchs like Rajas of Travancore provided better protection of tribes than the elected democratic governments of Kerala. In the post-independence era, tribes of Kerala, especially in Wayanad, had been the losers, always living on the receiving end. Multiple handicaps pervade them for over half a century, of which, landlessness is the major one.

2.4.1. Land Issues

Traditionally, 'land' in the wider sense of the term formed the pivot of the tribal economy of Kerala (Kunhaman 468). However, the question of who owned the lands did not arise among the tribes so long as land was commonly owned. After the tribes reached the stage of slash-and-burn agriculture, each family within a tribe used to be allocated an area, by the headman according to its needs and ability to cultivate. That plot was cultivated for the subsistence of the family.

Isac (298) remarks that "it is difficult to separate adivasi's relationship with land and its resources from their culture and values. The communal ownership patterns, management and access to land and the social embeddedness inherent in their relationship with land still prevails among the Adivasi communities in Wayanad. Their joint cultivation practices, protection of kavus, reverence for their burial lands and their ritual practices around land were all evidence of a culture that centres on production of life than on commodities".

So long as the family remained within the tribal organisation and cultivated the plot, its occupancy or operational right over that plot remained undisturbed. Thus, while the tribe as a whole retained the 'ownership' right, the individual tribal family enjoyed the operational right. This type of institutional arrangement was possible because land was not, at that stage of evolution of the tribal economy, a limiting factor of production; labour alone constituted the scarce agent.

Land became 'property' and a commodity for buying and selling with the arrival of non-tribes, including the British and the settlers. Kunhaman (467) comments that in Wayanad, the hill-tribes were in a primitive state till the middle of the 18th century when they were dispossessed and enslaved by the immigrants from the plains. For the next one hundred years, they remained as agrarian slaves of non-tribal landlords.

With the development of plantations in Wayanad, commencing from the latter half of the 19th century, a process of proletarianisation of the hill tribes started, continuing through the early decades of the present century. However, feudal vestiges, such as bonded labour system, are still prevalent to some extent in this region and the tribes are subject to various kinds of exploitation even today.

2.4.2. Landlessness of Tribes

Around 30 per cent of the tribal households in the state are landless (Bijoy and Ravi Varman 1976). Landlessness is lowest in the former princely state of Travancore and Cochin (Bijoy 1976, Kunhaman 467). The dominant tribes in these three districts, viz, Kanikkar (Thiruvananthapuram) the Mala Arayan (Idukki and Kottayam), Muduvan (Idukki) and the Urali (Idukki and Kottayam) were the first to become settled agriculturists.

Bijoy and Ravi Varman (1976-77) describe the landlessness of tribes in Kerala as

"The proportion of landless tribal households is highest in the Malabar area, with the districts of Wayanad and Palakkad taking the lead. The Paniya and Adiya were traditionally slaves and had not owned any land in recent centuries. As a result of the large-scale influx of non-Adivasis, particularly from the former Travancore state, a sizeable chunk of arable land, which the Adivasi's had used for shifting cultivation, have been encroached upon depriving them of their only means of subsistence. ... Extensive tracts of tribal land were surreptitiously acquired or usurped by cultivators who migrated from the plains and the Adivasis were reduced to the position of landless serfs of these Hindu, Christian and Muslim exploiters. The greatest suffering has naturally been inflicted on the Paniya and Adiya."

Number of adivasi landless field labourers increased from 57 per cent to 61 per cent in the Wayanad region. The table below gives details about the landless tribes in 2001.

Table: 2.7. District wise landless tribal families [during the years 1976 & 2001]

District	No. of Tribal Families	
	1976	2001
Thiruvananthapuram	111	13
Kollam	420	68
Pathanamthitta	-	117
Alappuzha	-	68
Kottayam	383	153
Idukki	1104	190
Ernakulam	4	5

Thrissur	3	271
Palakkad	871	5389
Malappuram	629	339
Kozhikkode	6	226
Wayanad	-	14031
Kannur	18	1395
Kasaragod	-	226
TOTAL	3549	22491

Adivasi Master Plan Committee Report 2001, Government of Kerala;
Socio-economic Survey, 1976, Government of Kerala. Nithya (155).

An official enquiry conducted by the state government on instructions from the Supreme Court confirmed the existence of bonded labour in Kerala (Bejoy and Ravi Varman 1977). Bonded labour exists in Wayanad and that too in the colonies where they were re-habilitated by the government like Sugandhagiri Cardamom Project and Vattachira Collective Farm. Hydroelectric projects and dams have resulted in a swelling of the numbers of landless tribes. Wild life sanctuaries and national parks such as the Periyar and Wayanad sanctuaries, have all driven thousands of Adivasis from their hearths in a colonisation of the last few rich patches of forests which have been thrown open to tourism operators, both within and outside the state. The number of landless families alone increased from 3,549 in 1976 to 22,491 in 2001 despite a ban on land transfer - a seven fold increase (Bejoy and Ravi Varman 1977).

2.5. English Language Learning among Wayanad Tribes

Till nineties higher education in Wayanad was a big problem (IIMK 32-33). Most of the students had to go adjacent districts for their higher education needs. Now the situation is changed, as

the district has six first grade colleges, two polytechnic colleges, one ITI, four B.Ed. colleges and three teacher training institutes. Besides, there is an engineering college, a veterinary college and a college of Hotel Management in Wayanad.

There are a total of 301 Schools in this district, consisting of 149 Lower Primary Schools, 79 Upper Primary Schools, 29 High Schools, 38 Higher Secondary Schools including Vocational and 6 Special Schools. Wayanad is a single educational district with one Deputy Director, one DEO, and three AEOs. It has also a DIET located at Sulthan Bathery. There are 11 other schools including 1 Kendriya Vidyalaya, 1 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya and 8 CBSE and 1 ICSE Schools in this District (IIMK 32).

The list gives a satisfactory look compared to the situation in many of the tribal pockets elsewhere in India. But the question still remains, how far the tribe students are able to make use of these facilities and achieve in life? Do all tribes manage to educate their children despite odds? According to 2001 census, the literacy rate of Wayanad district was 91.4. At the same time, the tribal literacy rate was only 58.2. There was a gap of 33.2% (IIMK 34).

The backwardness of tribes in Wayanad seen in education is also reflected in their English language learning. English language is the door of opportunities to many for their survival and upward mobility. Tribal students will not be able to learn English effectively unless a conducive environment and pedagogic pattern is adopted in Wayanad schools.

Kerala is the most literate state in India with the best social indicators. Among its population, Kerala has less than 1.5% tribes. It is a very small number when compared with the rest of the people. But when compared with the non-tribes and their achievements in all spheres of life, the tribes are very backward. In education, occupation, land holding, economic self-sufficiency, social acceptability, opportunities etc the tribes are far behind the general population in the state.

Tribes are doubly disadvantaged in the state. Education is the tool for their elevation and empowerment. English learning would open new vistas of opportunities for these tribes. It will help them to discover themselves by critically analysing their predicament. Hence English education of tribal children will surely lead the way to their emancipation.

READING SKILLS AMONG TRIBE LEARNERS

There was a time when reading had been defined by referring to specific skills such as reading the Bible, understanding directions, or answering questions about text. Today, reading is said to be an activity in which a reconstruction process takes place through the interaction between the printed text and the reader. Some scholars consider reading as a 'psycho-linguistic guessing game' (Subramanian 109).

Reading is seen as a process of getting linguistic information through the medium of print. (Widdowson 58). The reader, through reading, retrieves the information conveyed by the writer. Written texts provide linguistic as well as contextual meaning. While the literal meaning is easy to be grasped, to understand the pragmatic meaning encoded in the text, one must have a rich exposure to the ethno-linguistic aspect of the reading material.

3.1. Reading: A Complex Process

Reading is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. According to Subramanian (110) the meaning a reader makes out of given text depends also on the knowledge, mood,

context and the inferential ability of the reader. Hence reading is said to be a complex activity.

It is more correct to say that texts have the potential for meaning rather than to say that texts make meaning. The reader approaches the text with a world of ideas and experiences of her/his own. The reader creates meaning with the help of information in the text. Consequently, comprehension entails different interpretation for different readers depending upon the different amount of prior knowledge each reader brings into the text. Thus reading is a very complex process in which the recognition and comprehension of written symbols are influenced by a variety of factors like perceptual skills, word analysis skills, experience, language backgrounds, the state of mind, the reading ability of the reader, the ability of anticipating information etc (Subramanian 111).

Reading is the most basic of all language skills. Reading provides access to other skills and knowledge, facilitates life-long learning, and opens doors to opportunity (McShane 3). Learning to read is a fundamental right of children in a changing world (Roskos et al. 5). To achieve at school and succeed in the world at large, children need to know how to read and write.

3.1.1. Reading Strategy and Reading Skill

Strategy is a systematic plan, consciously adapted and monitored, to improve one's performance in learning. Reading strategies are deliberate, goal-directed attempts to control and modify the reader's efforts to decode text, understand words, and construct meanings of text (Afflerbach et al. 364). The reader's deliberate control, goal-directedness, and awareness define a strategic action. Being strategic allows the reader to examine the strategy, to monitor its effectiveness, and to revise goals or means if necessary.

Skill is an acquired ability to perform well; proficiency. Reading skills are automatic actions that result in decoding and comprehension

with speed, efficiency, and fluency and usually occur without awareness of the components or control involved.

Strategic readers employ flexibility and adaptability of actions as they read a text. In contrast, reading skills operate without the reader's deliberate control or conscious awareness. While strategy is purposeful and planned, reading skill is automatic and spontaneous. This is a key difference between skill and strategy. Once the reader becomes so proficient in the skill, s/he does not even think of the strategy. Hence strategy is a kind of method employed to arrive at reading mastery.

3.2. Sub-skills of Reading

Reading skills involve many sub-skills. Phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, decoding, word identification, word recognition, substitution, word reorganization, inference, logical reasoning, re-creation, word formation, critical awareness, skimming, scanning, predicting, summarizing, monitoring etc. are only a few among them.

From among various sub-skills, the author has identified four sub-skills viz. word identification, substitution, inference and re-creation to assess the reading skills of the target group.

3.2.1. Word Identification Skills

Often the terms word identification, word recognition, and decoding are used interchangeably. Word recognition and word identification may be seen as the process of determining the pronunciation and some degree of meaning of an unknown word. For words that are in a reader's meaning vocabulary, unlocking the pronunciation leads to the word's meaning. If a printed word is not in a reader's meaning vocabulary, word-identification skills may allow access to the word's pronunciation, but not its meaning.

3.2.1.1. Familiarity with Print

According to Pikulski (n.p.), word identification has two parts: familiarity with print and phonemic awareness. Some children have many early experiences with language, such as the experience of having someone read to them regularly. These children may have some concept of what printed words and letters are. As a result of this, they may realize that the print on a page is the source of the text information or know that a reader looks at the printed stuff from left to right. Those children who have had limited preschool experiences with printed language, stand in need of concept of print being taught to them.

3.2.1.2. Letter Names

One of the strongest research findings in the field of reading is the high correlation between knowledge of letter names and success in learning to read (Adams & Pikulski 12). Young children need to develop the concept that printed words are composed of letters; they then can be taught letter names if they don't come to school knowing them. Teaching children letter names can facilitate memory for the forms or shapes of letters and can serve as a mnemonic for letter-sound associations or phonics (Adams & Pikulski 14).

Most kindergarten children learn letter names without difficulty. Many teachers introduce letter names by teaching emerging readers to sing the alphabet song. Thus, children often learn the names first and then attach them to the letter forms. Knowing letter names appears to facilitate the development of word-recognition skills (Pikulski n.p.).

3.2.1.3. Phonemic Awareness

On learning to read, children pick up phonemic awareness, that is, spoken words are composed of a limited number of identifiable,

individual sounds or phonemes. Phonemic awareness is both the most powerful predictor of success in beginning reading, and a necessary prerequisite for learning to read (NRP 9). Learning such skills leads to significantly greater success in learning to read.

3.2.1.4. Word Identification Strategies

There are four strategies in the word identification process such as decoding, analogizing, predicting, and recognizing whole words by sight. Decoding is the ability to pronounce the words as the reader encounters them in the text (Samuels 22). Analogizing involves using known words or word parts as an aid for identifying unknown words. A store of easily recognized words is essential to reading words by analogy. As a reader's skill increases, the brain can make easy use of this information to figure out unfamiliar words. Predicting involves using letter clues, the surrounding context, and knowledge about syntax to guess what a word might be. Surrounding words, sentences, or pictures may also help narrow the reader's guess.

Those children who experience difficulties in word recognition are likely to spend more time decoding words (Cunningham and Stanovich 137). As a result, they read fewer words than more proficient readers. As a result they are likely to make smaller gains in reading comprehension and overall reading proficiency. Struggling readers benefit from meaningful, targeted instruction in word recognition and word study.

3.2.1.5. Identification and Tribal Students

The low literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes is a serious threat to Indian education. Lack of proficiency in English language is identified as a major obstacle to the education of tribal learners. The inability to read the texts is identified as a serious problem of tribal learners. Many tribe learners of 8th grade are not able to identify the alphabets and perceive the texts. The lack of training

in 'phonemic awareness' and 'phonics' methods in reading are identified as the root cause of learning deficiency (Varghese and Nagaraj, 'ELT' 38).

Assessing the possibilities of direct instruction methods for tribal learners, Ashitha and Nagaraj state that "tribal learners are highly behind their peers in literary development. Reading deficiency is identified as another cause of the problem. Lack of script in tribal mother-tongue brings in learners unfamiliarity with text and symbols... The learners are introduced to texts without the teaching of sounds and symbols" (Varghese and Nagaraj, *DI* 170-176).

3.2.2. Substitution Skills

Substitution is a sub-skill in the process of reading and writing, where the reader or writer tries to substitute one word or phrase with another of the same meaning. Substitution skill of a person can be tested by giving a number of choices, and asking to select the most appropriate word or phrase for the same. Children may have very limited skill for substitution in the beginning of language acquisition. Gradually they pick up the skill of substitution to do it with ease and accuracy.

3.2.2.1. Importance of Substitution Skills in Reading

When English is taught to children, early processing systems in literacy need to be flexible and tentative. Children work slowly at first; gradually becoming quicker and learning to use more complex networks of information. It is found that children use different substitution behaviours like meaning, structure, visual information etc. Knowing how to substitute words and phrases marks the fine quality of a good reader. One who is agile in substitution ought to be a mature reader.

