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Foreword from the Editor-in-Chief

It is with great pleasure and a deep sense of scholarly purpose that I present this volume of the International Journal of English Literature, Linguistics, and Social Sciences (IJELS-Multidisciplinary). This issue represents another significant milestone in our journal's ongoing commitment to advancing rigorous, interdisciplinary academic inquiry at the intersection of literary studies, linguistics, and the social sciences.

Language, literature, and society are inseparably intertwined. The ways in which human communities tell their stories, organise their grammars, negotiate their identities, and construct their social worlds are not merely subjects of scholarly curiosity — they are the very fabric of human civilisation. IJELS-Multidisciplinary was founded on the conviction that these disciplines are most productive when they speak to one another, when literary analysis is enriched by social theory, when linguistic inquiry draws on cultural context, and when social science methodology illuminates the structures of narrative and discourse.

This volume brings together a diverse collection of original research contributions from scholars across the globe. The manuscripts included here have been rigorously evaluated through our double-blind peer review process, ensuring that every article published meets the highest standards of academic quality, methodological integrity, and scholarly originality. We are grateful to our peer reviewers, whose expert and constructive engagement with submitted work is the foundation upon which this journal's credibility rests.

The range of topics covered in this issue reflects the genuine interdisciplinarity that defines IJELS-Multidisciplinary. Readers will find contributions spanning postcolonial literary criticism, applied linguistics, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, cultural studies, education, gender studies, translation studies, and comparative literature, among other areas. This breadth is not accidental — it reflects our editorial belief that the most significant scholarly advances today occur at disciplinary boundaries, where methodologies and theoretical frameworks converge in unexpected and productive ways.

We are particularly proud of the geographic and institutional diversity represented in this volume. Contributors from universities and research institutions across South Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas have shared their scholarship through these pages. IJELS-Multidisciplinary is, in the truest sense, a global journal — one that seeks to ensure that important scholarship produced outside the traditional centres of academic publishing receives the international visibility it deserves.

As we continue to grow, our commitment remains constant: to provide a rigorous, transparent, and accessible publication platform for scholars at every stage of their careers, from established professors to early-career researchers and doctoral candidates contributing their first original work to the scholarly record. Every voice that advances knowledge has a place in these pages.

I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to the members of the editorial board, whose expertise, diligence, and intellectual generosity make each issue of IJELS-Multidisciplinary possible. I also thank the authors who have trusted us with their scholarship, and the readers whose engagement gives our work its ultimate purpose.

I commend this volume to you with confidence, and I hope that the research contained within it will stimulate further inquiry, scholarly debate, and productive dialogue across the disciplines we serve.

Editor-in-Chief

International Journal of English Literature, Linguistics, and Social Sciences

[July, 2026]

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Bridging Liberal Arts and Industry: Apprenticeship-Embedded English Degrees in the NEP-2020 Framework

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Abstract

The transformation of undergraduate English studies in India has become imperative in the context of rapid socio-economic and technological change. Traditionally literature-centric, English programmes are now being re-envisioned to align with employability, interdisciplinarity, and skill-based learning as articulated in the National Education Policy 2020. This paper examines the pedagogical and structural implications of introducing Apprenticeship-Embedded Degree Programmes (AEDP) and internship-integrated curricula for English major students. It argues that AEDP offers a viable framework to bridge the gap between liberal arts education and industry requirements by embedding experiential learning, vocational skills, and professional communication competencies within the academic structure (UGC, 2020; Ministry of Education, 2020). Drawing upon developments in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), digital literacy, and Human Language Technology, the study proposes a comprehensive model comprising ten skill-oriented courses, including corporate communication, digital content writing, media writing, legal English, and Natural Language Processing. The paper situates these curricular innovations within broader theoretical constructs such as communicative competence, Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), and Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) (Cummins, 1979), while also engaging with the demands of the global knowledge economy (Gee, 2015).

