Chapter 4
The Higher Secondary Second Language Curriculum in Kerala

The school system of Kerala is divided into four clearly demarcated sections as follows:

a) The Lower Primary which includes the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th standards,
b) The Upper Primary which consists of the 5th, 6th, and 7th standards,
c) The Secondary which consists of the 8th, 9th, and 10th standards, and
d) The Higher Secondary which consists of the 11th and 12th standards.

The 11th and 12th standards labelled together as higher secondary is commonly referred to as the +2 course. The +2 is the terminal stage of school education and also serves as a preparatory course that enables the students to pursue higher studies. The second language demands at the tertiary level are foreseen in the second language classes at the higher secondary level. Language learning at this level is based on and draws from the language learning accomplished in the lower classes at school.

This section presents in detail the constructivist curriculum as implemented in the higher secondary classes. In 2005-2006 the higher secondary curriculum was revised to serve as a sequel to the revisions accomplished up to the secondary level. The revised curriculum is backed by ample curricular expertise that the curriculum designers have gathered in the preceding years at the lower levels. The foreword to the Course book announces the paradigm shift in the revised curriculum; that it is
“learner centred, activity based and process oriented….the main objectives of this curriculum are construction of language and development of language skills through increased opportunities for communication and interaction in the classroom” (5).

As the revision of curriculum entailed a paradigm shift from the behaviourist mode to the constructivist mode, its implementation demanded new teacher and learner materials. The teachers had to be educated anew about the new curriculum as it was a radical leap from the behaviourist practices with which they were familiar. From their days as students till the time the curriculum was revised, the teachers were entrenched deep in the methods and habits of the behaviourist paradigm. The successful implementation of a curriculum depends on the conviction of the teachers who implement it in real life classrooms.

The English teachers at the higher secondary level were given a five-day intensive training in the year 2005 to communicate to them in detail the salient aspects of the revised curriculum. The teachers were given hands-on training to familiarize them with the mode of implementation of the curriculum in the classrooms. The training classes were engaged by Resource Persons, who also were higher secondary teachers who were given five-day training by the State Council for Educational Research and Training, SCERT. The five-day class for the teachers was a replica of the five-day class given to the Resource Persons by the SCERT at Trivandrum. In the classes the teachers were divided into pairs and groups and the lessons in the Course book were taken up for close consideration. The teachers in keeping with the directions of the Resource Persons did the activities that accompany the lessons. The activities of various groups were presented in the
general meeting and the written works which mostly were discourses were written on chart papers and exhibited for all the participating teachers to read, understand and evaluate.

The revised constructivist curriculum for the higher secondary course is designed as follows. In both the first and the second years of the +2 course, English is taught as an integral part of the general curriculum. As part of the second language curriculum, two Course books and two Practice books are prescribed for study. The Course books are the revised versions of the regular textbooks used before the curriculum revision. The Practice books supplement the Course books. In addition to these four books, the book called Edumate gives guidelines regarding examinations to the teachers and the students. The Source book consists of guidelines for teachers regarding the revised curriculum and exists at two levels, one for the first year and another for the second year. The structure of the second language curriculum at the higher secondary level could be presented in a table as follows

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<td>2</td>
<td>Practice book</td>
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<td>4</td>
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Table 1. The second language learner materials at the higher secondary level.

Of these four books, the Source book is the primary vehicle of the curriculum. It was introduced in the five-day classes as the manifesto of the revised
The Source book states in detail, the central tenets of the curriculum. To inform the teachers about the theories that back the curriculum, it gives a brief detailing of the theories of behaviourism, cognitive psychology, constructivism and social constructivism. In the latter half of the 20th century, cognitive psychology came to shed light on the theories of education and behaviourism received a set back with the advances made by cognitive interpretations of the learning processes. The cognitive approach to education interprets and sees the learner as an active participant in the learning processes. Cognitive psychology unveiled the mental strategies and processes of the learner. Constructivism grew out of cognitive psychology. Constructivism owes its development to thinkers like Piaget, Bruner
and Vygotsky. The *Source book* also gives a list of the main features of constructivism as follows

Learning is construction of knowledge.
Learners construct new knowledge from authentic experience.
Learning happens as part of the attempt, to find solution to the problems faced by the learner.
Intellectual and linguistic development happens through social interaction.
The learner assimilates the knowledge; he/she has constructed, to his/her cognitive structure. (7)

The *Source book* continues to elaborate that the process of learning depends on four factors - the teacher, the learner, the tasks and the contexts. The classroom and the school become contexts for social interaction. The classroom becomes active through the negotiations about tasks made by the teacher and the learner. Such social interaction is constructive and social. The tasks serve as the “interface between the teacher and learners” (7). The classroom is a miniature society, which calls up interaction among students and between the teacher and the students.

The *Source book* informs the teachers that the new curriculum does not rely on rote methods as practiced in the behaviourist paradigm. The learner has to discover knowledge for himself either by himself or with the help of the teacher or his/her peers. The role of the teacher is to introduce the discovery method to the learners by creating a suitable ambience in the class and by rendering such help as would facilitate discovery of ideas and facts. “The teacher should not make the learner imitate prepared models. She should facilitate the child’s process of constructing her/his own models. Discovery learning promotes motivation and
problem solving” (7). The role of the teacher is merely to pose problems and trigger the thought process of the learners.

A major thrust of the revised curriculum is on collaborative and co-operative learning. Formerly, in the behaviourist paradigm, the students worked alone and saw every other student as a competitor. The revised constructivist curriculum considers learning as a joint venture, in which students participate and help each other. “Collaborative learning affords the students enormous advantage over traditional instruction because a group, whether it be the whole class or a learning group within the class, can accomplish meaningful learning and solve problems better than any individual can alone do it”. The Source book does not limit collaboration and cooperation within the bounds of the classroom; “involving students in real world tasks and linking new information to prior knowledge requires effective communication and collaboration among teachers, students and policy makers” (8).

The Source book elaborates how the constructivist classrooms are different from the traditional behaviourist classrooms. In the traditional classrooms, the teacher was the sole unquestionable dispenser of knowledge, the seat of authority. The students were considered as empty vessels to be filled in, who had no say in the classroom activities except to obey. The spirit of collaboration and co-operation rules the relationships inside and outside constructivist classrooms. The students cooperate with the teacher as they co-operate among themselves. The theoretical foundations of collaborative learning in the revised curriculum are the constructivist theories of Lev Vygotsky who said that human beings are the products of biology and culture. Based on the theories of Vygotsky, the Source book elaborates that
“intellectual functioning is the product of our social history, and language is the key mode of which we learn our cultures and thoughts which we organize in our verbal thinking and regulate our actions. Children learn such higher functioning from interaction with adults and other children around them” (10). The Source book informs that teachers roles have changed drastically and that it is in very many ways different from their roles under the previous curriculum. “As knowledge and authority are shared among teachers and students, the role of the teacher increasingly emphasizes mediated learning. Successful mediators help the students, connect new information to their experiences and to learning in other areas also” (9).