3.2.2.2. Tribal ELT Research on Substitution Skills

Mackenzie (194) and Jhingran (1-2) analysed the English language acquisition modes of tribal students in India. It was found that by class 5, some children can read standard 2-level texts, but with little understanding, and most are unable to answer or converse in school language. Most of the tribe ELLs cannot score a single mark on language tests. Children struggle to understand, often failing to learn either the school language or the language of their communities, failing also to learn basic skills and concepts and achievement levels are low.

Tribal students struggle to identify and substitute simple sentence structures. Jhingran (4) says that school itself is unfamiliar and the content of the curriculum and the textbooks are culturally distant to the tribal child, which result in a lack of interest as well as difficulty in comprehending.

3.2.3. Inference Skill

The language of any text, spoken or written, is not completely explicit. Deeper comprehension requires that the reader makes inferences necessary for comprehension. Studies have established that the ability to draw inferences predetermines reading skills. Poor inferencing causes poor comprehension and not vice-versa (Kispal 8-10).

Inference is a higher order skill, which cannot be acquired without the basic language skills. According to Grellet (6), inference means making use of syntactic, logical and cultural clues to attain the meaning of the target text. While teaching reading, rather than teacher explaining everything to students, they should discover the context and meaning themselves. In order to succeed, they need to be trained to make quick inferences (Grellet 5). Students are very often able to find the meaning of unknown words from the context.

3.2.3.1. Types of Inferences

British researchers Cain and Oakhill (229) made a distinction between text-connecting or inter-sentence inferences and gap-filling inferences. Inter-sentence / text-connecting inferences establish cohesion between sentences and involve integration of textual information. These are also known as coherence inferences. Coherence inferences maintain a coherent text and involve adding unstated but important information.

Using information from outside the text is known as gap-filling inferences. They employ reader's existing background knowledge (Kispaal 8). Local inferences create a coherent representation at the local level of sentences and paragraphs; while global inferences are those which create a coherent representation covering the whole text (Kispaal 9). The reader needs to infer overarching ideas about the theme, main point or moral of a text by drawing on local pieces of information.

3.2.3.2. Importance of Inference Skills in Reading

According to Lancouchová (15), inference is essential for effective reading because the conventional meaning of words or collocations are not always clear and the reader is often confused about the intended message of the writer. When dealing with a new text, it is better not to explain the difficult words to the learners beforehand. Students should be encouraged to make a guess at the meaning of the words they do not know rather than look them up in a dictionary. The first step of teaching procedure should always include working out the solution by the students on their own. Once the students reach the level of fluency, they think independently and make valid logical conclusions and inferences from reading tasks. This means that inference skills are vital to develop from the very beginning (Grellet 18).

3.2.3.3. Inference Skill of Tribal Students

A structured pedagogy and systematic instruction help to improve basic language skills of learners that are essential for higher achievement (Ashitha & Nagaraj 'DI' 170). It implies the teaching of basic reading skills and prepares learners for higher order skills. Inference skill, which is a higher order skill, will be learnt by tribal students if they are trained well with the basic skills in English language.

3.2.4. Re-creation Skill

'Creation' in literature refers to an original product of the mind, especially an imaginative artistic work. In language learning, creation encompasses the activity of producing new words and new ideas in the process of reading, writing or speaking. It implies an original contribution from the speaker/reader/writer.

While the word identification, phonemic awareness, grammar etc. fall in the primary part of text construction, the creativity and style remain ever vibrant and add a finish to language.

3.2.4.1. Importance of Re-creation Skills

Skill of creation/re-creation provides satisfactory evidence to the acquisition of literacy skills. Creation/re-creation includes finding out a new word/phrase to supplant another one in the text. Creation/re-creation calls for innovation from the part of the language user, and demands ability to handle vocabulary and substitution. Finding synonyms and antonyms, forming questions, tags, re-structuring of sentences etc. are part of creation skills.

3.2.4.2. Re-creation Skills in Tribal ELT

Tribal students of Chhattisgarh were subjected to a case study by Baghel and Nigam (3). They suggest that a language learning environment should be created in the class and the learner

should be encouraged to explore the language in use outside the classroom. Tribal learners are capable of learning English if effective opportunities are provided to them. They would develop language skills, especially creativity skills, if bilingually proficient teachers, in the mother tongue of children and English are made available (Baghel and Nigam 4). The activities and assignments should demand children to move beyond the textbook and the classrooms to find the language in use.

Discussing reading skills in the Indian class rooms, Sinha (1) remarks that when stories or other texts are used only to focus on language components excluding meaning, children never learn to engage with the meaning of the text. This disengagement can lead to a loss of motivation to read. In India, quite often, due to this approach in schools, children do not even realize that they should look for meaning. For them, reading in the early years is an exercise in meaninglessness. Sinha (3) argues that postponement of comprehension can prove costly as disengagement with texts can set in and prove hard to rectify. Children have to be trained to develop the firm belief that reading is something sensible and they should be able to use literacy in a productive manner.

3.3. Reading Models: An Overview

There is a sequence of skill development consistent with language learning principles and human growth patterns (Hudson 35). In that sense, learning to read should follow the sequence of four skills. Human beings learn to listen and speak before they learn to read and write. In order to build up reading skills, following L1 acquisition patterns, learner should be exposed to listening activities first. The natural order should be listening, speaking, reading and writing. All the four are not separate entities, rather are related and occur parallel in L2 acquisition.

Some of the important approaches in reading are described below.

3.3.1. Bottom-up approach

According to the Bottom-up approach, a reader constructs meaning by processing the text into phonemic units representing lexical meaning, and then builds the meaning in a linear manner. The key feature of reading is the phoneme-grapheme correspondence notions, through which the reader reconstructs an existing message (Hudson 37). Development and application of automaticity in reading skills are applied in a linear manner. In other words, as reading skills become automatic, they require less attention.

As reading is a process based on decoding and comprehending, the decoding process becomes more automatic, and readers place more attention on the comprehension. The reader does not bypass the process of phoneme-grapheme correspondence, but rather, thanks to the rapid processing of the reading material and the recognition of words, more cognitive room becomes available for comprehending. That makes reading easier and less complex actually, and in that way the reader might get the gist of the text much faster.

3.3.2. Top-down Approach

Hudson (39) says that in the Top-down approach a reader perceives the text with conceptualizations above the textual level, and then works down to text itself. It means that top-down processing is more complex than it is suggested. Contextual information can come from many different sources, such as analogy with a previous situation or from the meaning that has been built up so far.

While the bottom-up approach is linear, this model relies on the graphemes to attain the meaning. As the reader makes predictions about the text, s/he uses printed material to confirm or disconfirm his/her guesses. In this way an active process takes place and the reader conceptualizes internally how language is processed.

3.3.3. Interactive Approach or Schema Theory

According to the interactive approach, the key for reading lies in the cognitive process, the reader's interaction with the information in the text and his/her schemata. A schema as the organized knowledge that one already has about people, places, things, and events (Gilakjani and Ahmadi 141). The goal of schema theory is to describe interaction between what is in the text and how that information is shaped and stored by the reader. The underlying assumption is that meaning does not lie solely in the print itself, but interacts with the cognitive structure or schemata already present in the reader's mind. These schemata represent the framework for understanding new information (Gilakjani and Ahmadi 142).

A particular reader's interpretation of a printed message is influenced by the reader's personal background and history, knowledge, and the beliefs which are brought to bear in constructing schemata to provide the interpretative framework for comprehending discourse.

3.3.4. Minimal Principle of Reading Comprehension

Royer and Cunningham (3) presented the minimal principle of reading comprehension, which is similar to the schema mentioned above. The principle is that the act of comprehension entails an interaction between an incoming linguistic message and the comprehender's world knowledge. The reader's prior knowledge plays a part in the perceptual aspects of the reading process. This would include activities such as identifying the basic features in letters, attaching speech sounds to particular letter and spelling patterns, and identifying words and word meanings.

Every reader carries a distinct mental dictionary and an encyclopaedia. A reader's dictionary consists of information about words, with each word having three entries: the pronunciation, syntactic category, and the meaning. While the encyclopaedia contains the individual's entire world knowledge as it relates to

words. The simple form of the minimal comprehension principle suggests that the reader looks up the meaning for each word in the dictionary and then strings the meaning of the individual words together to form the “comprehended” message.

3.3.5. The Matthew Effects

Cunningham and Stanovich (137) explain the reciprocal influences of reading achievement through discussions of so-called “Matthew effects” in academic achievement. This notion appears to be more valid in the case of tribal learners of Wayanad, who are disadvantaged in numerous ways—socially, economically, educationally, environmentally, psychologically, linguistically and aesthetically (Dorairaj 109).

The term “Matthew effects” is taken from the Biblical passage that describes a rich-get-richer and poor-get-poorer phenomenon (Matthew 25:29). Applying this concept to reading, very early in the reading process, poor readers, who experience greater difficulty in reading initially, are less likely to get exposed to read tougher texts than their more skilled peers.

The combination of deficient decoding skills, lack of practice, and difficult materials results in unrewarding early reading experiences. That will in turn lead to less involvement in reading related activities. Lack of exposure and practice on the part of the less skilled reader delays the development of automaticity and speed at the word recognition level. Slow word recognition processes consume those cognitive resources that should be allocated to comprehension. Thus, reading for meaning is hindered and unrewarding reading experiences multiply. Children with disparity in the reading experiences might face many other obstacles for their future reading and cognitive development (Cunningham and Stanovich 139). The Matthew Effect is highly relevant and applicable in the case of tribal students of Wayanad (John and Subramanian 77).

3.4. National Reading Panel 2000 (NRP)

The NRP Report is a consensus document of U.S. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development based on the best judgments of a diverse group of experts in reading research and reading instruction. The NRP Committee identified and summarized research literature relevant to the critical skills, environments, and early developmental interactions that are instrumental in the acquisition of beginning reading skills.

3.4.1. Research Findings of NRP

NRP (<http://nichd.nih.gov>) that worked in six groups identified the following skills such as print awareness, phonological/phonemic awareness, phonics/decoding, vocabulary, reading fluency and comprehension/critical literacy as most important in developing reading in children.

Print awareness includes knowing that the print on the page represents the words that can be read aloud and distinguishing between various forms and purposes of print. Phonological/phonemic awareness is the understanding that words and syllables can be broken down into smaller units or phonemes. Poor phonemic awareness is a major underlying cause of reading difficulty. Phonics/decoding involves a consistent strategy to apply sound-symbol relationships to assist in the identification of unfamiliar words.

A reader's understanding comes chiefly from his or her vocabulary base. Vocabulary development can be achieved through reading, direct instruction and student-centred activities.

During the fluency stage, the student continues to work on decoding skills to the point where the child becomes unglued from the print. Achieving speed and accuracy in recognizing words is reading fluency. Comprehension/critical literacy involves understanding what is read, what is meant, and what is implied.

3.5. The Reading Process

There are many strategies and styles used in the reading process. Strategies are techniques, or routines that enable students to learn to solve problems and complete tasks independently. Different reading styles include effective reading, poor reading etc. which are briefly discussed below.

3.5.1. Effective Reading

Proficiency of the reader and the nature of the reading material are said to determine the effectiveness of reading (Subramanian 2002). The context of reading, words employed in the text, reader's knowledge, her/his personal interest and reading ability are some of the factors that characterize effective reading.

Proficient reading depends upon several interacting factors like prior knowledge and word recognition that combine and interact in a dynamic way. Proficient reading also relies on the techniques the reader adapts, the reading speed and her/his word recognition power.

3.5.2. Poor Reading

It is found that the rate of reading would drop to the tenth of its formal reading speed, if the readers were forced to adopt a "letter by letter" strategy. The reading ability normally fails due to the inability of the readers in the recognition of words and the speed of reading. Apart from the word recognition, the knowledge over the subject matter also controls the speed of reading.

Physical processes and mental processes get correlated in reading. The thinking process about the text should actively occur at a normal speed so as to achieve the reading speed. Otherwise the reader may not achieve the desired ability in decoding the information. Poor reading occurs due to the lack of vocabulary power and reading practice of the readers, the reader's speed

and the time they fix on the words in the text and the memory constraints that are encountered during the process of reading.

3.5.3. Science of the Reading Process

The written matter exists in the text in the form of symbols or graphemes or in other texts forms. While reading, the eyes move from left to right, right to left, top to bottom etc. The visual impressions are received by the eyes, the information received is processed by the mind to find out the meaning of the symbols or words, and the meaning is derived. If the symbols are familiar to the reader, then symbols will be assigned meanings quickly. Better readers make fewer eye movements in oral reading than poor readers (Subramanian 114).

3.5.4. Reading for Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from text (Woolley 15). The goal, therefore, is to gain an overall understanding of what is described in the text rather than to obtain meaning from isolated words or sentences. Four main types of comprehension strategies, such as preparational, organizational, elaboration and monitoring may be identified. Preparational strategies are those that activate prior knowledge about a particular topic or subject. This method is used to get students thinking about the topic they are about to work on.

The process of selecting important details and building relationships from them is described as organizational strategies. These strategies include: identifying the main idea and topic sentences, classifying information, deciding which information is relevant, sequencing and summarizing. Elaboration involves forming connections between the text and the reader's background knowledge of the subject. Making inferences, picturing images and asking questions are all types of elaboration strategies. Monitoring is an advanced technique that involves a great deal of independent thinking. It

occurs when a reader is aware that s/he does not understand what was just read. It is to know how to go back and find a way to gain understanding of the topic.

The mental ability of the reader plays a vital role to get the information from the printed material. According to Subramanian (115), some of the factors that affect reading comprehension are reader's knowledge in the identification of words and meaning of the vocabularies in language; reader's ability in understanding the different styles of writing; reader's favour in language skills; the knowledge in ethnography of reading; knowledge in pragmatics of reading; and knowledge on mechanics of reading.

3.5.5. Comprehensibility and Reader Autonomy

According to Amritavalli (24), autonomy in reading is the hallmark of successful learners of English. Success in SL learning appears to correlate with two sets of variables vested in the learner such as: i) motivation and attitude; and ii) 'unconscious acquisition'.

Amritavalli (25) prefers learner-chosen texts as they are more 'authentic'. Authenticity is 'not a quality residing in instances of language but... a quality which is bestowed on them, created by the response of the receiver.' Learner-chosen instructional materials are authentic in this sense. They proceed from a 'response from the receiver' right from the beginning, in the very act of the choice of material. Hence, in choosing the texts for reading comprehension learner autonomy is argued for (Amritavalli 26).