Keywords: Undergraduate English studies, AEDP, employability, interdisciplinarity, skill-based learning

I. INTRODUCTION

For quite a long period, undergraduate level English major subjects were literature-centric. After having the degree, students were mostly trying to get the teaching jobs in schools and colleges. Some others, although number is very few prefer to work with media, publishing and advertising companies. But. Time has changed. Now, syllabus for students of English tries to bring balance between both language and literature. Of late, it is realized that the increasing

utility of language in professional and technical domains needs to be addressed. In this context, Apprenticeship-Embedded Degree Programmes (AEDP) for undergraduate English majors aim to bridge the gap between traditional liberal arts education and industry employability, often resulting in a B.A. (English) with a minor in a vocational skill. These programs align with the curriculum framework of University Grants Commission (UGC) and national Education Policy (NEP 2020), and allow students to

earn while they learn, providing paid internships, and industry-relevant training.

An important part of English major is typically to move into careers requiring high communication skill levels. Thus, subjects like Corporate Communication, Content Writing, Digital Marketing, Media & Publishing, HR Operations, and Public Relations. In these programs, 25%-30% practical work experience is associated. Now, it not only makes English Major students industry-ready but also gives them a scope to be associated with field study and language laboratory. Now, such students can become copywriter, editor, PR specialist, instructional designer, and technical writer. What's more, such students can go for subjects of study like data science and human language technology.

II. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

For quite a long time, English major students were used to studying books on literature and literary theories. Then the studies relating to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) was introduced in professional and technical curriculum. Thus, for the last three decades or so, the idea of imparting the courses like Professional Communication in English, Business Communication, English for Engineers or English for Medical Professionals emerged. To some extent, in CBCS syllabus, Media Writing was also included as an Elective paper. Now, in the contemporary scenario, and specifically aligning with the salient features of NEP-2020, the need of new and apprenticeship-based teaching-learning system has to be introduced to English major at UG level too. This increasingly breaks monotony as students have to adaptive to multidisciplinary while gaining knowledge of literatures in English. In addition, of late, it is realized that the learners should develop autonomy; be able to bring about balance between Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) and Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) (Cummins, 1979). This should be ideally flavored with technical competence and Multiple Intelligence (MI, Gardener, 1983).

In this context, here ten course titles, the course objectives, outcomes and other pedagogical details have been presented aiming to benefit both teachers and students of English language.

III. BRIEF OUTLINE AND SUGGESTED READINGS OF SOME OF THE AEDC COURSES

Course-1: Corporate Communication and Public Relation

This course introduces learners to the principles and practices of communication in corporate and professional environments. It focuses on internal and external communication, business writing, corporate presentations, media relations, crisis communication, and ethical communication in organizations. By the end of the course, students will be able to understand the role of communication in corporate success; develop professional written and oral communication skills; analyze organizational communication strategies; apply communication tools in real corporate scenarios; and demonstrate ethical and culturally sensitive communication. Course Outcomes include explaining key concepts and models of corporate communication; draft professional corporate documents; deliver effective business presentations; handle internal, external, and crisis communication; and apply ethical and intercultural communication practices.

The paper can be prepared focusing on Introduction to Corporate Communication which can include: meaning and scope of corporate communication; evolution of corporate communication; communication vs business communication; role of communication in corporate identity and image; stakeholders and corporate communication; and ethics in corporate communication. In the second unit, topics of focus can be on organizational and internal Communication which includes formal and informal communication; vertical, horizontal, and diagonal communication; leadership communication; employee engagement and motivation; communication barriers and solutions. Unit three includes corporate writing skills including principles of effective business writing; emails, memos, notices, and circulars; reports; proposals and executive summaries; tone, clarity, and conciseness in corporate writing; corporate presentations and public speaking; presentation planning and structure; visual aids and slide design; persuasive and informative presentations; handling question and answer sessions; and external communication and media relations.