Learning is accomplished collaboratively by sharing ideas and by negotiation among learners. The students, in pairs and in groups share the responsibilities in connection with particular learning activities which lead to the sharing of knowledge. The teacher is equipped with knowledge and skill but he/she also takes into consideration the experience and knowledge of the students. The teacher acts as a mediator and facilitates the sharing of knowledge. The competition found in the traditional classrooms, is not to be found in a collaborative classroom. The classroom becomes a platform for negotiations among equals, monitored by the interventions of the teacher. As the classrooms become charged with discussion and group work the traditional discipline of the behaviourist classrooms need not necessarily be found in the constructivist classrooms. The teachers are not asked to exercise strong control over the speech and activities of the student with a dictatorial hand. In the traditional classrooms, discipline was inordinately stressed to the
detriment of individual freedom where as in the constructivist classrooms; discovery learning and co-operative enterprise take up the centre stage of the pedagogic drama.

Vygotskian theory serves as the basis of collaborative learning. The functioning of an individual’s intellect is guided by the social history. We learn and organize our thoughts and culture through language. Interaction with adults and peers enables the higher intellectual functions in children. Interaction as per the Vygotskian perspective, which includes teacher-student interaction and interaction among the students serves to make the classroom a miniature society. Activities and dialogues with adults and peers while engaged in activities enable learning in children. Dialogues that are internalized become the inner speech in children, which they use to direct their thought and behaviour. The classroom activities and collaborative interaction helps the students to internalize the language, which in later circumstances will stand by them as supportive inner speech. The Source book suggests that the teacher needs to understand the worth of inner speech in education and language learning and take apt measures that promote the development of inner speech in the minds of the students.

The idea of scaffolding is central to the curriculum. It becomes a constant and ongoing process. The idea of scaffolding is derived from the practice of caregivers, who while dealing with children under their charge use language that is slightly above the level of the children, to regulate them. The caregivers always keep ahead of the children, to initiate following and growth. Jerome Bruner named this practice of caregivers as “Scaffolding” (Source 11). It is this same practice of scaffolding, which is to be used in the collaborative classrooms, where the teacher,
who is a facilitator, leads the children providing ample scaffolding to ensure the intellectual growth of children. The role of the second language teacher is to scaffold the language learning of the students by using the target language in such a way that the students are able to learn the intricacies of the language by giving slightly advanced language samples. “Scaffolding and working in one’s own zone of proximal development can be accomplished in collaborative classrooms” (Source 11), where in the students learn from the teacher and from each other.

In the behaviourist paradigm, language was treated as an isolated skill and was treated in a vacuum. In the activity-based classrooms language learning is made more meaningful by blending learning with activities. The learners are given the opportunity to speak, read, write and interact at varied levels like personal, interpersonal and textual. These in turn help to foster their linguistic competence. With the help of the teacher the students engage in these simulated activities and such a process helps the acquisition of language.

Language learning activities are classified by the Source book under four heads. Performance based activities that call for oral representational skills include, speeches, recitations, reading of poems/stories acting, loud reading, news reading, compeering etc. Interactive activities cater to and foster the ability of the learner to interact with others individually and also in groups. Examples for such activities include group discussion, panel discussion, debate, seminar, dialogue, interview and TV/radio anchoring. Project, survey, field study and case study exemplify investigative activities. Such activities enable the learners to conduct studies and to arrive at conclusions. Creative and academic writing activities enable the learners to
write creatively and academically. These may be done within the classroom or as assignments. “Stories, poems, screen plays, review, literary appreciation, reports, letters, notices, news, editorials, translated pieces, comparative studies, and book reviews etc belong to this category” (Source 12).

The Source book also has a chapter entitled as “The Curriculum” in which the salient features of the revised curriculum are detailed. Language learning is defined as a difficult and complex process and that no single theory is capable of adequately explaining the secrets of learning a language. In the language classes, learners do not learn what the teachers teach and as such the pedagogy and teaching strategies have to be positively student centred taking the student’s mind and point of view into consideration. The Source book promises that the learner material will always be learner centred giving due and vital consideration to the working of the student mind. “What learners learn is not always what teachers teach and what they want them to learn. Therefore curriculum material shall be based on a learner centred approach which places the learner at the centre of the educational process” (Source 13). The Source book tells the teachers that the learner is to be taken in as an active processor of information. The teacher’s point of view and the teacher’s interest may not interest the learner. As such, they have to be taken into confidence by giving them dynamic roles in the activities that are under taken in the classroom. The learners have to be enticed into the lessons through the words of the teacher and through the activities that accompany the separate lessons and by the lessons themselves: “learners will be encouraged to learn more when they are interested in the content of the lesson” (Source 13).
The classroom should facilitate the acquisition of language through learner-centred activities, to give sufficient language exposure to the learner. As the first language learner acquires the language through real life situations, and ample exposure to the language, the second language learner also requires exposure to the language that is learned. In the traditional classroom rich exposure was not available. The teacher must create in the classroom, situations that would activate the “inner language learning capability of learners so that it takes place spontaneously” (Source 14). Such a mode of procedure is envisioned by Stephen Krashen, who advocated the view that language acquisition “occurs subconsciously as a result of learners’ participation in natural communication”. The classroom should provide ample opportunities to the learner to practice the use of the target language. The use of the language is facilitated by practice. “Active participation in classroom activities and an awareness of the need for exposure and practice in developing communicative skills motivate learners and involve them more and more in the language learning task” (Source 13, 14). The teacher introduces the lessons, motivates them through interesting activities that are negotiated with the students, and it seems likely that there will be plenty of healthy interaction among the students and between the teacher and the students. The curriculum designers believe that as the classroom and the activities are collaborative in nature, the students will get ample opportunity to communicate in the target language.

Interaction and creative meaning making processes and the construction of language in the minds of the students are the aims of the curriculum
The proposed methodology, activity based, process-oriented and child centred approach, operates in the constructive paradigm which would be helpful for the learners to construct language appropriate to various communicative contexts. The approach strikes a balance between the linguistic autonomy of the learner on the one hand, which is largely innate, and the social interaction on the other, which takes care of the functional aspects of language. Interaction is identified as the keystone of the whole learning process. Interaction at this level assumes three dimensions i.e. learner-teacher learner-learner and learner-material. The proposed three-tier interaction is more conducive to the development of the learner at the psychological and cognitive levels. (Source 14)

The approach takes learner autonomy and social interaction as key factors which facilitate language learning. The classroom witnesses three major types of interaction: between the learner and the teacher, between the learners, and between the learners and the learning materials. These varied types of interaction are intended to lead to the learning of language effectively.