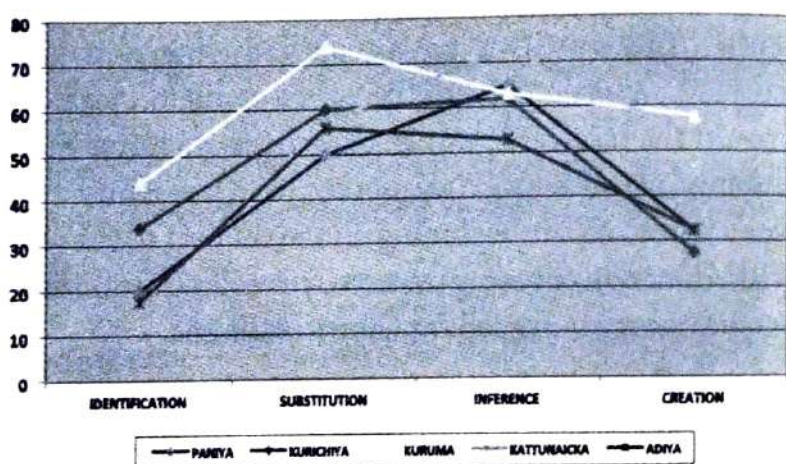
3.6. Analysis of Reading Comprehension

Tribal children of Wayanad speak their tribal dialects (adivasi bhasha) at home, such as Paniya, Kurichiya, Kuruma, Kattunaicka and Adiya. When a tribal student is made to join the school, s/he has to grapple with Malayalam, which is the official state language, and later with English, in the class rooms.

In the large class rooms, where it is often difficult to provide individual attention, tribal students find it hard to follow the language lessons. Usually s/he lacks the facility of parental or other support in language learning. Due to all these reasons, along with the socio-economic deprivation they face at home and school, they lag behind in language vis-à-vis English literacy skills.

Reading Skills - Total Score of 40 Students

	Paniya (40x15)	Kurichiya (40x15)	Kuruma (40x15)	Kattunaicka (40x15)	Adiya (40x15)
Identification	20	34	44	16.5	17.5
Substitution	50	60	74	57.5	56
Inference	65	62	63	73	53
Re-Creation	32.5	27.5	57.5	22.5	32.5
Tribe Total	121 (20.17%)	141 (23.5%)	179 (29.83%)	127 (21.17%)	119 (19.83%)



The graph shows that all tribal students are generally weak in reading skills. The highest tribe-wise total score is for Kuruma tribe- 29.83%. The lowest score in reading is for Adiya and Paniya tribes with 19.83% and 20.17% respectively. No tribe has scored above 30% for reading skills.

Each of the skills will be analyzed separately to find out the status of their skills and to search for possible solutions to the problem.

3.6.1. Tribal Students and Identification Skills

Every child has the capacity to succeed in school and in life. Yet many children, mostly tribes, fail to meet their potential. Why do the majority of the tribal students fail to achieve in studies and life? The deplorable situation of the tribal population in Wayanad, leading a life far behind the mainstream, makes us to rethink and revisit the pattern of learning in the schools generally, and English literacy skills in particular.

Failure of the tribes in academic achievement seems to be due to various reasons. One among the most important reasons is failure in acquiring learning skills, especially language literacy skills such as reading and writing.

Identification or word recognition skill is basic to reading comprehension. A student who is not properly trained in reading, especially in identification skills, cannot achieve on par with a student who is properly trained in reading. While most of the students of other communities are given systematic and continuously monitored training in reading from the kindergarten level onwards, or even before, through the 'read aloud' stories at home etc., the tribal students are left to learn all these skills from the class room in the under-managed government-run schools. Usually no one bothers about their skills. Teachers are busy completing the portion and conducting the examinations as per the academic calendar. While other students with a better home-background advance in studies, the tribal students grow from bad to worse in language skills, with cumulative disadvantages in English literacy, as they grow up in age.

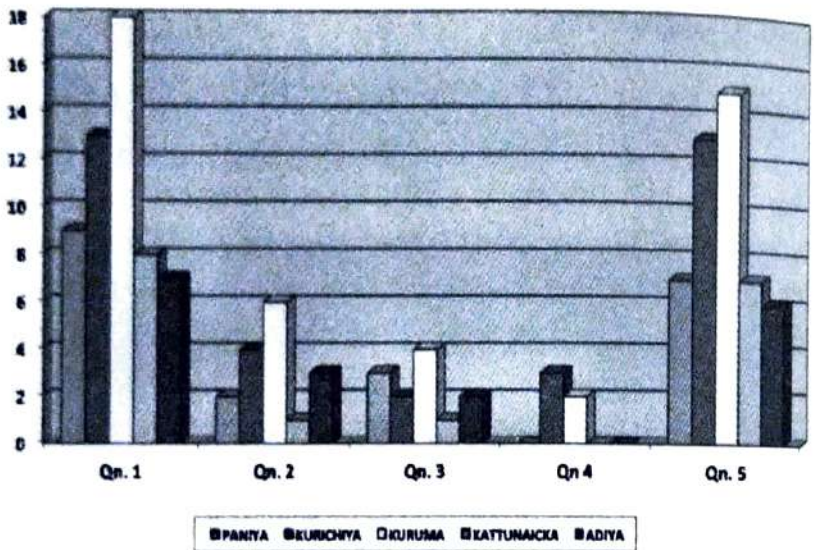
Hence it is high time to intervene in the English language education of the tribal students in Wayanad by introducing a balanced and context based tribal ELT pedagogy for their success in school and

society. The following analysis of identification skills would throw more light into the significance of the matter.

3.6.1.2. Inter-Tribe Comparison of Word Identification Skill

Qn.No.	Paniya (40)	Kurichiya (40)	Kuruma (40)	Kattunaicka (40)	Adiya (40)
I	9(22.5%)	13(32.5%)	18(45%)	8(20%)	7(17.5%)
II	2(5%)	4(10%)	6(15%)	1(2.5%)	3(7.5%)
III	3(7.5%)	2(5%)	4(10%)	1(2.5%)	2(5%)
IV	0(0%)	3(7.5%)	2(5%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
V	7(17.5%)	13(32.5%)	15(37.5%)	7(17.5%)	6(15%)

SUCCESS IN IDENTIFICATION SKILLS OF ALL TRIBES



3.6.1.3. Statistical Analysis Using ANOVA

IDENTIFICATION SKILL OF FIVE TRIBES					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	979.200	4	244.800	3.810	.005
Within Groups	12528.675	195	64.250		
Total	13507.875	199			

In the above SPSS analysis, significance value is .005. Hence null hypothesis is accepted. Inference: there is no significant difference between identification skills among tribes. The analysis reveals the fact that all five tribes have done so badly that there is no significant difference in the inter-tribe wise performance of identification.

Since the tribal students are very weak in identification skill, their reading skill also ought to be weak. Hence they need to be trained in the basic word identification skills, which should have taken place in their pre-primary and primary levels. All the tribes performed poorly in the identification skill analysis; hence the need for tribe learners to be trained in the basic word identification skills.

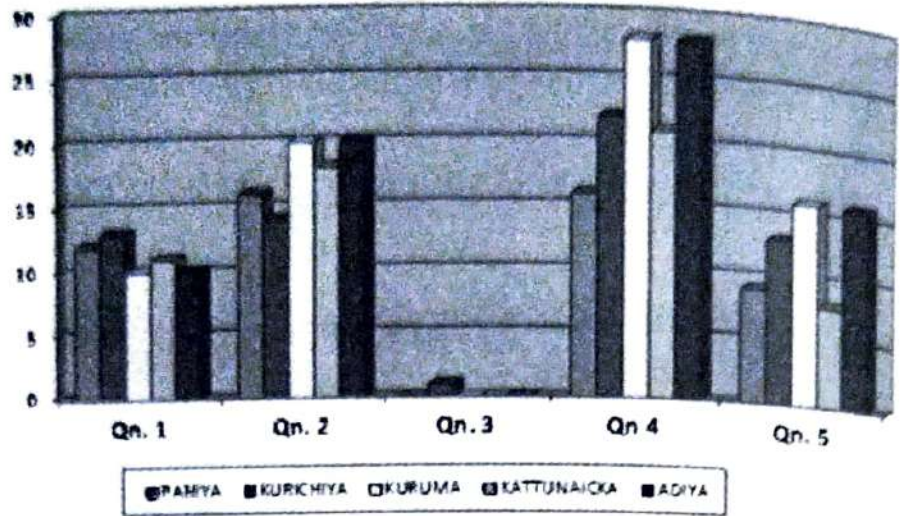
3.6.2. Achievement in Substitution Skills

There were five questions asked to test the substitution skills of the students. These were multiple choice questions (MCQ). All the five answers are examined below one by one.

Qn. No.	Paniya (40)	Kurichiya (40)	Kuruma (40)	Kattunaicka (40)	Adiya (40)
I	12(30%)	13(32.5%)	10(25%)	11(27.5%)	10(25%)
II	16(40%)	14(35%)	20(50%)	18(45%)	20(50%)
III	0(0%)	1(2.5%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
IV	16(40%)	22(55%)	28(70%)	21(52.5%)	28(70%)
V	9(22.5%)	13(32.5%)	16(40%)	8(20%)	16(40%)

SUCCESS IN SUBSTITUTION SKILLS OF ALL TRIBES

The table gives a general impression that tribal students are generally weak in substitution skills. There are many right answers for question number 4. Qns. 1, 2 and 5 are answered in a below average manner. The third question did not receive any right answer from any student, except one. Kuruma along with Paniya, Kattunaicka and Adiya scored zero score for the third question.



3.6.2.1. Statistical Analysis using ANOVA

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	472.680	4	118.170	3.097	.017
Within Groups	7440.075	195	38.154		
Total	7912.755	199			

Significance value is .017. Hence null hypothesis is accepted. Inference is that there is no significant difference between substitution skills among tribes. This shows that all groups need to improve in substitution skills.

The above analysis of substitution skill of tribal students of Wayanad clearly reveals the fact all the tribes are generally weak in substitution skill. It also evidences that they are weak in grammar. Verb is said to be the core of a sentence. The entire group of tribes, irrespective of the denomination, failed to answer the question to write the third person singular simple present tense of the verb 'run'. This fact points to the gravity of the problem of English language deficiency of the group. It is sad to note that they have not yet mastered even the basics of English language.

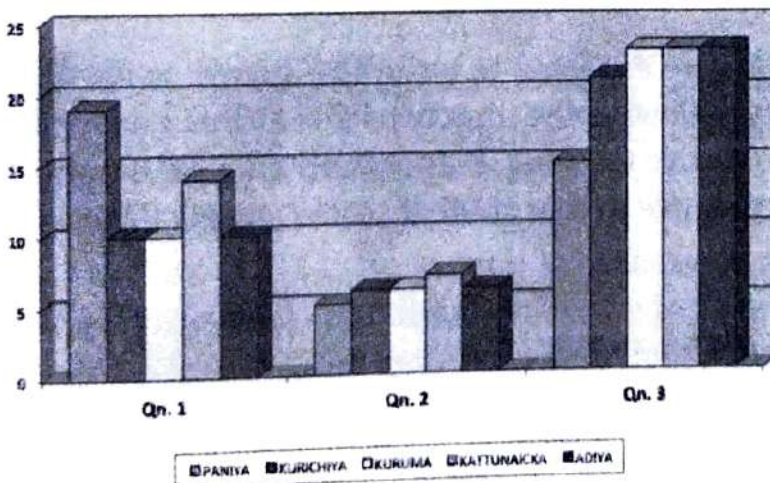
3.6.3. Achievement in Inference Skills

There were three questions asked in reading comprehension to test the inference skills of the students. Students were expected to find out the answer from the given poem using their comprehension and logical skills. This was to test their skills in logical reasoning or inference. All the three answers are examined here one by one.

Qn. No.	Paniya (40)	Kurichiya (40)	Kuruma (40)	Kattunaicka (40)	Adiya (40)
I	19(47.5%)	10(25%)	10(25%)	14(35%)	10(25%)
II	5(12.5%)	6(15%)	6(15%)	7(17.5%)	6(15%)
III	15(37.5%)	21(52.5%)	23(57.5%)	23(57.5%)	23(57.5%)

The table gives a general impression that tribal students are generally weak in inference skills. Though, they are generally weak, there are many students who could make some inferences correctly. There are many answers for question number 3 answered in an average manner. The second question received about five scores only in almost all the groups. Tribal students lack the basic language skills. It is on these basic skills, higher order skills like inference is built up. We may naturally conclude that, if given proper training in basic English and reading comprehension, tribal students can develop inference skills like any other group of language learners in the world.

SUCCESS IN INFERENCE SKILLS OF ALL TRIBES



3.6.3.1. Statistical Analysis of Inference Skills- ANOVA

Infervalue	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	293.000	4	73.250	1.053	.381
Within Groups	13566.875	195	69.574		
Total	13859.875	199			

Significance value is .381. Hence null hypothesis is rejected. Inference is that there is a significant difference in inference skill among five tribes. Some tribes are better than others in inference skills.

Inference skill is essential to make any logical conclusion from reading. For reading comprehension, along with decoding of words, comprehension also should take place. Prediction is an essential quality of good reading. The above analysis makes it clear that tribal students are backward in inference skill. This shows that they are slow in logical reasoning, or that they are not given any training for tackling higher order thinking skill questions in the classes.

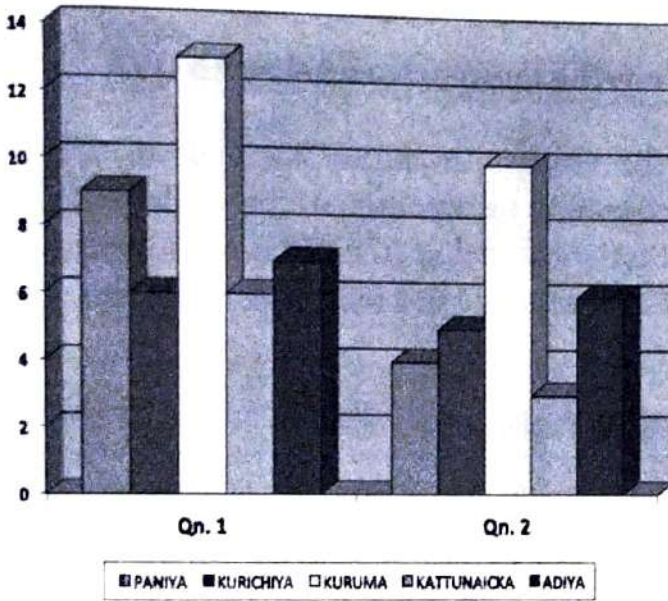
3.6.4. Achievement in Re-creation Skills

Two questions asked in reading section were dedicated to test the re-creation skills of the target students. Since creativity is a higher order skill, which one would be able to perform only when s/he has a sound grasp of the basic language skills, questions were limited.