Course-2: Professional Communication and Workplace Skills

Similar to course-1 but with a different title, this course prepares learners for professional and workplace success by developing communication skills, career readiness, interpersonal competence, ethical awareness, and lifelong learning habits. It integrates self-assessment, employability skills, and professional conduct. Course Objectives of this is to develop professional communication and workplace skills; Enhance self-awareness and career readiness; Demonstrate leadership, teamwork, and adaptability; Prepare for employment processes and workplace culture; Practice ethical and responsible professional behaviour. The Course Outcomes can be to demonstrate effective professional communication; apply interpersonal and teamwork skills; prepare career-ready documents and presentations; exhibit leadership and problem-solving abilities; practice ethical, inclusive, and responsible professionalism

The syllabus broadly covers i. Self-Awareness and professional identity under which verbal and non-verbal communication; workplace communication etiquette; email, reports, and formal correspondence; listening and feedback skills; presentation and public speaking basics. Interpersonal skills and teamwork can include i. emotional intelligence ii. team dynamics and collaboration iii. conflict management iv. networking skills and v. workplace diversity and inclusion. In the third unit, career readiness and employability skills can be focused including resume and cover letter writing; interview skills and group discussions; workplace professionalism and etiquette; time management and productivity; digital professionalism and online presence; leadership, ethics and workplace culture; leadership styles and qualities; decision-making and problem-solving; and Professional ethics and integrity. Unit four titled contemporary workplace skills includes adaptability and resilience; stress management and work-life balance; digital skills for professionals; remote and hybrid work culture; entrepreneurship and freelancing basics; customer interaction and service communication; and cross-cultural workplace communication.

For both the courses, the following list of books can be referred to for various academic and activity-based requirements.

- i. Handbook of Corporate Communication and Public Relations by Edited by Sandra M. Oliver
- ii. Business and Professional Communication: Keys for Workplace Excellence by K.M.Quintanilla and S.T.Wahl
- iii. Understanding Corporate Communication by Dmytro Oltarzhevskyi and Yevgen Zgurolko
- iv. Business Communication Today by C.L. Bovee and J.V.Thill
- v. Corporate Communications: Theory and Practice by Joep Corenellisen
- vi. Essentials of Corporate Communication by C.B.M.Riel & C.J.Fombrun
- vii. Handbook of Corporate Communication & Public Relation by Ed.Sandra M.Oliver
- viii. Professional Communication by Dingwall et al
- ix. Introduction to Professional Communication by Melisa Ashman
- x. Business Communication by Lesikar & Flatley
- xi. Workplace Communication by ILO

Course-3: Digital Literacy

This course equips learners with essential digital skills required for academic, professional, and everyday contexts. It focuses on digital tools, online safety, information literacy, ethical use of technology, and responsible digital citizenship. Here, course objectives are to develop basic operational skills for digital devices and platforms; use digital tools for learning, communication, and collaboration; evaluate online information critically; Practice safe, ethical, and responsible digital behaviour; understand the social impact of digital technologies. Course outcomes include operating digital devices and common software applications; use the internet effectively for academic and professional purposes; evaluate digital information for credibility and relevance; practice cyber safety and data privacy; demonstrate ethical and responsible digital citizenship. (Gee, 2015).

The syllabus can include: Introduction to digital literacy which covers the areas like meaning and scope of digital literacy; importance of digital skills in education and employment; digital divide and

inclusion, types of digital devices; digital tools and applications; word processing tools (documents, formatting, collaboration); spreadsheets (basic formulas, data organisation); presentation tools (slides, visuals, design principles); cloud storage and file management; and productivity tools for students. The second unit covers internet and information literacy that includes further basics of the internet and web browsers; search engines and effective search strategies; evaluating online sources (fake news, misinformation); digital libraries and open educational resources; academic use of online information. Unit three is based on digital communication and collaboration in which topics like email etiquette and professional communication; video conferencing tools; social media use for learning and networking; online collaboration platforms; and digital footprints are focused. In unit four, cyber safety, security and ethics; cyber threats: phishing, malware, hacking; password management and data protection; online privacy and security practices; cyber laws and digital ethics; plagiarism and intellectual property; responsible online behaviour; artificial intelligence and internet of things (IoT) and technology and society. Some of the suggested books for this course are:

- i. Digital Literacy for Dummies by Faithe Wempen
- ii. Digital Literacy: Tools and Methodologies for Information Society by P.C.Revoltela
- iii. Information Literacy in the Digital Age by Laura Perdwew