The teachers are given a detailed list of features that makes the aims of the curriculum more transparent to the teacher

The methodology integrates the various skills of language in a most natural way.
Emphasizes learning and not teaching.
Encourages and accepts learner autonomy and initiative.
Sees learners as creatures of will and purpose.
Thinks of learning as a process.
Encourages learner enquiry.
Acknowledges the critical role of experience in learning.
Nurtures Learner’s natural curiosity.
Takes the learner’s mental model into account.
Emphasizes performance and understanding when assessing learning.
Makes use of extensive cognitive technology such as predict, create and analyze.
Considers how the students learn.
Encourages learners to engage in dialogue with other students and the teacher.
Supports co-operative learning.
Involves the learners in real life situations.
Emphasizes the context in which learning takes place.
Considers the beliefs and the attitude of the learners.
Provides learners with the opportunity to construct new knowledge from authentic and real life experience. Ensures the transaction of English through the meticulous spiralling of discourses.
Ensures the spontaneous construction of a variety of oral and written discourses such as conversation, description, letter, diary, poem, narrative, report, debate, speech, etc. without explicit teaching.
Incorporates several strategies for the expansion of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).
Makes use of a number of activities meant for the development of multiple intelligence.
Ensures a collaborative learning atmosphere in the classroom.

(Source 15)

The Source book gives a picture of the role that the teacher has to play in the language class, after the teacher has assimilated the major thrusts of the curriculum. The teacher is given the freedom to design and execute strategies that contribute to make the classes rich with the scope for language learning. The teacher is admonished to be a researcher and academic, to keep herself abreast of the developments in his subject and to have an understanding of thee needs of her
students. Collaborative learning is not to be confined to students alone; teachers too are to work on academic tasks collaboratively. The language teacher has to devote himself to generating language in the classes by designing suitable language triggering activities, using the Source book and Course book as guidelines. The teacher’s knowledge and ingenuity are to be used abundantly to supplement the learning material and the classroom activities.

The teacher’s role is not limited and circumscribed as in the previous paradigm. Hers is an organic role, a role that fuses the functions of a facilitator, a co-learner, a researcher, an evaluator, a guide, a friend, and a promoter of everything that is positive and beneficial to learning. She is the dynamic presence in and out of classrooms, a source of positive thought and energy for all her students. The Source book lists the role of the teacher in the constructivist classroom as follows

- Plans and provides challenging situations.
- Diagnoses the learning difficulties and provides remediation.
- Continuously evaluates the progress of the learners
- Gives scaffolding/support wherever necessary.
- Promotes divergent thinking.
- Acts as a democratic leader.
- Acts as a co-learner.
- Acts as an efficient researcher.
- Facilitates inter-personal and intra-personal interaction.
- Gives a variety of learning experiences.
- Facilitates reference/data collection. (16)

The role of the teacher in the revised constructivist classroom is highly challenging and demands imagination and dedication from the teacher.
The learner, under the new curriculum, is more free and autonomous and is granted freedom. He is envisioned as an active participant in the learning processes. He is invited to share the responsibility of learning by taking leadership in the activities whenever and wherever required. He is to involve in the group works undertaken as a co-participant, as an observant researcher and sharer of information. He is free to experiment, draw inferences and make interpretations. As a collaborative individual, the learner is welcome to make use of teacher and peer resources. Interaction with peers and teachers is to be used as a means to development. It is he who is the centre of the class and of the curriculum and is privileged to enjoy the teacher’s friendly supervision and support. The learner

- Actively participates in the learning process.
- Acts as a researcher.
- Acts as a sharer of information.
- Acts as a sharer of responsibility.
- Collects information.
- Takes leadership.
- Involves in group work.
- Acts as co-participant.
- Observes his environment.
- Experiments and realises.
- Makes interpretation and draws inferences. (16-17)

The learning activities are so designed as to provide opportunities for multiple levels of interaction. They present before the learners challenging situations and demand their active involvement. The activities make the curriculum effective and the classrooms lively. The learning activities help to put the new paradigm in
action and make schooling and learning pleasurable. The curriculum realizes its purposes through the *Course book* and the learning activities.

As per the demands of the constructivist paradigm new learner materials are introduced. It is claimed in the *Source book* that they are sharp tools with definite objectives. In addition to the given *Course book* the teacher is granted professional freedom to introduce to the students suitable material from sources like newspapers, magazines and books. The learning materials include

- Authentic texts like newspapers, brochures, magazines, notices etc.
- Books from school library
- Material developed by teachers and students.
- Reference materials. (*Source 18*)

It is to be assumed that the student receives quality input and is surrounded by materials that trigger his thought.

The *Course book* is described by the *Source book* as a set of tools, centrally prepared by taking in the contribution of experts in diverse fields to ensure the effective realization of the curriculum objectives. The curriculum designers have a high esteem of the textbook and it is ambitious in its aims. As stated emphatically in the *Source book*, “it is one of the child friendly materials to engage the child. The *Course book* should enable the learners to construct various linguistic discourses such as conversations, letters, reports, stories, narratives, descriptions, speeches etc., effortlessly and spontaneously. Textbook is designed incorporating the discourse-theme spiralling strategy” (*Source 1, 18*).

The *Course book* is the primary vehicle of the curriculum. It holds the central
attention of the teaching learning procedures. As the curriculum is learner-centred and activity-oriented, the Course book is envisioned as a constantly self-effacing entity although its role is vital. The preface to the Course book 1 claims “The English Course book developed by the SCERT for class XI is specially designed to fulfil the requirements of the new activity-based, learner-centred, interactive curriculum. The Course book ensures the spontaneous construction of a variety of oral and written discourses without explicit teaching” (5). The basic assumption behind the Course book is that the learners will read the various sections provided and perform the language learning activities, individually and in groups and become equipped to use the language. ‘The language-developing and knowledge-building measures initiated at the lower classes are consolidated and refined in the two Course books given for study at the higher secondary level’ (Course 5). It is to be understood that the higher secondary second language curriculum is the culmination of the constructivist curriculum at the school level.

The foreword to the Course book, briefly introduces its specialities and its differences with the previous textbooks. It states that the Course book introduces various genres of literature in order to impart to the students a familiarity with the language and its rich literature and thereby create an aesthetic awareness and critical sense. Besides these translations and visual media experiences are given a befitting place in the Course book. It is also said in the foreword that various types of discourses like profiles, letters, notices, newspaper reports, review and literary appreciation are purposefully included to enhance the awareness and linguistic capabilities of the students. The learner materials, the Source book and the Edumate
“have been developed in a series of workshops by a team of teachers from Higher Secondary sector, colleges and universities in consultation with the faculties from RIE Bangalore and CIEFL Hyderabad” (*Course 1*, 5). The books were prepared by the SCERT through a series of workshops; which implies that a lot of manpower, expertise, and money have gone into the making of the four books. The curriculum and the books have been designed with the purpose of making learning pleasurable and rewarding. The curriculum designers have no doubts about the revised constructivist curriculum and assure that “Learning becomes an exciting and enjoyable experience through interaction between learners, between learner and teacher, and between learner and the learning materials” (*Course 2*, 4).

The *Course books* for the two higher secondary classes are carefully planned and divided into separate blocks. Each block contains a few lessons related to the theme of the block. Before and after each lesson there are activities suggested for the students to do individually, in pairs or in groups. Through the *Source book* the teachers are given guidelines about the way each lesson is to be handled in the classes. The teacher’s work consists mainly of facilitating the lessons and the activities and effectively monitoring the progress of the students. To analyze the curriculum and its effectiveness in the classes, a close view of the two *Course books* is inevitable. Both the *Course books* are similar in the approach and the methods. Both are divided into separate blocks prefixed and suffixed by activities and contain suggestions about possible discourses that the teachers can generate.