Students were expected to write the answer using their own creativity, following the directions given. This was to test their skills in creative thinking. Purposefully enough, questions were kept very simple so that students could answer them with ease.

Qn. No.	Paniya (40)	Kurichiya (40)	Kuruma (40)	Kattunaicka (40)	Adiya (40)
I	9(22.5%)	6(15%)	13(32.5%)	6(15%)	7(17.5%)
II	4(10%)	5(12.5%)	10(25%)	3(7.5%)	6(15%)

SUCCESS IN RE-CREATION SKILLS OF ALL TRIBES



3.6.4.1. Statistical Analysis of Re-creation Skills- ANOVA

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	652.500	4	163.125	1.691	.154
Within Groups	18810.000	195	96.462		
Total	19462.500	199			

Significance value is .154. Hence null hypothesis is rejected. Inference is that there is significant difference in creation skill among tribes. We need to address the lacunae found in all three tribes and train all of them.

Creativity is essential for reading and writing. Once the reader has mastered decoding skills, s/he begins to comprehend using all his skills. Creative skills are required to think divergently on a text and to gather the complete meaning of a given text. Tribal students seem to be very weak in creative skills with just 17% score. Hence steps should be taken to give them the basic skills of language. Creative skills grow naturally as one grows from the initial level of language learning. Tribe students stand in need of intensive training in re-creation skill.

3.7. Inter-tribe Comparison using ANOVA

Based on the research, the author has made an inter-skill analysis within each tribe to testify whether the whole group has weakness in skills. Statistical tool of ANOVA is used for this assessment. Details of analysis of all five tribes, one after the other are given below.

3.7.1. Paniya Tribe

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1893.619	3	631.206	11.425	.000
Within Groups	8618.875	156	55.249		
Total	10512.494	159			

Significant value is .000. According to the principle of null hypothesis, there is no significant difference between reading skills among Paniya students. All Paniya students seem to be weak in all reading skills. Paniya tribe is a former slave-tribe who are most marginalized and impoverished. The result evidences their linguistic backwardness.

3.7.2. Kurichiya Tribe

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	9530.325	3	3176.775	18.414	.000
Within Groups	26913.155	156	172.520		
Total	36443.480	159			

Significant value is .000. According to the principle of null hypothesis, there is no significant difference between reading skills among Kurichiya students. Kurichiya tribe is considered to be a group in the higher strata of tribal communities, living almost on par with people of non-tribal communities. However, in the English reading comprehension, all Kurichiya students seem to be weak. Hence all of them require training in developing the language skills.

3.7.3. Kuruma Tribe

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	182.550	3	60.850	.708	.548
Within Groups	13400.350	156	85.900		
Total	13582.900	159			

Significant value is .540. Hence null hypothesis is rejected. There is significant difference between reading skills among Kuruma students. Some Kuruma students do comparatively better than a few of them. Even in the inter-tribal comparison of skills, Kuruma students seem to top the tests.

3.7.4. Kattunaicka Tribe

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1893.619	3	631.206	11.425	.000
Within Groups	8618.875	156	55.249		
Total	10512.494	159			

Significance value is .000. According to the principle of null hypothesis, there is no significant difference between reading skills among Kattunaicka students. Kattunaicka is a primitive tribe who lived in dense forests, some of them even today. All Kattunaicka students seem to be weak in reading skills. In the interaction with the group of Kattunaicka students in schools, I have directly experienced the aspirational motivation of the

Kattunaicka students, who could be effectively trained in English literacy levels with systematic approaches.

3.7.5. Adiya Tribe

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	896.550	3	298.850	5.268	.002
Within Groups	8849.850	156	56.730		
Total	9746.400	159			

Significance value is .002. There is no significant difference in reading skills among Adiya students. All of them are weak in reading comprehension.

3.8. Gender wise Analysis of Reading Achievements using 't-test'

It is generally observed that girls do better than boys at the school level. A comparative analysis of boys and girls among the tribes is given below using the statistical tool 't test'. There are 20 boys and 20 girls in each of the samples.

3.8.1. Paniya

GROUP STATISTICS					
F2	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
M	20	2.7500	2.19149	.49003	.248
F	20	3.7000	2.88554	.64523	.249

Mean of boys is 2.75 while that of the girls is 3.7. Standard deviation of the boys is 2.19149 while that of the girls is 2.88554. The Significance value is .248. Hence null hypothesis is rejected. There is significant difference between reading skill between boys and girls among Paniya students. Reading calibre of girls is higher than boys.

3.8.2. Kurichiya

GROUP STATISTICS						
	F2	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
F11	M	20	2.8250	2.49882	.55875	.024
	F	20	5.1000	3.51912	.78690	.024

Mean of boys is 2.825 while that of the girls is 5.1. Standard deviation of the boys is 2.49882 while that of the girls is 3.51912. The Significance value is .024. Hence null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference between reading skill between boys and girls among Kurichiya students.

3.8.3. Kuruma

GROUP STATISTICS						
	F2	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
F11	M	23	5.0000	3.32005	.69228	.566
	F	17	4.3824	3.34724	.81183	.566

Mean of boys is 5 while that of the girls is 4.3824. Standard deviation of the boys is 3.32005 while that of the girls is 3.34724. The Significance value is .566. Hence null hypothesis is rejected. There is significant difference between reading skill between boys and girls among Kuruma students. Mean reading calibre of boys is higher than girls.

3.8.4. Kattunaicka

GROUP STATISTICS						
	F2	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
F11	M	15	4.1667	2.72336	.70317	.018
	F	25	2.3800	1.83303	.36661	.018

Mean of boys is 4.1667 while that of the girls is 2.3800. Standard deviation of the boys is 2.72336 while that of the girls is 1.83303. The Significance value is .018. Hence null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference between reading skill between boys and girls among Kattunaicka students.

3.8.5. Adiya

GROUP STATISTICS					
F2	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
F11 M	17	2.3235	2.46184	.59708	.164
F	23	3.4348	2.44161	.50911	.164

Mean of boys is 2.3235 while that of the girls is 3.4348. Standard deviation of the boys is 2.46184 while that of the girls is 2.44161. The Significance value is .164. Hence null hypothesis is rejected. There is significant difference between reading skill between boys and girls among Adiya students. Mean reading calibre of girls is higher than boys.

Among Paniya and Adiya tribes, girls perform better than boys. Among the Kuruma group boys perform better than girls. Kurichiya and Kattunaicka groups do not have significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.

3.9. General Observations

On evaluating the reading skills of the tribal students of Wayanad, the following observations may be made:

- Generally the tribal students are very weak in reading skills. The up most score for the tribal score is 30%
- Students are weak in reading skills because of difficulty in word identification. Of the four sub-skills considered for assessment, the lowest score is for identification

- The principle of Matthew effect is found among the tribal groups, as they have no basic skills in word identification and decoding, they fail to develop their skills further
- Tribal students seem slightly better with inference skills, when compared with other skills. Many of the tribal students have the capacity to think logically, but their innate skills are not yet given a fine tuning by proper training and follow up
- Kuruma tribe is ahead of other groups in reading skill. Many Kuruma students did exceptionally well in the test, while some of the students were weak like other groups
- Paniya and Adiya are the most backward among the select tribes
- While among Paniya and Adiya, girls perform better, while among Kuruma, boys perform better than girls. Two tribes- Kurichiya and Kattunaicka do not show much difference in the performance of boys and girls.

INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND ON ELT

4.1. ELT in the Context of the Disadvantaged

The present ELT study takes place in the context of the disadvantaged tribal learners of Wayanad. Two things are to be specially noted here: locating the learners in their own context and assessing the constraints- such as psychological, socio-economic and linguistic- to learning the English language. In other words, context and the specific target group of learners are the two key factors in this discussion. According to Arul Kumar (131), the problem of under-achievement in academics vis-à-vis English language literacy cannot be and should not be seen in isolation from the context and conditions in which learning takes place.

In the post independent India, universalization of elementary education became the rule. According to article 21-A of the Constitution of India (<http://india.gov.in>), "the state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years as a fundamental right in such a manner as the state may, by law, determine". The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education -RTE- Act, 2009, which represents the consequential legislation envisaged under Article 21-A, means that every child has a right to full time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies

certain essential norms and standards. Through these historical legislations, education was open for many disadvantaged groups for whom education remained just a dream.

Though education was seen to be a tool of emancipation, instead of becoming a tool for empowerment, English has become a major source of disadvantage to many learners (Kumar 131), especially the scheduled tribes. The educational processes have failed to engage these students' under-achievement in English. The phenomenon of poor literacy skills of tribal learners in Wayanad cannot be narrowed down to the language deficits of the learners. In order to address the issue realistically, one needs to understand the socio-cultural background of the learners, to identify their learning needs, to evolve materials that could effectively engage their attention or to modify the instructional processes to effectively cater to those needs (Kumar 134).

A focussed discussion on the English language and general academic instruction among the tribal students in the context of Wayanad is the core of this study. It will naturally lead to the analysis of the issues and constraints involved and seek measures to solve the trajectory.

4.1.1. The Disadvantaged

In ELT, the term 'disadvantaged' refers to those learners who suffer from multiple handicaps or disadvantages which stem primarily from gross 'inequality of opportunities' (Dorairaj 109). The disadvantaged learners as those who are socially, culturally, economically, psychologically, locationally, environmentally and educationally backward. Almost all these disadvantaged students have a poor command over English.

According to Thanasoulas (n.p.) the term disadvantaged evokes images of poverty, disability, and lack of potential. To be at a disadvantage means to be discriminated against and looked down

on. In short, it suggests that a specific social group differs from society at large because it evinces characteristics that deviate from the norm. Tribes, scheduled castes, fisher folk, people who live in remote areas, migrants, slum dwellers, pestilence-stricken people, and many others with similar experiences could be included in this broad category of the disadvantaged. In our case the tribes of Wayanad are a typical disadvantaged group who demonstrate all elements described in the definition.

4.1.2. Constraints

The word constraint is derived from the Old French *constreinte*, meaning limitation or restriction. It can refer to any kind of factor or element that would adversely affects the natural growth or development of a person, society or a process (<http://dictionary.com>). When one speaks of constraints in the education of tribal students of Wayanad, particularly in learning English literacy, all kinds of internal and external impediments, such as psychological, sociological, economic, cultural, anthropological, environmental which adversely affect their cognitive and linguistic advancement are to be taken into consideration.

4.1.3. Psychological

Psychology is the scientific or objective study of the psyche. The psyche is the totality of the human mind, conscious and unconscious (<http://dictionary.com>). It refers to the forces in an individual that influence thought, behaviour and personality. Sigmund Freud made the distinction between id, ego and super ego as three constituents of one's psyche (<https://www.thoughtco.com>).

The self-psyche- is the core of one's personality. One grows into the wider realms of social personality from this 'self'. A positive self image is essential for a healthy and balanced human existence. Generally, tribes are withdrawn in nature, as they seem to have a poor self-image and apparently lack self-confidence. Any kind of

learning impediment seen among the tribe learners are resultant to these psychological barriers.

Tribes in Wayanad are said to live with a wounded psyche, being marginalized and neglected by the mainstream population. They are generally withdrawn and their attitude and behaviour appear slavish (Panoor 15). This type of behaviour points to their collective consciousness of being subservient and dependent on others. They show tendency of withdrawal and public silence. When someone's psyche is wounded, it affects her/his individuality. Person with a wounded psyche cannot behave normally. For the tribes as a group, there is said to be a collective psyche or racial consciousness which carries the foundational behaviour of the entire group. Karl Jung said that the collective unconscious is expressed through universal concepts called archetypes. Archetypes can be signs, symbols, or patterns of thinking and behaving that are inherited from our ancestors (<https://www.verywellmind.com>).

4.1.4. Linguistic

English is taught in India as the SL. English was considered a foreign language earlier - FL. In the Indian academic context, English is taught nationally as the second or third language, depending on state policies.

According to Klein (11), it is through the medium of language a child acquires the cultural, moral, religious and other values of society. "A language is 'first' and so its acquisition- if no other language was acquired before; otherwise it is second. Thus the mother tongue which is acquired primarily by a child when his/her language cells are empty is First Language or L1, and the language which is acquired/learnt in addition to L1 is Second language or L2".

While L1 is acquired from the family and its surroundings (Subramanian 1), FL is a non-native language taught in schools

(Chaturvedi and Mohale 2). There is clear distinction between FL and SL. FL has no status as a routine medium of communication. SL is a non-native language that is widely used for purposes of communication; and is also used as a medium of education, and as a means of communication in government and/or business (Klein 14). For instance, English is FL in Japan, but in Nigeria and India English is SL.

According to Chaturvedi and Mohale (3), the main objective of the SL is to enable the speaker for wider participation in society and the nation leading to secondary socialization. Hence, the SL is usually the official language of a state or a national language.

In the case of tribal learners of Wayanad, L1 is their tribal language, which they speak at home and in their communities. Malayalam, the state language, which is the medium of instruction-MOI- in schools, is L2. English is L3 for them, while Hindi is L4 for the tribal learners. For their non-tribal counter parts, Malayalam is L1, English is L2 and Hindi is L3.

4.1.5. Socio-Economic Status (SES)

Socioeconomic status or SES is a tool used for social analysis. According to the National Centre for Educational Statistics (<http://nces.nic.in>), SES is a composite measure created using parents' income, level of education, and occupation (Caro et al. 559). When analyzing a family's SES, the household income, earners' education, and occupation are examined, as well as combined income, versus with an individual, when their own attributes are assessed.

Socioeconomic status is expressed under three categories such as high SES, middle SES and low SES, basing on any or all of the three variables such as income, education, and occupation. Low SES is indicative of under achievement, ill health and poverty (Chandra and Azimuddin 1953). Education is not likely to be prioritized in low SES context, where subsistence is more important than

learning. It is assumed that SES and learning achievement are proportionately related in the case of tribal learners of Wayanad.