Course-4: Web-based Content Writing

This course introduces learners to writing for digital platforms. It focuses on creating engaging, audience-centric, and search-optimized content for websites, blogs, social media, and online publications. Students will develop practical skills in content planning, writing, editing, and ethical digital publishing. Here, students will be able to understand the nature and purpose of web content; write clear, engaging, and audience-specific digital content; apply basic SEO principles to writing; adapt content for different web platforms; practice ethical and responsible online writing. After completing the course, students will be able to: explain key concepts of web-based content writing; produce effective content for websites and blogs; apply SEO and readability techniques; edit and

optimize content for digital platforms; and demonstrate ethical digital publishing practices

In this course, first unit contains Introduction to web-based content writing which includes meaning and scope of web content writing; difference between print and digital writing; audience analysis and purpose; content types and platforms; basics of digital publishing; website and blog writing. Unit two contains SEO and Content Optimisation which is based on introduction to Search Engine Optimisation (SEO); keywords and keyword research (basic); writing SEO-friendly content; meta titles and descriptions; Internal linking and readability tools. Unit three is titled Writing for social media and Digital Platforms. This includes Writing for social media platforms; Micro-content and captions; content calendars and consistency; visual-text balance; hashtags, trends, and engagement strategies; editing, plagiarism, ethics and digital credibility. Unit four titled professional web writing and portfolio development includes freelance and professional content writing; writing proposals and client briefs; content marketing basics; building a digital writing portfolio and Introduction to AI tools in content writing (ethical use). In this, following books can be suggested for reading.

- i. Content is King by David Mill
- ii. Reader-centric Writing for Media: Theory and Practice by David Hailey
- iii. Digital Writing Guide by Dan Lawrence

Course-5: Advertising and Copywriting

This course introduces students to the principles of advertising and the craft of copy-writing. It focuses on persuasive communication, creative strategy, media planning basics, and ethical advertising practices across print, broadcast, and digital platforms. Course objectives are to understand the role of advertising in marketing and society; analyze different forms of advertisements; develop creative and persuasive copy; adapt copy for various media platforms; practice ethical and responsible advertising. Course Outcomes can be explained key concepts and functions of advertising; analyse advertising strategies and campaigns; write effective advertising copy for multiple media; apply creativity and audience analysis in copywriting; and demonstrate ethical awareness in advertising communication

In this paper, unit one introduces advertising which includes meaning and scope of advertising; advertising versus publicity versus public relations; functions of advertising; types of advertising (product, service, social, political); advertising agencies and their structure; advertising strategy and consumer psychology. In unit two, copywriting fundamentals and meaning and role of copywriting are discussed. Then, topics like qualities of good advertising copy; AIDA and other copy models; tone, style, and language of advertising; creativity in copywriting are usefully related. In unit three, copywriting for different media; print advertisements (newspapers, magazines); radio and TV advertising scripts; outdoor advertising (hoardings, posters); digital advertising copy (web, social media); headlines, slogans, taglines, and captions; layout, visuals and creative execution like topics are covered up. In unit four, focus is on ethics, regulations and contemporary advertising; ethics in advertising; advertising standards and regulations; misleading and surrogate advertising; gender, stereotypes, and representation; emerging trends: influencer marketing, native ads, AI in advertising.

Course-6: Writing for Mass Media

This course introduces students to the principles and practices of journalistic writing in English. It focuses on news reporting, feature writing, editing, interviewing, and ethical journalism across print and digital media platforms. Course objectives are to understand the fundamentals of journalism and news values; write clear, accurate, and engaging journalistic content; apply journalistic style and conventions; edit and proofread news content; practice ethical and responsible journalism. The course outcomes are to explain the role and functions of journalism; write different types of news reports and articles; apply journalistic style, structure, and language; edit news content for clarity, accuracy, and balance; and demonstrate ethical and professional journalistic practices.