The Part 1 *Course book* prescribed for the first year higher secondary students is divided into seven blocks. The first block of *Course book 1* entitled
“Beauty is Truth” has four separate lessons it, accompanied by activities which the students are asked to do in the classes or at home. In the regular classes the students can work in pairs or in groups as the teacher asks them to. The first block begins with a brief story, which is an excerpt from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s *A Study in Scarlet*. The story presents the sharp observation of Sherlock Holmes and drives home the point that to learn about the world the power of sharp observation is inevitable. This story is not accompanied by any activity other than a discussion. Though the activity is simple, the text is beyond the comprehension of the students and may require the teacher’s explanatory intervention. This is followed by the lesson entitled ‘Lifting the Veil’, which presents the story of a blind man who goes on a sightless tour to northern Thailand. The story is told in simple language and the plight of the blind man fills the student mind with pathos and conveys the message about how invaluable the gift of sight is. It also suggests that to behold beauty in the normal way, sight is vital. It also makes the student aware of how much of the world is missed by all who take the gift of sight for granted. Having read the lesson either alone, in pairs, in groups or by the teacher, the students are asked to do a number of activities. In addition to these, there are a few comprehension questions based on the lesson. Questions like “What does the story tell you? Is it about a tour, a blind man or blindness? Does the story give a new idea to you? Did you enjoy reading this?” (*Course 1*, 16) are found at the end of the lesson.

It has to be noted that there are seven activities that the students are asked to do in connection with this single lesson. The comprehension questions which are specifically about the content of the lesson in a way resemble the comprehension
questions that accompanied the lessons in the behaviourist curriculum. The content of the lesson is fascinating and maintains the interest of the students to read and enjoy the story. The lesson conveys the idea that to see and enjoy beauty the power of sight is inevitable. However, the number of activities that accompany the lesson brings up a question about the feasibility of so many activities in connection with a single lesson.

The next lesson ‘Review’ is taken from A.C. Ward’s Twentieth Century English Literature. The review presents an analysis of the novels of Arnold Bennett. The curricular objective of the lesson is to inform the students about the beauty of literature and the manner of writing literary reviews. The lesson tells the students that in literature, we can find the beauty of real life solidified and perpetuated. The lesson is followed by a discussion, a collection of book reviews and a project. ‘The Lake Isle of Innisfree’ by W.B.Yeats, which follows the review, may be regarded as the best of the block. It is a simple poem celebrating the beauty of nature. The poem in keeping with the theme of the block celebrates the beauty found in nature and helps to inculcate the love of nature in the minds of the students. Having learned about the method of writing reviews, the students may feel it easy to write a review of the poem. The last lesson of the block ‘The Reason’ by E.V Lucas is a piece of light fiction which presents the beauty of animal life and makes the students think about the life of animals. Though the lesson has a touch of humour, it is humour that is deliberately worked out and it is a generally understood truth that the element of force diminishes humour to the bottom of boredom. It is needless to say that the lesson falls flat, as it is one that is difficult for the teacher to teach and for the learner.
to learn. On the whole it may be evaluated that the first block somehow saves itself due to the presence of the simple poem and the story about the blind man. However, the students and the teacher do not feel the rush of enthusiasm to go through the lessons and activities of the block. The thread of interest is delicately maintained and is undoubtedly brittle. Though the block starts solemnly with the lines from Gabriel Okara

Then the drum beat with the rhythm
of the things of the ground
and invoked the eye of the sky
the sun and the moon and the river gods-
and the trees began to dance. (Course 1, 9)

The solemnity and the grace are not maintained in the lessons that follow and leave the students and the teachers with a tinge of dissatisfaction. It could be said that the first block does not instil in the students or in the teachers a craving to turn the pages and go to the blocks and the lessons that follow.

The second block entitled ‘A Hymn to Life’ begins with the lines from Alfred Lord Tennyson

The woods decay, the woods decay and fall,
The vapours weep their burthen to the ground,
Man comes and tills the field and lies beneath,
And after many a summer dies the swan (Course 1, 25).

The first lesson of the block is a travelogue named ‘Beautiful Mandakini’ by Ruskin Bond. Though the travelogue is beautifully told it is not as captivating as its title which gives false hopes to the student. The adolescent student is easily led to think
that the lesson is a story of romance about a beautiful girl named Mandakini. As a sequel to the lesson the students are asked to discuss about their own travel experience and also to write a travelogue based on their experience. They are also asked to compile a book of travels and also to prepare a brochure. The second lesson is the poem ‘The Road not Taken’ by Robert Frost. It is a poem that the world loves as it promotes serious thinking about life with its ups and downs. However, the adolescent mind just stepping into adulthood may not fully comprehend the poem in its true depth to enjoy it sincerely. “The Autobiography of Mark Twain” and the biography of Albert Schweitzer that follow it are read by the students in the classes in pairs and in groups with the necessary interventions by the teacher. Though these lessons hold valuable lessons and imitable samples, the adolescent mind is not likely to be transported by the content of the lessons as they dwell on the facts of life that are a bit beyond their level of experience. The activities that they are asked to do at the end of each of these lessons are serious in nature and demands deliberation on the part of the students.

The third block is named quite romantically as ‘The Language of my Dream’ and is introduced with a few lines from Kamala Das. This block deals mainly with language and is informative in nature. The first lesson, ‘Indian Words in English’ informs the students that the vocabulary of the English language grew by generously borrowing from other languages and that English has taken a number of words from Indian languages. The students are asked to write about the historical context of Indian words entering English and they are also asked to compile a dictionary consisting of English words that are borrowed from Indian languages. The two
lessons that follow, namely, ‘The Evolution of English’ and ‘The Gift of Language’ are both highly serious in nature. The activities that the students need to do on the completion of these two lessons are also serious in nature. The only lesson that redeems the block and brings in cheer is the last lesson of the block which is the story by Kushwant Singh named ‘Karma’. The activity that follows this lesson is also interesting and helps the students to forget the boredom of the previous lessons and the tedium of the activities that accompanied them. The whole of the third block is educative but when one goes through the lessons one wonders whether they suit the needs and tastes of the +1 student whose mind is full of curiosity and the spirit of play. The aim of the curriculum designers seems to be to instil in the mind of the students thoughts about the language that they learn. But at their age when their knowledge of the second language is not full fledged and error proof it may not be just to expect in them a curiosity to learn about the language. The lessons of the block except the last one are high serious in nature and cannot be expected to find a resonant echo in the minds of the students. The teacher’s interventions and informative talk may help to alleviate the gravity of the lessons and to engender in them a love for speculations about the history and evolution of language.