4.1.6. Context

The word context is originated from Latin contextus which is the combination of con which means 'together' and texere which means 'to weave' (<http://dictionary.com>). Context refers to the circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood. The present study of ELT in the context of the tribal learners in Wayanad warrants the analysis of psycho-socio-economic-circumstances (context) of the learners that greatly influence what they learn and how they learn. The role of context can be scientifically established using statistical tools of analysis.

4.2. The Context of Tribal Learning

Tribes are one of the most exploited and deprived sections of the population in the Indian society (Xaxa v). Despite many a decade of efforts, a vast majority of population in India have remained outside the education system (Sujatha 3). Apart from lack of access and quality of provisions, extension of education is also suffered from the lack of social opportunities. The presence of acute social hierarchy, gender discrimination and group discrimination has affected the progress of education at the societal level. The spread of education has largely been confined to urban and developed rural territories among a selected set of population (Sujatha 3).

The tribal population of India suffers from the double disadvantage of spatial and socio-economic constraints with regard to overall development as well as education (Sujatha 11). Achieving the objectives of Education for All (UNESCO 5) would not be possible unless the problems associated with the education of tribal areas and tribal people are addressed and rectified. Further, tribal areas are the unreached areas in terms of infrastructure facilities including education.

According to Jesa and Rahman (n.p.), there are three minimum pre-requisites for addressing tribal education. They are sensitivity to tribal culture and life, recognition of cognitive strengths of tribal children and appreciation of their personality qualities. Educational context must be moulded in the relevant culture of the community by developing content that embraces the local context.

4.2.1. Global Literacy and Tribes

In India, education is the fundamental right of every child. Education imparts knowledge and skills that enable people to realize their full potential, and so it becomes a catalyst for the achievement of other development goals. Education reduces poverty, boosts job opportunities and fosters economic prosperity. It also increases people's chances of leading a healthy life, deepens the foundations of democracy, and changes attitudes to protect the environment and empower women (UNESCO 22).

But the report presents a dismal picture of the achievements made in the field of elementary education since 2000. Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO writes (3) that "fifty-seven million children are still failing to learn, simply because they are not in school. Access is not the only crisis. Poor quality of education is holding back learning even for those who make it to school. "One third of primary school age children are not learning the basics, whether they have been to school or not. To reach our goals, this report calls on governments to redouble efforts to provide learning to all who face disadvantages - whether from poverty, gender, where they live or other factors" says UNESCO report (31).

Of the world's 650 million primary school age children, at least 250 million are not learning the basics in reading and mathematics. Of these, almost 120 million have little or no experience of primary school, having not even reached grade 4. The remaining 130 million are in primary school but have not achieved the minimum

benchmarks for learning. Often unable to understand a simple sentence, these children are ill equipped to make the transition to secondary education" (UNESCO 32)

4.2.2. The Indian Scenario

The educational system in India is the second largest in the world (Tilak 33-34). The number of students in Indian educational institutions in India out numbers the total population of united Germany, England and Canada together. According to the ASER Report 2014 published in the Curriculum magazine (8), India is close to universal enrolment for the age group 6-14, with the percentage of children enrolled in school at 96% or above for six years in a row. The proportion of children currently not in school remains at 3.3%.

The NUEPA documentation (22-23), presents the growth Indian education system during the period 2000-01 to 2013-14.

- Total number of primary schools has increased by 34.5 percent i.e. from 638,738 to 858,916 schools. The total number of schools imparting upper primary education has increased by 185.9 per cent i.e. from 206,269 to 589,796, while the total number of schools imparting elementary education has increased by 71.4 per cent i.e. from 845,007 to 1,448,712 during the same period. Total number of schools in the country during the year 2013-14 was 1,518,160. Total number of schools with only primary section in 2013-14 was 1,200,772
- The overall increase in enrolment in primary education during the period 2000-01 to 2013-14 was 18.6 million while the overall increase in enrolment of boys and girls respectively was 4.6 million and 14.0 million during this period
- The enrolment of SC children in primary education increased by 5.1 million i.e. from 21.2 million to 26.3 million. The

enrolment of boys belonging to SC in primary education has increased by 1.5 million, while the enrolment of girls increased by 3.6 million during this period

- The enrolment of ST children in primary education increased by 3.7 million i.e. from 11 million to 14.7 million. Enrolment of boys belonging to ST in primary education has increased by 1.3 million i.e. from 6.3 million to 7.6 million, while the enrolment of girls increased by 2.4 million i.e. from 4.7 million to 7.1 million during this period. The total enrolment of ST children in primary education has increased by 33.6 per cent during the period 2000-01 to 2013-14
- Available data relating to drop-out rates indicates that during the period 2000-01 to 2008-09, the over-all drop-out rate for Classes I-V declined by 15.8 percentage points. During the period, the over-all drop-out rate for ST students in primary education declined by 21 percentage points and for SC students at primary stage declined by 18.5 percentage points. (NUEPA 22-23).

4.2.3. Right to Education Act 2010 (RTE)

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education – RTE-Act, 2009 came into force from April 2010, ensuring free education to more than 92 lakh out-of-school children in India. This Act gives every child the right to a quality elementary education (<http://hrd.gov.in>). Some of the main features of the RTE Act are:

- All children aged 6-14 shall have the right to free and compulsory education at a neighbourhood school
- No direct school fees or indirect costs on uniforms, textbooks, mid-day meals, transportation etc. need to be borne by the child or parents to obtain elementary education
- The Govt. will provide schooling free of cost until the child's elementary education is completed

- All schools must comply with certain infrastructure and teacher norms. Two trained teachers will be provided for every 60 students at the primary level
- Schools shall constitute school management committees comprising local officials, parents, guardians and teachers. The SMCs will monitor utilization of government grants and the school environment
- RTE mandates inclusion of 50% women and parents of children from disadvantaged groups in SMCs.

4.3. Education in Wayanad

For a general understanding of school education in Wayanad, three sets of data from authentic sources are presented below regarding student enrolment, student drop out and SSLC pass percentage in Wayanad.

The following table describes the school enrolment in Wayanad district for during 2011-14.

Table. 5.1.

STUDENT ENROLMENT IN WAYANAD SCHOOLS							
Year	All Communities			Scheduled Tribes			
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	%
2011-12	63166	60574	123740	15127	14363	29490	23.83
2012-13	60949	58011	118960	15521	14309	29560	24.84
2013-14	59356	56717	116073	14875	14111	28986	24.97
2014-15	58632	55907	114539	14799	14117	28916	25.24

(DDE, Kalpetta, Wayanad)

There were 123740 students enrolled in all the government, government-aided and unaided state-syllabus schools in Wayanad from Classes I to X in the academic year 2011-12. The total number

students shows a fall in successive years from 2011-12 to 2013-14. 4780 children are less in the first year, 2887 in the second year and 1534 in the third year. Drop outs from schools is a reason for fall in enrolment.

Despite the fall in the general category of students, the number of tribal students is on the increase year by year. Fall in the dropout rate and rise in the school enrolment thanks to various initiatives are the reasons for this hopeful rise in the number of tribal students in the school. This also points to the fact that tribes normally attend state schools as they cannot afford to attend private English medium schools.

Table. 5.2.

STUDENT DROPOUT IN WAYANAD SCHOOLS								
Year	All Communities				Scheduled Tribes			
	Boys	Girls	Total	%	Boys	Girls	Total	%
2011-12	1351	943	2294	1.85	945	709	1654	5.6
2012-13	1222	831	2053	1.72	1008	719	1727	5.84
2013-14	1088	683	1771	1.52	828	540	1368	4.71

(DDE, Kalpetta, Wayanad)

The table above provides the details of school dropouts in Wayanad schools for three academic years. While the total dropout rate was 1.85% in 2011-12, tribal school dropout remained 5.6%. While the total dropout fell to 1.72% in 2012-13, tribal dropout rose to 5.84%. In 2013-14 total dropout was further reduced to 1.52% and the tribal dropout remained at 4.71%. The tribal dropouts in Wayanad schools mostly occur among students from Paniya and Adiya communities.

Table. 5.3.

SSLC PASS PERCENTAGE - GENERAL & ST				
Year	Pass % (Total)	Pass % (ST)	All A+ (Total)	ST- A+
2011 March	91.37	80.94	5821	6
2014 March	95.47	84.3	14802	13

(<https://google.com>)

The general pass percentage in Kerala SSLC examination was 91.37 in 2011. But it was only 80.94 for the tribal students. In 2014, 95.47% was the total qualified students while only 84.3 tribal students qualified the SSLC exam that year. More interestingly, while 5821 students scored A+ for all subjects in 2011, only six tribal students could be those stars. In 2014, the number of full A+ rose to 14802 totally, while the tribal students had just thirteen of them!

The data discussed so far sets the context for our study- global, national and local. When education standards get revolutionized in the world around, and research in science and technology brings in substantial changes in the school education systems, how far tribes are able to make use of them or get exposed to them rightly? Why do they lag so far behind even amidst hundreds of projects to salvage them?

4.3.1. The Tribal Learning Context

Amol Padwad (117) speaks of “a new kind of divide in India- between the English - haves and English-have-nots”. This is reflected in the growing feeling among the underprivileged sections of the society that one important reason for their being underprivileged is their lack of English (Padwad 117). In Kerala, the terms underprivileged, disadvantaged and poor would best describe the tribal students of Wayanad.

Wayanad is the most backward district in Kerala with the largest tribal population. This is the least populated district of the state, and its population constitutes 2.47 per cent of Kerala's total population and covers 5.5 per cent of land. Tribe communities form the poorest section of the population of the district and they fall behind the rest of the population of Kerala in terms of literacy, income and health (IIMK 7).

According to a survey conducted by KILA (Khan n.p.), "there are about one lakh tribal families, among them mere 27,416 families have land....49 per cent don't have toilets and more than 39850 families don't possess a kitchen ... 98,536 tribal people of Kerala are still illiterates and the number of people who received the formal education is 2.48 lakhs only, The dropout rate among the tribal students is also high in the state, 15393 students in the primary, 12907 students of secondary and 1453 students from the higher secondary dropped out for several reasons... about 2402 families take meal one time in a day and amongst them half are agricultural labourers and 34,092 families only have two meals a day and the number of family members who are having malnutrition is 13,960...The socio economic position of most of the tribes residing in the scheduled area of the state is miserable, Socially they are at the lowest rank of the society" (Khan n.p.).

4.4. Socio-Economic Status and Academic Achievement

Jennifer Barry (2) suggests four factors that affect academic performance such as student role performance, family level factors, peer factors and school factors. Farooq et. al. (2) present four factors such as student factors, family factors, school factors and peer factors. The present analysis combines all these into the notion of SES.

The SES of a child is most commonly determined by combining parents' educational level, occupational status and income level (Ahmar and Anwar 13). Families with high SES often have more

success in preparing their young children for school because they have access to a wide range of resources to promote and support young children's development (Vellimalay 11; Caro et.al. 559, Chandra and Azimuddin 1953). After analysing the schooling in Pakistan, Farooq et al. (10) concluded that the higher level of SES is the best indicator contributing towards the quality of students' achievement. Family characteristics like SES are significant predictors for students' performance at school besides the other school factors, peer factors and student factors.

Many students who have a low SES earn low scores in the tests and undergo stress at home (Vellimalay 21). Low SES leads to family problems and disrupted home environment and negatively affect the academic performance of the child (Caro et al. 559).

4.4.1. SES and Tribal Learners

Asoora (328) classifies the reasons of educational backwardness of tribal students into three: external, internal, socio-economic and psychological factors. The external constraints are related to problems and difficulties at levels of policy, planning, implementation, and administration. Internal constraints refer to problems associated with the school system, content, curriculum, medium of instruction, pedagogy, academic supervision, monitoring, and teacher-related problems. The third set of problems relates to social, economic, and cultural background of tribes and psychological problems of learners.

According to a study conducted in West Bengal, many tribal students suffer from inferiority complex, and this badly affects their academic performance (Basu and Chaterjee 936). Acharya and Behera (210) present an array of factors that influence, induce and impel educational attainment. These are: (a) environment at the macro-level, (b) parental attitude towards education, (c) environment at micro-level (family level) and (d) economic condition of the family.

While analyzing the issue of primary education among the tribes of Jharkhand, Anant Kumar (6) observes that poor socio-economic conditions is a major constraint to educational access, impossible for marginalized households to make investment in education in the form of school fees, costs of books, uniforms, meals and transportation. Children from poor families contribute to family income either directly by working as labour or indirectly by contributing in doing household chores.

It is established that SES of students influence their academic achievements (John and Subramanian 91, Roy 33) while the home environment negatively affects the learning process (John and Subramanian 95). In the following section the author examines the influence and role of socio-economic and psychological variables in the literacy skills of tribal students in Wayanad.

4.4.2. The Survey Conducted among the Tribal Learners

A survey was conducted to collect the socio-economic status, psychological background and social habits of tribal students in Wayanad, using a standardized questionnaire. There were questions aimed at eliciting four key points such as 1) SES of the learner; 2) Social habits of the learner's community; 3) Psychological make-up of the students; and 4) constraints to ELL as the students observe them.

4.4.3. Analysis of Findings

The survey was administered to a total 200 tribal students equally from five major tribes of Wayanad such as Paniya, Kurichiya, Kuruma, Kattunaicka and Adiya. These students were administered with the survey and their feedback was collected. For the purpose of unearthing the SES factors influencing the literacy skills of tribal students in Wayanad, the author identified three main variables to find the correlation with the score in literacy skills. The variables are 1) SES of the learners; 2) social habits of the

community of the learners; and 3) psychological status of the learners. The score achieved by the learners for literacy skills was analysed against the three variables using the principle of Pearson Coefficient Correlation.

Correlation coefficient ranges between -1 and +1. As it approaches -1 it indicates high negative correlation, mean variables are in opposite direction. When it approaches +1 the relationship between variables indicates high positive correlation, and in the same direction.

4.4.3.1. Variable 1: Socio-Economic Status

Socio-economic status analysis considered the following points for the survey. Education level Parents, land owned and occupied by the student's family, having a permanent house of their own, distance from home to school, facilities and gadgets available at home like electricity, television, mobile phone, newspaper, gas connection, cycle, bike, car/jeep etc.

4.4.3.2. Variable 2: Social Habits of the Community

Social habits of the community refer to the alcoholism, smoking, tobacco chewing and gambling by the elders in their colonies. Usually tribes live in clustered settlements where multiple small houses are made in a small piece of land. There are, in many cases, more than one family living in a small house. Habits like smoking, consumption of alcohol, tobacco chewing and gambling of elders in the community are often a social problem deterring tribal development (Mohindra et al. 70).