The syllabus for this course includes: Introduction to journalism and news writing; meaning and scope of journalism; role of journalism in a democracy; print, broadcast, and digital journalism; news values and newsworthiness; structure of a news report (inverted pyramid). In unit two, focus is given on the language of journalism

which includes characteristics of journalistic language; headlines: types and techniques; leads and nut graphs; clarity, brevity, and objectivity; common language errors in news writing; digital and contemporary journalism. In unit three, topics like types of journalistic writing are focused in which hard news and soft news; feature writing; human interest stories; editorials and opinion pieces; reviews and columns are there. In unit four, reporting and interviewing skills; basics of news gathering; sources of news; interviewing techniques; note-taking and observation; reporting beats (education, politics, culture, crime) and editing, ethics and media law are focused.

Some of the books for both the courses can be prescribed as follows:

- i. Fundamentals of Journalism: Reporting, Writing and Editing by Berner. R. Thomas
- ii. Reader-centric Writing for Digital Media: Theory and Practice by David Hailey
- iii. Content is King: Writing and Editing Online by David Mill
- iv. Digital Writing: A Guide to Writing for Social Media and the Web by Dan Lawrence
- v. Writing for Journalists by Matt Swaine and others
- vi. Writing for Journalists by Wynford Hicks and others
- vii. The International Journalism Handbook: Concepts, Challenges and Contexts by Rodrigo Zamith

Course-7: English for the Court of Law

This course introduces learners to the language of law, focusing on legal vocabulary, genres, discourse, and communication skills used in legal contexts. It aims to develop competence in reading legal texts, drafting legal documents, interpreting statutes and judgments, and effective oral advocacy using clear and precise English. Course objectives of this syllabus include: understand the structure and style of legal English; interpret legal texts, statutes, and case laws; use legal vocabulary and terminology accurately; draft basic legal documents in formal English; communicate effectively in legal and quasi-legal settings; and develop critical reading and analytical skills for legal discourse. Course Outcomes can be mapped through identifying features of legal language and discourse;

interpreting statutes, contracts, and judgments; drafting basic legal documents using appropriate conventions; applying legal vocabulary in written and oral communication; and presenting arguments clearly and logically in English.

The units include i. Introduction to Legal English which covers up nature and scope of legal English; characteristics of legal language; legal vocabulary and terminology; legal terms, maxims, and expressions; common Latin legal phrases (e.g., habeas corpus, prima facie); archaic terms and doublets (e.g., null and void); words with special legal meanings; and synonyms, antonyms, and collocations in legal English. In unit two, reading, writing and interpreting legal texts can be focused with emphasis on critical reading strategies for legal texts; structure of statutes and acts; reading case laws and judgments; understanding contracts and agreements; interpretation of legal notices; legal writing skills; principles of legal writing; drafting legal notices, affidavits, agreements and contracts; case briefs and summaries; and clarity, coherence, and conciseness in legal writing. Unit three contains oral communication in legal contexts; courtroom language and etiquette; client interviews and consultations; argumentation and persuasion; moot court presentations; professional ethics in legal communication. Unit four contains grammar and style for legal English in which the topics like sentence structure in legal writing; use of passive voice and modality; punctuation and formatting in legal documents; avoiding ambiguity and redundancy; and plain English movement in law.

Suggested Books

- i. Legal English by Rupert Haigh
- ii. English for Law: A Toolkit for Discourse and Genre-based Approaches to ESP Language by Girolamo Tessuto
- iii. handbook of Legal Terminology by William Charlton and others
- iv. Modern Legal English: A Handbook for Students by S.K.Bose
- v. The Legal English Manual: Handbook for Professional Legal Language and Practical Skills edited by K.W.Walsh
- vi. Desouza's Forms and Precedents of Conveyancing Book

Course -8: Knowledge Process Outsourcing (KPO)

This course introduces students to Knowledge Process Outsourcing (KPO) is a high-end segment of outsourcing that involves analytical, research-based, and knowledge-intensive work. The course focuses on industry practices, sectoral applications, communication skills, research methods, data handling, ethics, and emerging trends in the global KPO industry.