The fourth block entitled ‘The End of Living and the Beginning of Survival’ begins with the lines from William Wordsworth

For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing often times
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. (Course 1, 69)
The block takes a meaningful beginning with these lines and deals with serious issues like the destruction of nature, the degeneration and denial faced by women and the suppression faced by the marginalized. The block brings in also a series of activities that are meaningful and useful. The first lesson of the block ‘A Fable for Tomorrow’ by Rachel Carson is informative as far as the students are concerned. Rachel Carson presents a meaningful picture of destruction caused by the careless and selfish use of fertilizers and chemicals. The lesson ends with a grim warning and makes the students aware about the need to preserve nature. The initial lines from Wordsworth and the first lesson are helpful in making the students aware that without nature and its support human life would be impossible. A discussion, a comparative study, note making, letter writing and write-up follow the lesson. The students are also asked to compile a book on nature preservation with the write-ups prepared. The activities spur involvement and if the students are motivated enough they are likely to do the activities in earnest. ‘Susheela’s Story’ and ‘The Women of Bhopal’ are both lessons that present to the student in simple language the problems faced by women. Susheela’s plight is as moving as the plight of the women of Bhopal. Both these lessons communicate their message and find an echo in the minds of the students and effectively warn the students about the marginalization and neglect faced by women. The interview with Vandana Shiva that follows also brings up the problems of women and the social issues like environmental degeneration and presents to the students the sample of a meaningful interview. Having read the interview the students are asked to conduct a similar interview either on a similar or on a different topic. The students are also asked to conduct a discussion, to prepare a write-up and also to conduct a seminar. ‘The Sacred Earth’
that follows is a rather lengthy speech by Chief Seattle. It is an emotionally charged rendering by the Chief who is overcome by desperation and intense remorse. The lesson is followed by activities like speech, essay and a project. The block ends with the poem by Gieve patel ‘On Killing a Tree’ which is charged with sarcasm and irony and its simple lines easily are understood and the message of the block is projected on to the student mind most eloquently. In connection with the poem the students are asked to write an appreciation of the poem and also to attempt the writing a few similar lines. The activity seems capable of triggering the imagination of the students to write a few lines that echo the message and tone of the given poem.

The fifth block ‘Down the Corridors of Time’ which begins with the lines

The play is over. The performance committed. Slowly
The theatre, a sagging intestine, empties. In the dressing rooms
The nimble salesmen of the hotchpotch mimicry, of rancid rhetoric
Wash off make-up and sweat (Course1, 91)

These lines by Bertolt Brecht are dedicated to dance and drama. The first lesson of the block “The Rich Tradition of Indian Classical Dance” presents a detailed history of dance as an art. It is a learned treatise that presents systematically the Indian concepts and forms of dance. The various forms of Indian dance are made familiar through brief descriptions. At the end of the lessons the students are asked to conduct an interview with a performing artist in their area. On the whole the lesson looks erudite but how much it will be appreciated by the adolescent minds is a question with no definite positive answers. What follows is a write-up about theatre and drama and this too is high serious and tells the students gravely about the
nuances of drama and theatre. Happily, what follows is the meaningful and delightful one act play ‘The Never – Never Nest’ by Cedric Mount. It is delightfully simple and enjoyable. It is a short play with a lot of punch. A dialogue by Aunt Jane could be cited to prove the point. “Lie down? Do you suppose I’m going to trust myself in a bed that belongs to Mr. Sage, or Marks and Spencer, or somebody? No, I am going home” (Course I, 102). The limited number of characters and the absence of lengthy dialogues and the crystal clarity of the message and the overall flavour of humour immediately strike a note in the student mind. The activities that follow are also equally delightful and demanding. The students are asked to rewrite the play rooting it in the Kerala culture of the day. The students are asked to conduct a discussion about the play in preparation for the re-write, which they naturally will do with pleasure. ‘The Case for the Defence’ by Graham Greene that follows the play also has the element of drama in it and as a sequel to it the students are asked to write a drama version of the story and also to write a report on a murder case that resembles the one in the given story.

The sixth block is entitled ‘Ever Widening Horizons’ and has only two lessons in it, one a play and the other a poem. The story ‘True Love’ by Isaac Asimov is a piece of science fiction and provides a pleasurable read. On the completion of the lesson the students need to write a newspaper report, the story in their own words, a review of the story and also conduct a discussion comparing the story with the story named ‘Lifting the Veil’. The poem by Stephen Spender named ‘The Express’ celebrates the fusion of machines into human life. It provides a certain degree of pleasure while it is read aloud. After having read the poem the
students need to conduct a discussion, write an appreciation and also an essay. Both the lessons of the block have a scientific tone about them and both are about the progress achieved by man through inventing and using machines. The number of lessons in the block is lesser than that in the other blocks and as such the block gets over quicker than the others in the book.

The last block ‘Impressions’ begins with John Keats’s lines

“Heard melodies are sweet, those unheard
Are sweeter: therefore, ye soft pipes play on” (Course 1, 125).

Two chapters of Jane Austen’s novel Pride and Prejudice are the content of this last block. A brief introduction about the novel and its story is given followed by the two chapters. It is evident that the curriculum designers included two chapters from a classic novel to familiarize the students with the richness of English literature. Although the aim is justifiable, it is doubtful whether the curricular objective will be realized in the classes where the students still struggle with the basics of the second language. The students are made to read the two chapters in class either in groups or in pairs after a suitable introduction by the teacher. At the end of the chapters, the students are asked to discuss about the novel; its story, characters and the way the story is told. The students also need to write a character sketch of the leading characters. The end of the block is also the end of the book and marks the end of the year’s study of the second language.

The Course book 1 has been prepared with the aim of generating discourses in the classrooms. The collaborative nature of the activities and teacher’s facilitation are supposed to ensure positive results. The activities, which are included to enable the generation of discourses, keep the students engaged on a regular basis and serve
as platforms to maintain the academic profile of the class hours. The first year higher secondary *Course book* gives students the opportunity to engage in one hundred and thirty seven language activities. In addition to these, the individual teachers are given the freedom to design and work out suitable activities. The following table presents the activities listed in the first year course book -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities incorporated in +1 Coursebook</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Itinerary</td>
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<td>Letter</td>
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<td>Speech</td>
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<td>Project</td>
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<td>Essay</td>
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<td>Conversation</td>
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<td>Script writing</td>
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<td>Case study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total types of activities</td>
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Table 2. Comprehensive list of the activities incorporated in the first year course book.

The Second year *Course book* is in many ways a replication of the first year *Course book*. It is the last English text that the students will study at the school level. The curriculum designers are aware of the importance of this *Course book* as the
final English book of the school years. The foreword to the book says that it “as a text designed for the terminal stage of the school education, the Course book refines and consolidates the language-developing and knowledge-building measures initiated at the lower level” (Course 2, 4). As such the second year Course book is to be treated as a continuation and culmination of all the English Course books in the lower classes. Like Course book 1, Course book 2 also is divided into separate blocks. In all there are five blocks all of them presenting a few lessons and a number of activities.