4.4.3.3. Variable 3: Psychological Status of the Learners

Psychological status considers many aspects of tribal psyche including their self image and respect, aim in life, pressure experienced in studies, joy to learn in and outside school, willingness to attend

school, opportunities to travel outside the tribal villages, occasions to mingle with people from other communities, general awareness about society, happiness experienced in family life, disposition to do hard work, habit of saving money for future, feeling of being respected by others in society, feeling of being respected by teachers in the school, feeling of being respected by friends in the school, their respect for people of other communities, feeling of being envious of others etc.

4.4.4. Statistical Analysis of Socio-Economic Correlations

In the above analysis of 200 samples collected from high school students of five tribes under study - Paniya, Kurichiya, Kuruma, Kattunaicka and Adiya, the Pearson coefficient correlation between literacy score and SES score is .876. It shows a highly positive correlation between the literacy achievements and the socio-economic status of the learners establishing a positive relationship between the two.

PEARSON COEFFICIENT CORRELATION			
	SES Score	Habits Score	Psycho Score
Pearson Correlation	.876	-.460	.367
Sign (2-tailed)	.051	.436	.544
N	5	5	5

Factors like education level of parents, land owned and occupied by the student's family, having a permanent house, distance from home to school, facilities and gadgets available at home like electricity, television, mobile phone, news paper, gas connection, cycle, other vehicles etc positively affect their literacy skills. Students with better SES have high scores in literacy tests and vice versa. The correlation value is .876 which is highly positive.

The second variable of social habits has the score -.460. This shows a negative correlation between the literacy skills and the

social habits like alcoholism, smoking, tobacco and beetle leaf chewing, gambling etc. Since these habits are negative, they negatively influence the academic achievement in general and English literacy skills in particular. Students and their academic performance are hampered by the negative social habits of their parents, family members and siblings.

The psychological variable gets the score .367. Again this shows a positive correlation. The psychological experiences of tribal students including their own positive self image, respect and confidence, aim in life, pressure experienced for studies, joy to learn in and outside school, willingness to attend school, opportunities to travel outside the tribal villages, occasions to mingle with people from other communities, being respected by teachers, friends and others etc. positively influence their literacy skills achievement.

4.5. Constraints to Tribal English Literacy

In the context of tribal ELL, the term constraint denotes all kinds of internal and external impediments, such as psychological, sociological, economic, cultural, anthropological, environmental which adversely affect the cognitive and linguistic advancement of tribal learners.

Sujatha (45) classifies the constraints broadly into external, internal, socio-economic and psychological. The external constraints are related to the problems and difficulties at the policy level, planning, implementation and at administration level. Internal constraints refer to problems associated with school system, content, curriculum, medium of instruction, pedagogy, teacher related problems, academic supervision and monitoring. The third set of problems are related to social, economic and cultural background of tribes and the psychological problems of first generation learners.

4.5.1. Constraints in Wayanad

Tribal students of Wayanad are a disadvantaged group of learners in all respects of the term. They are socially, culturally, economically, psychologically, locationally, environmentally and educationally backward. The tribal learners have never been able to avail the benefits of universalization of education due to various reasons. This resulted in their under-achievement in education, especially in basic literacy skills. Various constraints experienced by the tribal learners in Wayanad are briefly described below.

4.5.1.1. External Constraints

Many tribes in Wayanad live in remote areas. There are tribes like Kattunaickas, Cholanaickas, Wayanadan Kadars, Uralis etc. who live inside the forest land with no schools nearby. The general rules about location of schools are not context specific vis-à-vis tribes of Wayanad. Sujatha (45) remarks that population and distance norms formed by the government were not beneficial to the tribal locations because of their sparse population and sporadic residential patterns. The walk-able distance norms prescribed by previous laws and by RTE 2009 (<http://ssa.nic.in>) were basically of no use considering the inaccessibility of tribal areas and presence of natural barriers between the tribal habitations and schools (Sujatha 45).

In India, the tribal development departments did not have powers to prescribe an educational policy. The education department, who frames the national education policy, did not have the sensitivity to understand the specificity of tribal culture. The changes brought by tribal development department were essentially welfare principles and not specific to education. Hence there are many lapses in the educational policies and tribal department could not bridge this gap. The dual administration system brought in many drawbacks in planning. It was not context specific vis-à-vis tribes.

A uniform educational policy was framed by the union and state education departments. Sujatha (46) notes:

"The school calendar is a case in point where the vacations and leaves only cater to the need of a formal, non-tribal set up rather than the local context and festivals of the tribes. Lack of sensitivity to the problems and the failure in understanding the tribal social reality coupled with the faulty selection and appointment of teachers in tribal areas have resulted in poor performance and teacher absenteeism among tribal schools".

The conflict and lack of coordination between the education and tribal departments make the situation still a vicious one.

4.5.1.2. Internal Constraints

A majority of schools in Indian tribal areas are without basic infrastructure facilities. Often the school buildings in Wayanad tribal areas are with dilapidated walls and non-plastered floors. Class rooms are congested and many with no proper ventilation. A government run school in Mananthavady taluk was found very suffocating to manage the morning hours due to the fumes and smoke from the common kitchen. Many a time the premises are far from safe for children to move about. Teaching-learning materials are scarce in these schools. Safe, clean drinking water, toilets etc. often do not meet the standards.

The centralized curriculum, which is often urban based, is tough for the tribal children in primary classes. The biases about tribal life are in some text books which should be removed from the texts while they are to be made more tribal friendly (Sujatha 48). The pedagogy also should be flexible, and learner-centred. Tribal children are accustomed to learn in groups through observation and practice which is sharply in contrast with rote learning practices of schools. The teaching method is yet another constraint in their education. Lack of proper communication with the teacher is

another reason that leads to absenteeism and dropout of tribal students.

Tribal students have a tribal mother-tongue as L1, Malayalam as L2 and English as L3. The medium of instruction in the schools is Malayalam, which is a strange tongue to many tribal students in Wayanad attending class I. Mother tongue integration in the lower classes is expected to make the tribe learners feel at home and reduce dropout rates considerably (Jesa and Rahman n.p.; Bachan et al. 3). Most of the teachers teaching in tribal areas are non-tribal, who cannot fully understand the psyche and aptitudes of their tribal learners. Selection and training of teachers in tribal schools are also important.

4.5.1.3. Socio-Economic and Psychological Constraints

Socio-economic and psychological factors are two major constraints in the educational progress and development of tribal communities in India. Poverty and poor economic conditions, lack of awareness and understanding of the value of formal education, conflict and gap between the home and school etc. are some of the problems faced by the tribal learners in Wayanad (Sujatha 47).

Abject poverty of the tribes has the most damaging effect on the socio-psychological development of personality of tribe children in Wayanad. Studies on educational deprivation of tribes are inevitably linked it to their poor economic condition and subsequent poverty (Swamy 71). It must be noted that the tribes are the most impoverished and economically backward section of India (Sujatha 48). Poverty makes education not their priority, where elder children are required to take care of their younger siblings while parents go for work. Some of the tribal children have to work to support the family, thereby neglecting their studies. Even when education is free, there are expenses to be met, and want of money make tribe children stop going to school.

Many tribes have not yet understood the importance of education. Generally tribes have a rhythm in life and they move freely. Schools which move on the wheels of discipline at times fail to hold back the tribal children who cherish freedom more than anything. This also results in wastage and dropout in schools.

Health is a major hindrance in the promotion and participation of tribal children in education. Contagious diseases like scabies, eye infection, malaria, diarrhea, etc. are common in tribal areas, which too affect the children's attendance at school (Sujatha 50). In Wayanad, water-borne diseases and skin diseases are even more common.

Education of parents is another important factor in the academic achievement of students (Farooq et.al. 10). It is clear from the present study that those students whose parents with have some education, have done better than those students whose parents do not have any education.

4.6. Constraints to English Literacy Achievements

Sharma (3) remarks that an English teacher encounters several odds at various levels in teaching English to the tribal learners. In very unfavourable situations, a teacher is assigned the task of teaching English through the syllabus meant commonly for all the learners irrespective of their socio-cultural background. It results in low achievement at all levels, especially in English literacy skills.

4.6.1. Reasons for Low Performance in English Language Skills

Analysing the low performance of English language skills among the tribal students in Odisha, Mishra (n.p.) lists the following reasons:

- Alien language outlook: They treat English as a foreign and alien language
- Faulty sentence structures=SVO becomes OSV: I eat rice becomes, Rice I eat
- Miserable Spellings-cat becomes kat
- Lack of Exposure to the language
- Lack of usage of the language
- Using the vernacular for management
- Phobia and inhibition for the language
- Dearth of Compassionate trained teachers
- Pronunciation problems
- Problems of intelligibility
- Problems of comprehension-Bilingual method more effective
- Rustic impoverished status
- Genetic problems
- Objective of learning unclear
- No relevance in day to day real life
- High amount of Mother Tongue Interference
- Highly faulty grammatical usage.

Sharma (4) describes the situations which are quite unfavourable for tribal students in Odisha to learn English. These learners exhibit following characteristics during the learning:

- They show poor motivation towards learning of English
- A considerably low cognitive ability is reported among them
- The feeling of cultural alienation is found among them in learning English

- They have a low degree of self-esteem that has a considerable bearing on learning of English. A high degree of classroom anxiety prevails among these learners.

In the first study referred above, Mishra seems to have applied the same method of evaluation for the tribes and non-tribal students in Odisha. The tribal students need to be evaluated as a disadvantaged group in their specific context with an altogether different SES and cultural ethos. The above study gives the result as if that of a general study. Core aspects of SES like economic situation of the family, distance from the school, education of parents, nature of habitat, facilities at home, social habits, self-respect and dignity etc are not assessed at all. A study about the tribal education in India will never be complete unless these aspects are taken into consideration.

4.6.2. Low Performance of all Tribe Students in Wayanad

Various constraints to English language learning have been already discussed in the previous sections. The impact of socio-economic background on their English literacy skills also has been proved. Having gathered data from 200 tribal students of Wayanad on the reasons for their backwardness in English literacy skills using the survey method, the author identified twelve reasons which are given below according to its priority given by the tribal learners.

- Lack of basic knowledge in reading & writing
- Difficulty in writing
- Difficulty in finding out connections between words
- Carelessness in studies
- Difficulty in grammar
- Lack of facilities at home
- Lack of individual attention

- Less explanation in the class with examples
- Teachers are untrained
- Structural difference between English & Malayalam
- Lack of self confidence
- Teachers pay more attention to better students.

Out of 200 students selected from five major tribes, 131 responded to this particular question on the reasons behind their backwardness in English language skills. Most of them assign the prime reason for their low performance to their lacunae in the basic language skills. These skills should have been taught to them in the lower classes. Difficulty with the basics in grammar and other language skills get cumulated over the years. This phenomenon is known as 'Matthew effect' (Cunningham and Stanovich 137), whereby the deficiency among the tribal learners gets cumulated over the years.

Lack of basic knowledge in reading and writing; difficulty in writing; difficulty in finding out connections between words; difficulty in grammar and lack of facilities at home are some of the most important reasons behind their low performance.

4.6.2. Tribe-wise Analysis of Reasons behind the Low Performance

Apart from the general analysis, tribes show slight differences in determining the reasons behind their poor score in English language skills.

4.6.2.1. Paniya Tribe

According to students from Paniya tribe, lack of facilities at home (SES) is the most important constraint in English literacy skills achievement. Other reasons include lack of basic knowledge in reading and writing; difficulty in writing; difficulty in finding out connections between words and difficulty in grammar. SES

and the cumulated lack of basic skills in literacy mar the Paniya students from performing well in English literacy skills.

4.6.2.2. Kurichiya Tribe

For the Kurichiya students, lack of basic knowledge in reading and writing is the prime reason behind their poor performance in English literacy skills. Other reasons include; difficulty in writing correct English sentences, difficulty in finding out connections between words; difficulty in grammar and lack of facilities at home.

4.6.2.3. Kuruma Tribe

Kuruma students, who have proved to be the best among all tribes in Wayanad in literacy skills, say that difficulty in grammar is the major reason for low performance in English. Lack of basic knowledge in reading and writing; difficulty in writing; difficulty in finding out connections between words and lack of facilities at home are some of the other important reason for their low performance.

4.6.2.4. Kattunaicka Tribe

Kattunaicka students evaluate their difficulty in finding out connections between words in English as the most important reason for their low performance in English. Other important reasons for the deficiency in literacy skills are the lack of basic knowledge in reading and writing; difficulty in writing; difficulty in finding out connections between words; lack of facilities at home and structural difference between English and Malayalam.

4.6.2.5. Adiya Tribe

The students belonging to the Adiya tribe find that the major reason for their low English proficiency is their difficulty in finding out connections between words in English. Other important reasons

for their low performance in English are lack of basic knowledge in reading and writing; difficulty in writing; untrained teachers; difficulty in grammar and lack of facilities at home.

The strong inter-relationship between psycho-socio-economic status of the learners and their academic vis-à-vis English literacy skills was established using the statistical tool of Pearson Coefficient Correlation. The relationship is directly in proportion to the other. Students with better SES scored high in English literacy skill test while students with low SES profile could score only less in the English literacy skill test.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING FOR TRIBES: EMERGING MODELS OF TRIBAL ELT

English language learners from tribe communities often struggle with language studies. For the tribal students in Wayanad, the native language is the respective tribal dialect and the academic language very often is Malayalam. English is the compulsory SL in schools. But they often fail to achieve on par with students from other communities. Some of them dropout of school, and most of them struggle to continue to studies, and many fail to obtain proper employment after school, in spite of being talented. It is assumed that with knowledge of English, their life chances would certainly develop. Therefore, developing a model ELT programme for tribal learners of Wayanad is the need of the hour. Going beyond the constituents of any conventional ELT method, how can the marginalised youth, especially the tribal students, be given access to teaching-learning English is the issue under consideration in this chapter.

5.1. The New Approach for Tribal ELT

Before dealing with the quintessential aspects of tribal ELT, "the five wrong popular assumptions" about ELT presented by Philipson (12) may be noted.

- English is best taught monolingually
- The ideal teacher of English is a native speaker
- The earlier English is taught, the better the results
- The more English is taught, the better the results
- If other languages are used much, standards of English will drop.