The course aims to familiarize students with the KPO industry and its evolution; develop analytical, research, and domain-specific skills; build professional communication and documentation skills; introduce tools and methods used in KPO services; and create awareness of ethics, data security, and global standards. On completion of the course, students will be able to explain the structure and functioning of the KPO industry; identify major domains and services in KPO; apply research and analytical skills to real-world problems; produce professional reports and presentations; and demonstrate awareness of ethics, compliance, and data security.

The course contents include introduction to KPO; meaning and scope of Knowledge Process Outsourcing; difference between BPO, KPO, and LPO; evolution of the outsourcing industry; global KPO market and India's role; key skills required for KPO professionals; and case study on outsourcing evolution. In the second unit, subjects include KPO domains and services in which topics like market research and business research; financial and investment analysis; publishing and content-based KPO; group presentations on KPO sectors; and use of charts, graphs, and dashboards are focused. In unit three titled communication and documentation in KPO, the topics like professional email writing; business reports and executive summaries; report writing and documentation; presentation skills for global clients; cross-cultural communication; and client interaction and requirement analysis are studied. In unit four, titled technology and tools in KPO, use of spreadsheets and databases; introduction to data visualization tools; basics of automation and AI in KPO; knowledge management systems; cybersecurity and data protection; and ethics, compliance, and future trends are comprehended.

Suggested Books

i. Knowledge Process Outsourcing: Unlocking Top-line Growth by Outsourcing “the Core,” KMPG Advisory

ii. Knowledge Process Outsourcing: Transformation in the Operating Model for Free Earning Activities (Elix-IRR: KPO Outsourcing)

Course-9: Communication, Personality, and Employability Skills (CPES)

The objectives are to equip students with industry-ready skills in communication, self-management, teamwork, career tools, and ethics to boost employability by 30-50% (via pre/post skill audits). Learning outcomes includes how students will demonstrate effective verbal/non-verbal skills and produce error-free professional documents; complete a personality profile and apply time/stress tools daily; resolve simulated conflicts and deliver a 1-minute elevator pitch; build ATS-optimized resumes and ace mock interviews/GDs; and navigate ethical scenarios and demonstrate cross-cultural competence.

Unit one includes foundations of professional communication like verbal versus non-Verbal: 7-38-55 rule (Mehrabian); practice with role-plays and video feedback; active listening: paraphrasing techniques and follow-up questions; barrier analysis (cultural, psychological, physical); professional writing: pyramid principle for emails/memos/reports; AI tools like Grammarly for editing; activities like rewriting a poorly worded email chain. Unit two covers up personality development and self-management in which topics like big Five Traits: Free online assessments (e.g., IPIP-NEO); self-reflection journals; emotional Intelligence (EQ): Goleman's model; empathy exercises; growth mindset: Carol Dweck's strategies; time/stress management: Eisenhower Matrix, Pomodoro; apps like Todoist or Forest and activities like personalized 1-week time audit with peer review can be done. In the third unit that is interpersonal and team dynamics, topics like conflict resolution: crucial conversations framework; role-plays; networking: authentic strategies (informational interviews); LinkedIn etiquette; public speaking: Glossophobia tips; pitch practice with Toastmasters-style feedback; leadership styles: situational leadership (Hersey-Blanchard); team simulations; and activities such as virtual networking

event simulation can be done. In the fourth unit that is employability and career readiness, topics like verbal reasoning: logical sequences, blood relations, syllogisms, analogies; resume/cover letters: achievement-focused with keywords; tools like canva/resume; digital Footprint: LinkedIn optimization; personal branding audits; interviews/GDs: STAR method; GD strategies (e.g., balanced contributions); and activities like live mock GD and interview with video critique are done. In the fifth unit that is workplace ethics and global etiquette, office etiquette: hybrid meeting norms (Zoom backgrounds, mute etiquette); ethics/Integrity: case studies (e.g., Enron); decision-making frameworks; cross-cultural Competence: Hofstede's dimensions; global team simulations; stress management: mindfulness apps (Headspace); resilience building; Capstone: Group ethics dilemma presentation (integrates all modules).