The first block named “Peaks of Excellence” begins solemnly and meaningfully with a few lines from H.W. Longfellow

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by a sudden flight
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night. (Course 2, 7)

The four lines give a meaningful start to the second year of second language studies. It inspires the students with the zeal to do hard work and to attain success as great men have done. The first lesson is an anecdote named “Oh! Public Performance…!” by Richard Wright. It is a flashback from the author’s school days when he had a dread of public performances due to inordinate shyness. The lesson is simple and conveys its message quick and is helpful in making the students aware of the need to have the daring to speak out in public. At the end of the lesson the students are asked to conduct a discussion and to make a speech about their experiences in school. The second lesson of the block is a speech by Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam the former
president of India. In it he speaks eloquently about national and international issues and makes a meaningful analysis of the Indian mindset. Based on the lesson, the students are asked to make notes, discuss about Kalam’s speech in groups and also to make a speech about “Your dreams of a Developed India” (Course 2, 16). The students are asked also to write a report and to conduct a debate on the topic “We should follow the West for development and need not think of our rich tradition” (Course 2, 17). In addition to these activities, the students are also asked to write a letter as a parent would write to the teacher about his/her child. It has to be noted that this lesson is followed by a large number of activities just as there were a number of activities accompanying the first lesson of Course book 1. However, the letter writing activity can also be considered as a preparation for the lesson that follows, ‘A Nice Citizen’ by Abraham Lincoln. Having read the poem the students are to conduct a discussion and also to prepare a speech. The next lesson of the block seems to be quite unconnected to the other lessons in the block; the theme of the lesson is health. The lesson is a panel discussion in which doctors and intellectuals participate. The debate is about various health traditions prevalent in India. The participants discuss their views and argue for and against the preservation of Ayurvedic practices that are popular in India. Having gone through the lesson the students are asked to make a speech, to conduct a group discussion, a seminar and also to write the report of the seminar. The first block presents a good deal of work in terms of reading, writing and performing. As the block ends, the students are asked to take up the practice book to do more activities.
The second block named ‘Heights of Glory’ seems to have been named to make the students focus on the success achieved by Kalpana Chawla who achieved her ambitions through strong will and the determination to alter her circumstances. The first lesson of the block is the profile of Kalpana Chawla which briefly presents the story of her life. After reading the lesson the students are asked to discuss about the lesson, about People like Kalpana and also about the technique of writing profiles. The second lesson too is about a brave girl. She is a girl of fourteen who risked her life to save her little brother. The lesson is a story by A.J. Cronin named ‘An Irish Rose’. It is a story that is deeply moving and the element of pathos is capable of striking a note in the minds of all readers be it students or elders. After having enjoyed the story the students are asked to discuss about the story and to write a diary, to conduct a debate and to make a comparative study of Irish Rose and any other story that they have read. The lesson that follows shares no similarities with the previous ones. It is simply about health in India. It is in the form of an editorial, in fact it is the editorial of The Hindu of 7 April 2006. An editorial is given for study with the aim of teaching the students the technique of writing editorials. As a sequel to the lesson the students are asked to do note making, to write a similar editorials and also to conduct a survey of editorials. They students are also given a piece of writing in Malayalam language and also its translation and are asked to make a comparative study of the original and the translation. It seems that the students are given this activity to prepare them for the next lesson ‘The World Renowned Nose’. It is the translation of a Malayalam story by the renowned writer Vaikkom Muhammed Basheer. Having read the Malayalam story in English the students are asked to attempt translation of two English paragraphs into Malayalam.
They are also asked to do creative writing and to compile them into a manuscript magazine. Even as the block ends with a number of activities, the students are asked to take up the practice book for doing more activities.

The third block named ‘Wings of Fancy’ is introduced by the lines from William Shakespeare

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see
So long lives this and this gives life to thee (Course 2, 55)

Though the lines are from Shakespeare, the relevance of the lines in the context somehow eludes most readers. It is to be assumed that Shakespeare refers to fancy or the power of imagination. The first lesson of the block, a story named ‘The Open Window’ by Saki is about a girl’s imaginative stories. The story is interesting to read and there is much that makes the readers smile and even laugh. At the end of the story the students have to conduct a discussion, a debate and prepare a character sketch of the characters in the story. The students also need to write a review about the story. The next activity is rewriting the story by giving it a different ending than what they have read. The next lesson of the block, ‘The Patriot’ which is a poem by Robert Browning is followed by discussion, appreciation, and writing a poem by the students individually. The one act play that follows, ‘The King Who Limped’ written by Monica Thorne is a satire that often verges on farce. After the play the students are asked to do seven different activities. The activities include appreciation, review, newspaper report, class magazine, discussion, script writing and play-acting. The third block seems to be a heavy one in terms of the lessons and
the activities. The students and the teacher have much work to do in and out of classes in relation to the block.

The fourth block ‘Frames of Culture’ is about films and their intricacies. The block is introduced with a quote from Jean-Luc Godard: “the cinema is not an art which films life; the cinema is something between art and life. Unlike painting and literature, the cinema both gives to life and takes form it” (Course 2, 81). The first lesson of the block titled as ‘On Viewing the Television’ by David Considine is educative in nature and informs the reader about how to watch TV programs gainfully. The lesson is followed by two activities, a discussion and an interview. The next lesson is an interview with Adoor Gopalakrishnan, the famous Malayalam film director, who has won many awards. In the interview, the director speaks about his career and opens his mind about a few questions about his films. After having gone through the interview the students are asked to discuss about the interview that they have read. They are also asked to write a paragraph about Adoor Gopalakrishnan’s ideas of making films. In addition to these activities, the students are asked to write a newspaper report, a profile and a comparison. The next lesson also is about filmmaking. In this lesson named ‘The Making of a Film’ by Satyajit Ray, the art and craft of filmmaking are unveiled. It is followed by an extract from the screenplay of Pather Panchali. The students are also given a chance to see the film Pather Panchali. Having seen the film and read the lesson the students are asked to discuss and write about the characteristics of screenplays. They are also asked to collect other screenplays and compare them with each other and with the screenplay of Pather Panchali. The last lesson of the block titled, ‘The Making of the Kid’ is
written by Charlie Chaplin. In it he writes about the circumstances that led to the making of the famous film ‘The Kid’ and also about the film itself. The lesson is simple and easy for the students to understand. The lesson is followed by activities like discussion and diary writing. The biggest activity of the whole textbook is found at the end of this block. Having seen two films and studied about the art of making movies, the students are asked to conduct a film festival in the school. On the whole the block has been heavily and richly loaded. However, it needs to be doubted as to whether the students loved the block. They love films and stories but they may not have real intellectual appetite for such films as ‘Pather Panchali’.

The last block of the Course book 2 is light in comparison with the previous block. The block opens with the poem ‘Middle Age’ by Kamala Das. The poem is followed by recitation of the poem, discussion about the poem, review of the poem and a speech about the topic of the poem. The story by Anton Chekhov, ‘The Lottery Ticket’ also is easy to grasp and makes enjoyable reading. Having read the story the students are asked to write a critical appreciation of the poem and also to collect similar stories. The last lesson of the block and of the textbook is the one act play ‘The Dear Departed’. It is a rather long play with a lot of dialogue and some action. The teachers and the students take it up in the name of duty. In comparison with the Course book 1, the Course book 2 appears to be shorter as there are only five blocks but the contents of the blocks are more loaded and demands much work from the students. The students have much to do in and out of classes. There are many activities that require thorough group work and individual effort. The table below lists the activities that accompany the lessons.
Table 3. Comprehensive list of the activities incorporated in the second year Course book.