According to Bagai and Nundy (3), ELT programme for the tribes need to be built on the strengths of the tribal community, value their culture and history, and at the same time, establish programmes which enable, more or less seamless, integration into mainstream education systems. This balancing act between preserving tribal cultural identity and mainstreaming for economic prosperity can be better achieved through creating stronger community cultural wealth by developing a tribal child as an individual. Educational content must encompass building life skills that can help integration with the mainstream system (Bagai and Nundy 3).

The conventional teaching materials primarily focus on the skills in grammar. Conventional method seems inadequate for the tribal students. Hence it is relevant to think of a new Tribal ELT programme. This process mandates redefining teaching material from the perspective of the learner rather than the teacher. In other words, the focus should shift from the development of teaching material to learning material. This can happen only if the instructional material is socially relevant and the instructional process more interactive. The focus should shift from a mere identification of grammatical items to meaningful communication, rendering the pedagogic relevance of the material secondary to its social implications. Language should be able to carry cultural implications along with the contextual meanings (Kapoor 65-66).

The teaching/learning materials should motivate and lead the learner ahead by inviting him/her to accomplish the tasks step-by-step, one after the other. At each stage the learning material

should be slightly higher than the learner's cognitive ability so that the learner is inspired to reach the next or higher level. Opportunities of expression in the target language should be provided and encouraged to meet the learning objectives.

ELT in tribal areas should cater primarily to the economic, cultural and interactive needs of the tribal people. The English course is not intended to transform the tribal people into the so called civilized society. The tribal already population is civilized, perhaps better civilized, than many of our urban societies. They own an authentic culture which is great in many respects. Their association with nature, myths, beliefs, and practices along with their indigenous knowledge can best be known to the world if English becomes a tool in their hands (Kapoor 67-68).

5.2. Tribal Education: A Balancing Act

Bagai & Nundy (4-7) present two schools of thought related to improving tribal education. The first group focuses on developing an indigenous education system as an island rich with tribal culture and traditions – while maintaining a distance or near isolation from mainstream society. This involved education solely in local dialects, instilling a stronger sense of “tribal identity”, and preserving tribal culture, livelihoods and history.

The contrasting opinion argues for mainstreaming the tribes to a “national education system”, under which common schooling is practiced, and development of modern languages occurs. This concept of mainstreaming is actually meant to abolish all forms of marginalization.

Researchers suggest that these two opinions described above have often caused polarization in the effort to improve the status of tribal education when in reality the solution lies somewhere in between. Hence a fine balance is to be struck between these two. In the context of tribal education, finding a balance between

preserving tribal cultural identity and mainstreaming for economic prosperity means building education programmes that ensure tribal child's success in mainstream schools

5.3. Enhancing Tribal Capital through Development of Life Skills

Before mainstreaming the tribes, say Bagai and Nundy (4-7) six types of tribal capital assets should be enhanced. The capital assets to be focussed are the following:

5.3.1. Aspirational Capital

It is evident that many tribal parents, if not all, have high aspirations for their children's future, despite extreme levels of poverty and discrimination. There is a mismatch between the tribal parents' current occupation and the importance they continue to place on their child's education. Fostering aspiration is the first step towards achieving social mobility.

Aspirational focused programs include parent meetings, career counselling for secondary students, exposure visits to companies, highlighting local heroes in school curriculum.

5.3.2. Linguistic Capital

Tribal children come to school with knowledge of multiple languages and communication skills where they engage in storytelling. Such capital harnesses skills like memorizing, attention to detail, dramatic pauses, comedic timing, facial affect, vocal tone, volume, rhythm and rhyme. Linguistic capital also refers to communication via visual art, music or poetry.

Tribal linguistic capital is extremely high and can be further developed for ways of increasing vocabulary, meta-linguistic awareness, teaching and tutoring skills. Linguistic focused

programs include storytelling in curriculum, learning English as a spoken language, promotion of creative arts in the classroom or non-formal education centres.

5.3.3. Familial Capital

Tribes maintain healthy relationships with their communities where isolation is minimized and a bond is created as they identify with each other's problems. Familial focused programs include parent-teacher associations and interactions, involving elders in storytelling of history/culture, training tribal para-teachers for educational support.

5.3.4. Social Capital

Tribes can overcome adversity in their daily lives by uniting with supportive social networks. Social focused programmes include creation of tribal student associations in mainstream schools, scholarship and mentoring programmes, employing young tribal leaders as agents of change.

5.3.5. Navigational Capital

Navigational focused programs can leverage social networks through schools, job market, health care and the judicial system. For example, tribes should be well aware of which government schemes help them specifically such as quotas, scholarships etc. and use this to their advantage. These include career exhibitions, exposure visits, speakers from mainstream institutions, networking opportunities and making accessible database of government schemes.

5.3.6. Resistant Capital

Passing tribal values from one tribal generation to the next is essential. Building this capital opposes the self-defeating and

conformist behaviour often exhibited by oppressed groups such as tribes. Resistant focused programs include examples of inspirational local heroes that have overcome barriers and achieved success, meetings with parents, coaching of mothers (Bagai and Nundy 4-7).

5.4. Support Mechanisms for Tribal Education

The present education system is designed keeping the dominant groups in mind. Hence there needs to be investment in creating support mechanisms that supplement the integration of tribal children into the formal education system. Bagai and Nundy (41) suggest the following eight points to support the tribal education system:

- Using both tribal and state languages during the pre-primary and primary levels
- Creating supplemental tribal relevant learning materials
- Introducing monetary/non-monetary incentives for teachers in tribal areas
- Addressing the health and nutritional needs of tribal children
- Improving community participation by training tribal teachers and youth as peer educators
- Establishing and strengthening transitional education centres which focus on mainstreaming tribal children
- Creating seasonal hostels and residential schools for children of migratory parents
- Training female teachers for single sex classrooms.

5.5. Tribal Education Experiments in Wayanad

Apart from mainstream education programmes initiated under the

state departments of education and tribal welfare, there have been many attempts initiated from many activists and social groups in organizing an effective curriculum for the tribal students of Wayanad. Many of them, being experimental initiatives, lacked institutional support and missed out the general education system of education. A few of them are mentioned below.

5.5.1. Kanavu

Kanavu started by K.J. Baby in Wayanad was an alternative school for the Paniya children. The system integrated tribal culture, folklore, arts and music into the residential education system.

5.5.2. Tudi

Tudi is a tribal research-cum-learning centre run by Jesuit missionaries in Wayanad. Sarvodaya higher secondary school is the only school in Wayanad where Paniya tribes are staffed. They also run a tribal hostel, folklore centre - Tudi Kalakendra, Tudi learning centres in neighbouring villages - Tudikkoottam patasala etc. Kurinjipookkal is a nursery school for the Paniya children using the tribal language as the medium of instruction.

5.5.3. Kaveri Adivasi Padasala

Kaveri Adivasi Padasala (KAP) is an initiative of Adivasi Gothra Maha Sabha (AGMS) since 2010. In numerous tribal hamlets, Padasalas (learning centres) are opened and managed by tribal instructors and assistants. School going students are given nutritional food and helped in learning lessons at the patasalas. Tribal teachers are given training on regular intervals.

5.6. Tribal Language as Medium of Instruction in Tribal Schools

No man fully capable of his own language ever masters another

says G. B. Shaw. According to Krashen's affective filter hypothesis the use of learners' mother tongue works well to lower the affective filter by lowering their anxiety of going wrong in using target language (Meher n.p.). The use of learners' home language and culture create familiar atmosphere and learners get their self-identity and existence in the classroom.

Sadananda Meher (n.p.) analysed the English reading comprehension of tribal students from Sambalpur area in Odisha, whose medium of instruction was Odia and made the following remark "Of course all the learners do not need the use of Sambalpuri to understand English, but for most of the learners it has been found helpful. Responses of both teachers and learners to the questionnaires and interview indicate that use of Sambalpuri in the teaching of English has significant positive effect on learning".

D.P. Pattanaik (48) narrates the bilingual primary education programme developed by CIIL, Mysore. It started with reading and writing of the home language and speaking and understanding of the state language. Allotting 80 percent of the available time for the home language and 20 percent for the school language in the first year, by the end of the primary stage the time allocation was reversed. By that time the learner had assumed sufficient competence in the school language to study through that language. This was tried out in four locations in the country such as Khasi in Meghalaya, Santhali in West Bengal, Koli in Maharashtra and Jenu Kurubas in Karnataka. The results were exciting (Pattanaik 48).

5.7. Some Foreign Reference Models for Tribal ELT

5.7.1 Socio-Cultural Model by Collier

Virginia P Collier presents a prism model (313) which has four major components: socio-cultural, linguistic, academic, and cognitive processes. The four major components are interdependent and

complex. Central to that student's acquisition of language are all of the surrounding social and cultural processes occurring through everyday life within the student's past, present, and future, in all contexts-home, school, community, and the broader society (Collier 313).

Figure 6. 1 Collier's PRISM model of Language development



Collier, SLA for School 313

Linguistic processes consist of the acquisition of the oral and written systems of the student's first and second languages across all language domains, such as phonology, vocabulary, morphology and syntax, semantics, pragmatics, paralinguistics, and discourse. To assure cognitive and academic success in a SL, a student's first language system, oral and written, must be developed to a high cognitive level at least through the elementary-school years.

Academic development includes all school work in language arts, mathematics, the sciences, and social studies for each grade level, Grades K-12 and beyond. With each succeeding grade, academic work dramatically expands the vocabulary, sociolinguistic, and discourse dimensions of language to higher cognitive levels.

Socio-cultural processes strongly influence, in both positive

and negative ways, students' access to cognitive, academic, and language development. Therefore it is crucial that educators provide a socio-culturally supportive school environment that allows natural language, academic, and cognitive development to flourish.

Collier views language acquisition as a lifelong process. To understand what occurs in first and second language acquisition for school, it is important to recognize the complex, lifelong process that we go through in acquiring our first language and the parallels in second-language acquisition. Bilingual instruction for initial six years is the solution suggested by Collier and Wayne (Wayne and Collier 27)

5.7.2. Integrated Language Curriculum by Cummins

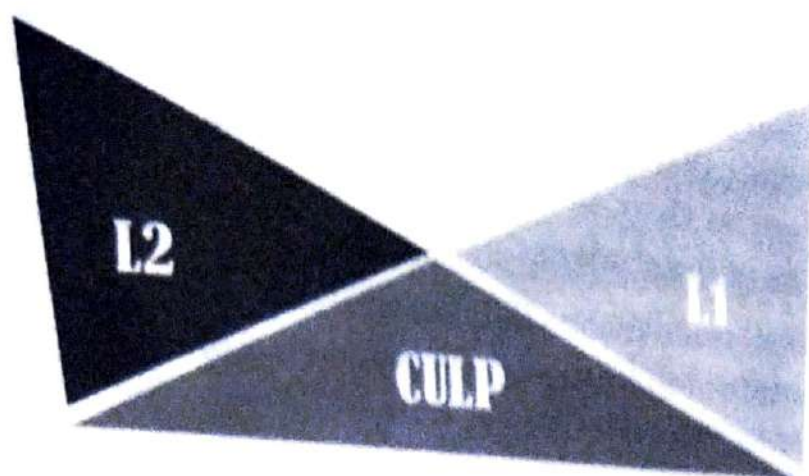
Cummins makes the distinction between two differing kinds of language proficiency viz. BICS and CALP (<http://esl.fis.edu/>; NCERT 8). Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency or CALP is the basis for a child's ability to cope with the academic demands placed upon her/him in the various subjects. Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills or BICS are the "surface" skills of listening and speaking which are typically acquired quickly by many students; particularly by those from language backgrounds similar to English who spend a lot of their school time interacting with native speakers. While many children develop BICS within two years of immersion in the target language, it takes between 5-7 years for a child to be working on CALP (<http://esl.fis.edu> n.p.).

In the course of learning a language, a child acquires a set of skills and implicit metalinguistic knowledge that is useful in learning other languages also. Cummins calls these skills and knowledge 'common underlying proficiency' or CUP. The CUP provides the base for the development of both the L1 and L2. It follows that any expansion of CUP that takes place in one language will have a

beneficial effect on the other language(s). This theory also serves to explain why it becomes easier and easier to learn additional languages.

A diagram of the CUP is given below.

Figure 6. 2 CUP model by Cummins



(<http://esl.fis.edu> n.p.)

It is very important that students be encouraged to continue their native language development. When parents ask about the best ways they can help their child at home, you can reply that the child should have the opportunity to read extensively in her/his own language. If a child already understands the concepts of "justice" or "honesty" in her own language, all she has to do is acquire the label for these terms in English.

5.7.3. Constructivism and Critical Pedagogy

Dhankar (2) presents the salient traits of constructivist pedagogy that provide a broad framework for tribal ELT. Those traits are:

- Teaching involves creating opportunities for students to trigger their own thinking

- Teachers not only need to be familiar with the curricular content, but they also must have available a repertoire of didactic situations in which such conceptual content can be naturally built up in a way that sparks the students' natural interests
- Teachers need to realize that students' mistakes are not wrong as such, but are predictable solutions on the way to more adequate conceptualization
- Teachers need to understand that specialized words in academic disciplines do not have the same meaning for a student as they do for the expert, and teachers must have an idea of the students' present concepts, ideas, and theories
- Teachers must realize that the formation of concepts requires reflection, something accomplished by conversations among students and with the teacher.

In constructivist pedagogy, learner constructs knowledge in the particular social context. Learning is not filling the empty vessels with knowledge, rather it is enlightenment. Methods of teaching vary with learners, contexts and themes. Learners develop a critical consciousness through constructivist learning. Learning English language will in turn enable them to question the supremacy of English in the very language itself (Dhankar 2).

As far as tribal learners are concerned, presently they are mere recipients of knowledge. In the new pedagogy, they will construct knowledge, select texts, choose appropriate methodology, evaluate and correct themselves. Education will thus have to become a social construct. The newly evolving tribal ELT will bear in mind these traits of critical aspects of ELT in developing the methodology.

5.8. Psycho-Socio-Cultural Elements of Tribal Education

SLA involves many elements from psychological and socio-cultural disciplines. These are briefly discussed below.

5.8.1. Vygotsky's Contributions

Vygotsky (1896-1934), the Russian educational psychologist, views education as a social and cultural construct. His contributions like the sociocultural theory, zone of proximal development, mediation and scaffolding are relevant in developing a critical tribal ELT in the context of Wayanad.