In addition to the two Course books, the students have to study two Practice books as well. Practice book, as the name suggests is intended to give practice to the students in writing English. These books contain guided activities that the students can do with the help of the teacher and with each other’s help. The Practice books are sub titled as books of Functional English. The preface to Practice book 1 announces its aims. “The Practice book supplements and enriches the process of acquiring language skills initiated through the activities in the Course book by providing additional opportunity to the learner to familiarise himself/herself with various language functions. A number of activities are designed to give practice in the use of English” (5). The Practice books are to be taken up in class at definite
intervals in between the blocks of the *Course books*. The activities in the *practice books* supplement the activities that accompany the lessons in the *Course books*.

The *Practice books* share a structural similarity with the *Course books* regarding their structure. Just as the *Course books* are divided into blocks, the *Practice books* are divided into units. The Part one *Practice book* is divided into seven units and each unit has a title and a theme. The first unit of *Practice book 1* is titled ‘Of What Colour and Shape is it?’ and concentrates on the teaching the art of description both simple and elaborate. The first activity asks the students to describe people in detail after reading the sample descriptions. The second exercise asks the students to read a description about Mother Theresa and to study the words that are used to describe the external appearance of Mother Theresa. These words will be of use to them when they attempt descriptions of people. The third exercise asks them to describe a person by looking at his photograph. The fourth is to prepare a TV message describing a person who was found missing. The fifth exercise is about the description of feelings. The sixth is an activity to familiarize them with the dictionary and vocabulary items. The eighth is a very simple one that asks the students to match descriptions and photographs of persons. The ninth exercise gives them a story to read and a few questions based on the story for them to answer. The tenth consists of three jumbled pieces of autobiography that the students have to put in order. In all, the unit consists of ten activities of which some are simple and some complex. On the whole, it is a unit that the teacher can easily communicate to the students and the students can do a reasonably good job with the exercises.

The second unit is titled ‘I Prefer a Life in the Village…’ and aims to teach
the way of expressing one’s likes, dislikes and preferences. The first exercise asks them to make sentences with expressions such as “I like, I don’t like, I prefer, I hate, I’d like to…. Because, since, as, the reason why …” (Practice 1, 20). The second and third exercises of the unit introduce a man named Gopal and give a brief view of his character and domestic situation. In the fourth exercise the students are given training to frame questions to interview Mr. Gopal. The fifth exercise is sentence-completion, the sixth a piece of diary writing, the seventh a telephone conversation and the eighth again is a diary writing exercise. The ninth exercise gives the students a simple poem to read and in connection with the poem they are asked to prepare an advertisement to be given in the missing column of the newspaper. The tenth exercise is the writing of letter as if from a mother to son. The second unit is characterised by a stream of thought that links all the exercises and it somehow gives the exercises a relation to life. As the exercise form part of a story, doing the exercises can become a pleasure for the students who otherwise do the activities and exercises mechanically as a part of classroom duty.

The third unit is titled as ‘Sorry, I Can’t Agree with You…’ and begins with an interesting anecdote about a farmer who expresses his positive and negative opinions. The second is a conversation after the reading of which the students are asked to write the continuation of the conversation. The third exercise is pictorial and focuses on the expression of opinion, likes and dislikes. The fourth and the fifth are conversations, which at the end ask the students to put in their contribution to continue the dialogue. The sixth and the seventh are also about the expression of opinions and the phrases and usages that are common in such contexts. The next is a
newspaper report based on which the students are to make their comments and also
draft a letter expressing their opinions about the newspaper report. The ninth is a
panel discussion which eloquently presents the expression of opinions by different
speakers and in continuation of the same exercise the students are asked to conduct a
similar discussion about ‘Preventing corruption in high places’ and about ‘Student
strikes’ (Practice 1, 34). The tenth exercise is a paragraph followed by the brief note
made about it following which the students are asked to read a note and write a
paragraph based on the note given. The unit is rich in the number of exercises. All of
them intend to coach the students in the methods of expression and using their
verbal repertoire to express meanings. The expression of opinion is the focus of the
unit and a variety of measures are used to engender a positive result in the minds of
the students in as far as enabling them to express their views, opinions, likes and
dislikes.

The fourth unit has a rather lengthy headline: ‘Is Tele-Shopping Better than
Shopping at the Market’ (Practice 1, 37)? This unit too has ten exercises, which the
students are asked to do after reading the contents and the directions that follow. The
unit opens with a brief and simple description about tigers, which the students can
easily read for themselves. The words used are simple and the ideas are not
complex. After reading the paragraph the students are asked to compare the tiger and
the cat using words like “but, though, although, while, whereas, smaller, bigger,
faster etc” (Practice 1, 37). The second exercise begins with a table that presents the
salient aspects of life in the past and in the present. Based on the table the students
are asked to write a comparison about life in the past and life now. As the third
exercise, the students are asked to read a paragraph about Mother Theresa by Kushwant Singh and to compare it with a similar description of Mother Theresa in unit 1. The fourth is a sample exchange of opinions between two people and the fifth a table depicting food habits of a few people. Both these exercises end by asking the students to do a similar comparison. The sixth work is that of answering the questions based on a given weather chart. The remaining four exercises are also exercises to develop the ability to express comparisons and contrasts.

The fifth block as the title ‘If I were a Film Star …’ (Practice 1, 47) suggests is about the expression of wishes and possibilities. As in the previous blocks in this block too there are ten activities for the students to do. The first exercise focuses on questions and answers that are about possibility and chance. The second activity is to read a conversation and then to give suitable answers to questions asked by a friend. The third activity is to write reactions and expressions based on a few given questions. The fifth asks the students to make a few suggestions while the sixth and the seventh activities ask them to write sentences involving hypothesis or wishes.

The sixth unit is about making suggestions, giving advice and instructions. The theme of the unit is suggested in the title of the unit which is ‘Shall We Go for a Movie’ (Practice 1, 56)? The first activity, which includes a reading passage and writing a paragraph on the advantages and disadvantages of a computer, seems to be incongruous with the title and the rest of the activities of the unit. The second, third and fourth activities are about making suggestions while the fifth, eighth and ninth are about giving instructions and the sixth and the seventh are about giving advice. The last activity is about computer vocabulary. It introduces words that are familiar
in the circles of computer and Internet users and is linked to the lesson ‘True Love’ in the Course book 2. As suggestions advice and instructions are a part of daily conversation, this activity helps to familiarize the students about the suitable terminology and expressions. Students who have read the lesson ‘True Love’ and the dialogue between Milton Davidson and his computer, will find this activity useful and effective.

This unit tries to teach the students how to express speculation about the past, present and future. The students are familiarized with usages like, ‘will do, will be doing and will have done’ (Practice 1, 85). The first and the second activities ask the students to make predictions using will. The third asks them to make a timetable chart while the fifth asks them to make a similar program chart. The fourth gives the students two tasks namely discussion and writing. The sixth is a conversation the seventh a report and the eighth making a plan for the future. In the activities nine and ten the students are given a paragraph each to read and based on them questions are asked, to which they need to give suitable answers.

In all the seven units the students are given guided activity, which the teachers help them to do. In comparison with the activities in the Course book, the activities in the Practice book do not call up the originality and inventiveness of the students. There are clear directions and blank spaces that follow which the students are asked to fill in with the correct expression. The exercises in the Practice book aim to give the students familiarity with expressions, usages and grammar. Each unit is independent of the other units and has a specific theme and specially selected discourses, which are used as a trigger to generate the correct usages and
expressions. In the *Course book* the activities are linked to the theme of the individual lessons and thereby while doing the activities suggested by the *Course book* the students feel more confident as the ideas have already been familiarized through the content of the lessons.

The *Practice book* for the second year is very much similar to the *Practice book* prescribed for the first year. The difference between the two books is only in the number of chapters and the names given to the chapters. In *Practice book 1* the chapters are named as units while in *Practice book 2* the chapters are named as Worksheets. There are seven units in *Practice book 1* while in *Practice book 2* there are only five worksheets. The number of activities in the Worksheets exceeds the number of activities in the Units of *Practice book 1*. The second year *Practice book* supplements the second year *Course book*. The content of the lessons in the *Course book* are used in the *Practice book* to trigger the activities. The link between the two books is strongly established by the activities in the *Practice book*. In all there are sixty activities in the *Practice book 2* for the students to do as a part of the second language learning at the +2 level. These are in addition to the one hundred and twenty activities that are prescribed by the *Course book 2*. It could be easily assumed that there is much work for the teachers and the students to do as a part of the study of English in the second year of the +2 course.

Having analyzed the prescriptions of the *Source book*, the content of the *Course books* and the *Practice books*, it is only just to analyze the classroom activities, the processing of the discourses and the lessons by the teachers and the work done by the students collaboratively in the second language classes. Teachers
are given clear directions regarding the processing of the individual lessons and the activities that accompany them. The usual procedure adopted by the teachers is to introduce the lesson by a small introductory talk related to the topic of the individual lessons. At times an activity like discussion or debate is given to the students and then the teacher proceeds to talk to the students about the particular lessons. The lessons themselves are to be read and understood by the students in such a way that the reading helps them to do the activities and to write the discourses. But reading a lesson and grasping its meaning may not be possible for all students. To help the weaker students the teachers tend to read the lessons in the class with explanations in English and even in the mother tongue. This practice of reading and explaining the lessons in the classes is reminiscent of behaviourist practices. It could be said that in the constructivist paradigm at the higher secondary level the teachers read and explain the lessons with the aim of processing the activities and the discourses. The content of the lessons is not given an importance beyond the purpose of understanding and enjoying their subject matter. The teachers explain the lessons and try to link their subject matter to the activities that are to be done by the students.

In the context of the detailing about the actual classes facts about the student strength of the classes and the duration of the periods and the number of periods that the teacher gets in a class every week needs to be looked into. In keeping with the directions of the education department and the higher secondary directorate, the student strength of the higher secondary classes is between fifty-five and sixty. Reservation is granted to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes minorities and the
physically challenged. These students find a place in the classes along with the students who are admitted on the basis of merit. As such the intellectual and academic standard of the students as a class is liable to variation and eludes an accurate evaluation. The higher secondary follows a six-day week timetable. Every working day which begins at 9.15 am and ends at 4.00 pm is divided into eight periods with an interval after every two periods. On all working days, in every higher secondary class there is a minimum of one period dedicated to the teaching and learning of English. The timetable is scheduled in such a way that the students receive seven periods of English classes. The teachers, who are in full-time service, are to engage twenty fours hours a week; four periods per day.

In the second language classes the teachers present the lessons and process the activities in all the four periods that they engage each day. They instruct, direct and monitor the students to read the lessons and to do the activities. He/she has to be with the students giving suitable guidance regularly to make sure that each student achieves progress in the use of the second language. The students in classes and at home do the activities and then they are evaluated by the teacher as a part of the Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation, CCE process. Teachers need to complete the lessons and the activities in time for the term and annual examinations.

Along with the regular classes and the activities the teacher has to do the evaluation. All directions and information regarding the new evaluation methods are given in the separate book called Edumate which is designed as a guide to the teachers in matters of evaluation. It helps the teacher to equip the learners to face the term and annual examinations. The book serves the purpose announced through its
name; it becomes a mate, a companion to the process of education.

All the central tenets of the curriculum are taken into consideration in the evaluation procedures. Evaluation is considered as a means to challenge the thinking of the learner in a most positive. It enables the learner to analyze, synthesize, recall and construct discourses in keeping with the language ability that he has acquired. The conventional examinations in which knowledge is tested through questions, which demand reproduction of stored data, would not correlate with the new paradigm. The evaluation should aim at testing the thinking capabilities of the pupil. It should also test the extent to which the student has been able to internalize the modes of thinking, of constructing knowledge from the facts of life. It is stated that

Our aim in this book is two fold. First, to inform the teaching learning community at higher secondary level the changed strategies of evaluation. Secondly, to familiarize them with the activities of evaluation and sample questions and to equip the learners to face the final examination with confidence. (Edumate 2, 3)

The Edumate emphasizes the fact that evaluation is not a measure to inflict strain on the student but a continuation of the learning procedures undertaken in the classroom. Evaluation “is an integral part of the learning experience designed and undertaken by the teacher and the learner together” (Edumate 6). Unlike in the past, evaluation is considered a continuous process, which spreads through out the two years of the course. It is termed as “Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation, CCE. The term examination TE is a continuation of the CCE. CCE is informal and ongoing and is done by the teacher by analyzing and assessing the activities and
reports that are done by the students in the class.

Like all the other books prescribed for the higher secondary course, the *Edumate* also has two versions, one for the first year and another for the second year. Both give directions to teachers regarding the evaluation procedures including the manner in which ideal question papers are to be prepared. Following these directions ideal question papers in keeping with the tenets of the curriculum can be prepared by the teachers. The thrust of the guidelines is on the specific nature of the questions, the scores to be allowed to each type of questions. Based on these guidelines the teachers can also give suitable questions and activities in connection with the separate lessons. To make the evaluation measures free of errors both books give full-length sample question papers. A look at these question papers would bring to focus the implementation of the pedagogic theories and the stipulations of the curriculum regarding evaluation (Appendix 2).

The paradigm shift was brought to effect in the higher secondary pedagogic practices through the *Source book*; the *Course books* the *Practice books* and the *Edumate*. Through the teacher training courses, cluster meetings of teachers and monitoring, the curriculum designers tried to make the paradigm shift complete. Through the new roles given to teachers as facilitators, new learner materials and activity sessions, the second languages classes became different from what they previously were. However, though the paradigm shift has taken place, everything with regard to the teaching learning processes in the second language class rooms is not fault-free. There are aspects that invite attention and remediation.