5.8.1.1. Socio-Cultural Theory

Education is a socio-cultural construct. According to Vygotsky (Turuk 245) the child is completely dependent on other people, usually the parents, who initiate the child's actions by instructing him/her as to what to do, how to do it, as well as what not to do. Parents, as representatives of the culture and the conduit through which the culture passes into the child, actualise these instructions primarily through language. The child acquires knowledge through contacts and interactions with people as the first step (inter-psychological plane), then later assimilates and internalises this knowledge adding her/his personal value to it (intra-psychological plane). This transition from social to personal property according to Vygotsky is not a mere copy, but a transformation of what had been learnt through interaction, into personal values. Vygotsky claims that this is what also happens in schools.

It is argued that education can never be value-free (Turuk 247); it must be underpinned by a set of beliefs about the kind of society that is being constructed and the kinds of explicit and implicit messages that will best convey those beliefs. These beliefs should be manifest also in the ways in which teachers interact with students.

Sociocultural theory has a holistic view about the act of learning. It opposes the idea of the discrete teaching of skills and argues that meaning should constitute the central aspects of any unit of study. The theory also emphasizes the importance of what the learner brings to any learning situation as an active meaning-maker

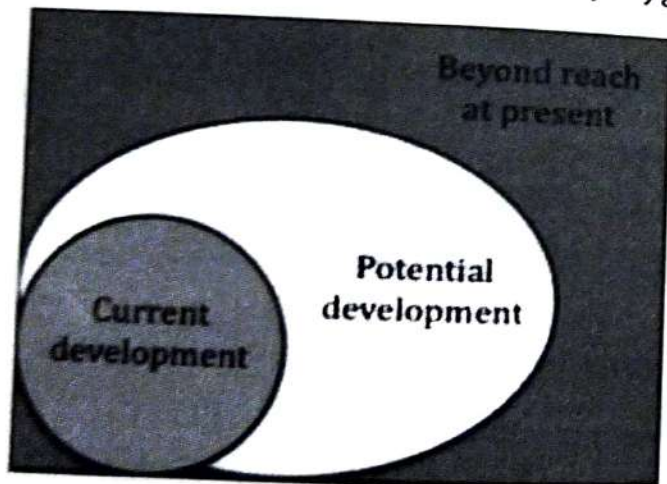
and problem-solver. It acknowledges the dynamic nature of the interplay between teachers, learners and tasks and provides a view of learning as arising from interactions with others (Turuk 248).

5.8.1.2. Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

Perhaps the most important contribution of Vygotsky is the notion of ZPD. There are two levels of attainment for the ZPD (<http://psychohawks.wordpress.com/>):

- Level 1 - the 'present level of development'. This describes what the child is capable of doing without any help from others
- Level 2 - the 'potential level of development'. This means what the child could potentially be capable of with help from other people or 'teachers'.

Figure 6. 3 'Zone of Proximal Development' by Vygotsky



<https://psychohawks.files.wordpress.com>

The gap between level 1 and level 2 i.e. the present and potential development is what Vygotsky described as zone of proximal development. He believed that through help from more knowledgeable people the child can potentially gain knowledge already held by them.

Tribal ELT should take into consideration the ZPD of the learners in Wayanad so as to have its optimum results.

5.8.1.3. Scaffolding

Another important notion of Vygotsky's theory is scaffolding. When an adult provides support for a child, s/he will adjust the amount of help they give depending on their progress (<https://psychohawks.files.wordpress.com/>). For example, a child learning to walk might at first have both their hands held and pulled upwards. As they learn to support their own weight, the mother might hold both their hands loosely. Then she might just hold one hand, then eventually nothing. This progression of different levels of help is scaffolding. It draws parallels from real scaffolding for buildings; it is used as a support for construction of new material and then removed once the building is complete.

The role of the teacher in tribal ELT, in any other context for that matter, is of scaffolding. In the case of tribal students in Wayanad, who are a disadvantaged group of learners in many respects, role of scaffolding and hand-holding is very much essential.

5.8.1.4. Mediation

Mediation according to Vygotsky refers to the part played by other significant people in the learners' lives, people who enhance their learning by selecting and shaping the learning experiences presented to them. Education is a mediated learning experience (Feuerversten et. al. 13). The mediation occurs between the learner and a more knowledgeable other.

5.9. Contextualization in Language Learning

Contextualization of learning materials and inclusion of local languages are two key elements in tribal education. Lack of contextualization has been recognized as one of the shortfalls in

the current education system. One of the main reasons for high dropout rates is the lack of 'contextualized' curriculum that suits one's region or community. The present education system which is a product of the historical events of the colonial era has been insensitive to the local and marginalized groups in India. In the case of Kerala, the most 'literate' state where ethnic groups are a minority (Census 2011), and there is no such curriculum in the state to accommodate the linguistic, geographical and cultural diversities of any particular group of the population (Bachan et al. 14).

It is obvious that we need to start from a 'known' thing to lead to the unknown and it is not possible to understand an 'unknown' from another 'unknown'. In most of the exercises without a locally contextualized curriculum or exercise, the children will be learning by rote, retain it for some time, use it awkwardly without an understanding or comprehension just for writing an examination and soon it will be lost from memory. Unfortunately this is the system most of the people follow in the classrooms. In reading, while the focus is on how to decode and not on comprehension, comprehension get affected (Bachan 17). Introduction of contextual materials makes comprehension easier.

5.10. Multilingualism in ELT

Multilingualism is said to be the key to 'inclusiveness' in India (Pattanaik 50). Central Institute of Indian Languages prepared multilingual learning materials for selected tribal communities in India. Study materials named 'Arunima' in Odissa, was introduced in ten tribal languages such as Munda, Santhali, Kissan, Oraon, Kuvi, Koya, Bonda, Juanga and Saura in 2012. KIRTADS in Kerala documented and developed books for primary schools using Irula, Kurumba and Muduga tribal languages. An ethnic community based, multilingual, in Kadar and Muthuva tribal languages as well as Malayalam and English was developed by Western Ghats Hornbill Foundation (Bachan et al. 2014).

Inclusion of diverse languages and dialects, materials and themes native to diverse indigenous and other marginalized communities, diverse pedagogy providing great freedom for the students and such an inclusive diverse curriculum connecting to the universal syllabus is still a dream for the tribes in Wayanad. Development of diverse, contextualized supplementary curriculum materials addressing worldview of each indigenous and marginalised community is required.

Any attempt to contextualize education to the needs of the marginalized communities must look into the failures in the major experiments to bridge the gap in the extent of contextualization. Contextualization of education should focus on –

- 1) Content to start from known to unknown to accommodate everyone's world view
- 2) Language to be indigenous; flexible to accommodate multilingual, ranging from indigenous, local, regional to universal
- 3) Should result in effective decentralized and inclusive pedagogy; flexible enough to provide high degree of freedom to choose
- 4) Method of teaching and evaluation should be comprehensive rather than prescriptive
- 5) The role of the teachers should be facilitators to enable pupil's comprehension, travel from known to unknown through pursuits of creativity, problem solving using information, rather than act just as a knowledge centre or information provider.

5.10. Affective Factors in Tribal Education

While learning English language, affective factors like the learners' motivation, language aptitude and self-confidence should be considered (Mora and Fuentes 128). This is all the more important in the case of tribal learners who face aggravated psycho-social barriers in learning.

5.10.1. Motivation and Language Aptitude

Motivation depends to a large extent on learner's belief that s/he can succeed in a specific subject. Motivation helps students to invest effort in learning. It is challenging, but "manageable" learning experiences that lead to higher performance in students. Initiating motivation relates to goal setting, while sustained motivation depends on the quality of the language experience (Mora and Fuentes 135).

Tribal students need to be motivated thoroughly about the need and uses of study, especially English. Most of them do not have the occasion to get motivated by the family due to socio-economic reasons, hence wastage and dropout.

5.10.2. Self Confidence of Tribal Learners

Self-confidence is a general belief by an individual in her/his competence and acceptability, a general expectation of success (Mora and Fuentes 136).

Self-confidence is the result of an unthreatening and effective classroom atmosphere. Tribal students, live with a poor self-image compared to many students from non-tribal communities (Panoor 121). Their morale and self-confidence should be boosted for optimum performance in the academic areas.

5.10.3. Student Willingness to Learn

Mora and Fuentes (136-140) refer the BASICS model of Smith to express student willingness to learn. The name BASICS is an acronym that encompasses six elements: belonging, aspirations, safety, identity, challenge and success. The tendency among teens to belong to the group is applicable for students at the high school levels. Teenage students should get the feeling of oneness and belongingness to the group so they can study more effectively. This is more than true in the case of tribal students. Aspirations refer to the motivating factors that initiate and sustain interest in language study.

Safety refers to physical and emotional security that a student experiences in the class. Many learners feel insecure when they have to take risks expressing themselves in front of others in a language they have not fully mastered. Peer and teacher pressure can become real handicaps and can only be avoided when the teacher and the group create rules that build self-respect. In a secure learning space, the teacher projects a supporting image and avoids learner humiliation. A relaxed classroom atmosphere is of crucial importance.

For the tribal learners who often come to school with wounded psyche, may not feel safe and secure in class room and might feel out of place. When the tribal students does not experience freedom and joy in learning, s/he cannot really learn the language. Teachers as well as students need to understand the tribal learner in the primary classes so that the tribal child does not feel fish out of water.

Identity refers to the positive self image that a student carries with her/him. Tribal students come to the school with a rich cultural capital. Today modern market economy has permeated student attitudes so much that whatever that does not suit a globalized consumer culture seems out of place. In the process, the tribal

students consider themselves uncultured and try to absorb the trends of the present consumerist society. It makes them more estranged and faceless.

Challenges include problem-solving activities and thought-provoking tasks. Predicting, inferring, problem solving, analysing and connect with their cultural environment etc are some of such tasks. In the case of tribal learners, challenges have to be commensurate with their identity and curriculum goals.

The sense of success is very much related to goal achieving. Learners who are trained to set realistic and achievable goals feel internal motivation and are more likely to become successful. Tasks that include the presentation of an end-product can enhance the sense of competence and a sense of pride in their accomplishments.

Positive reinforcement works perfectly well with the tribal students. Perhaps it is a sine qua non for tribal ELT practices. It would surely boost up their morale and positive self-image to take on further challenges.

CONCLUDING REMARKS: ELT SCHEMA FOR TRIBAL LEARNERS

From the discussions in the previous chapters, there are four elements to be considered while designing a sensible and effective ELT programme for tribal learners. All these aspects are interrelated and mutually influencing. While developing a contextual ELT programmes, these four elements will serve as four pillars on which the emerging tribal ELT may be built upon. These elements namely context, people, materials and methodology are briefly analysed here.

6.1. Context

Geographical, psychological, cultural, socio-economic and environmental background of the tribal learners are distinct from any other general or marginalized groups. Hence all these aspects should be born in mind while planning the ELT curriculum. The impoverished, remote at the same time culturally rich environment is distinct from the world outside the tribal colonies. Distance between home and school, transportation facilities, facilities available in the colonies and home, source of income, food, work, health conditions, drinking water, irrigation facilities, climate

conditions etc. affect their attitude to learning. The context also includes the school infrastructure facilities available to the learners.

6.2. People

All people involved in the education vis-à-vis ELT of tribal students should be considered. Learners, teachers, peers, parents and others who directly involve in the curricular process should be considered while planning the curriculum. Most important are the learner and the teacher. Psychological, attitudinal, cognitive, aspects are important for this. Learner attitude and willingness, flexibility, adaptability and positive attitude matters in the learning process are important. Teachers' training, commitment to the teaching of the disadvantaged, flexibility to context and constructive approaches are important for effective transaction in the class rooms. Teachers' work is not limited to the class rooms. It extends to the home and world of the tribal learner. Teacher acts as mediator of learning through the continuous process of scaffolding.

6.3. Learning Materials

Learning materials include the textbooks, supplementary materials, medium of instruction, learning equipment used in the school etc. Apart from the materials centrally planned and prepared, there should be materials specifically prepared for tribal students in their own language at least in nursery and classes I and II. Tribal learners will be able to comprehend the concepts very well in their own mother tongue. There should be a gradual and natural transition from mother tongue to Malayalam till class IV. In class IV the child starts English lessons. Language learning should start in the natural order of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Contextualized learning materials prepared for tribes of each district may be used along with the main text. Teaching materials also should draw from the socio-cultural resources of the tribes. Teachers should be trained for this task and need to be flexible to adapt to varying situations.

6.4. Methodology

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) seems to be more effective for teaching ESL. In a mixed class room where tribes and more non-tribes study together, teachers need to give a differentiated delivery. In the primary classes, time and space should be set aside for differentiated instruction. Multilingualism, mother tongue integration and contextualization are the key points to be taken into consideration in the primary classes. In the high school level, teachers should pay an extra attention to the tribal learners and remedial support is ideal for them. Choice of authentic texts for each context is an effective step in this regard. Constructivist approach will support the ELT practitioner in this regard;

6.5. Participatory and Emancipatory Learning Process

Learners' involvement in the selection of learning materials and assessment will make a participatory and engaging learning process. Tribal ELT should not be aimed merely at skill development of tribes. It should be a process of emancipation and self-discovery, where the tribal students learn to question the dominance of English using English language. S/he will be the decision maker for her/himself. There will not be any imposition; rather s/he chooses what is best for her/him.

6.6. An Optimistic Concluding Note

As English literacy skills among the tribal students are despicably low; many of them fail miserably to read and write English even at high school level; and as many tribal communities remain on the verge of extinction due to various socio-political reasons, the 'great Indian dream' is far from the scope of realization. Development of India will never be complete without the development and education of these indigenous peoples. Hence this study, of sociolinguistics of language teaching, addresses the issue beyond linguistics and academics and includes the socio-

political, anthropological, cultural, pedagogic, and policy issues.

After discussing the topics of ELT in general, tribes, education and various theories and approaches of ELT relevant to tribal education, we have also analysed the empirical data of the literacy skills, especially reading skills of tribal learners of Wayanad, in this study. Further to this, we need to spend our resources now on the following areas: pre-primary and primary curriculum research with special reference to the tribal learners of Wayanad; integration of speaking and listening skills in the tribal school curriculum; contextualization of syllabi with reference to the disadvantaged learners of English; practical steps and solutions to address the difficulties in English language learning of tribal learners who have cumulative deficiencies.

Studies in this line is global in outlook, since its aim is to liberate the marginalized tribes from their limiting forces and thus to empower them to make positive contributions to national development and integration. Thus, tribal ELT is national and global in its scope. The noble ideals enunciated in the Constitution of India will be fully realised when the tribes, though the effective process of tribal ELT become active agents of change in the Indian society.

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