Assessment Methods include mock Interviews/GDs (25%): Recorded, peer/faculty feedback; portfolio (25%): Resume, LinkedIn profile; verbal Reasoning Test (15%): 45-minute online quiz; TED-Style Talk (20%): 5-minute video on personal growth and participation/Reflections (15%) in weekly journals plus module activities.

Suggested Textbooks and Reference Books

Business Communication Today by Courtland L. Bovee and John V. Thill (15th ed., 2021) – Excellent for Modules 1 & 4; covers writing and interviews.

Emotional Intelligence 2.0 by Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves (2009) – Practical EQ assessments for Module 2.

Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High by Kerry Patterson et al. (3rd ed., 2021) – Ideal for Module 3 conflicts.

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen R. Covey (30th Anniversary ed., 2020) – Time management and mindset (Module 2).

How to Win Friends and Influence People by Dale Carnegie (Updated ed., 2022) – Networking and interpersonal skills (Module 3).

Designing Your Life by Bill Burnett and Dave Evans (2016) – Resume/digital branding (Module 4); free workbook online.

Presence: Bringing Your Boldest Self to Your Biggest Challenges by Amy Cuddy (2015) – Public speaking and body language (Modules 1 & 3).

Online Resources: Free supplements include Coursera's "Inspiring Leadership through Emotional Intelligence" (Case Western), LinkedIn Learning (free student access), and YouTube channels like TED-Ed for pitches.

Course-10: Human Language Technology (HLT)

This course introduces students to the intersection of language, technology, and cognition. It explores how human language is processed, represented, and utilized in computational systems. Students will gain foundational knowledge of Natural Language Processing (NLP), machine translation, speech technologies, and digital linguistics while critically engaging with ethical, cultural, and multilingual concerns in the Indian context.

The course objectives include: to introduce core concepts of human language processing and computational linguistics; familiarize students with tools and techniques in Natural Language Processing; analyze language technologies in real-world applications; develop basic hands-on skills in text processing and language data analysis; encourage critical thinking about AI, language, and society. Learning outcomes including understanding key concepts in human language technology and NLP; analyzing linguistic data using basic computational tools; demonstrating practical skills in text annotation, corpus handling, and language tools; critically evaluating language technologies in multilingual and socio-cultural contexts; and applying interdisciplinary approaches combining linguistics, literature, and technology.

The first unit contains topics like Language, Mind, and Technology in which what is Human Language Technology (HLT)? Language and cognition; introduction to linguistics (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics); language as data: digital text and corpora; and overview of Artificial Intelligence and language are discussed. In the second unit titled foundations of Natural Language Processing, basic topics like what is NLP? scope and applications; text preprocessing: tokenization, stemming, lemmatization; parts of Speech (POS) tagging; syntax and parsing basics and introduction to

corpora and corpus linguistics are included for study. In the third unit, that is Language Technologies in Practice, topics like Machine Translation (rule-based vs neural); speech recognition and synthesis; chatbots and conversational AI; sentiment analysis and text classification; and Indian language technologies and challenges are placed for study. In the fourth unit that is Language, Society, and Ethics, topics like AI and language bias; digital divide and linguistic inequality; ethics of AI and language data; language preservation and technology; and policy perspectives (Digital India, Bhashini initiative) are highlighted. This paper includes practical component in which students will engage in hands-on activities such as: Basic text processing using Python (introductory level); using NLP libraries (NLTK / spaCy – conceptual exposure); corpus creation and annotation; simple chatbot design (rule-based); sentiment analysis mini-project; and exploration of translation tools (Google Translate, Indic NLP tools).

Some of the suggested books are as follows:

- i. Speech and Language Processing by Jurafsky, Daniel & Martin, James
- ii. Natural Language Processing with Python by Bird, Steven, Klein, Ewan & Loper, Edward.
- iii. Foundations of Statistical NLP by Manning, Christopher & Schütze, Hinrich.
- iv. Speech and Language Technology by Sproat, Richard.

Expected Challenges and Possible Solutions

IV. EXPECTED CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The challenges in dealing with such subjects of study are not many although it needs to be addressed by institutions, facilitators and State and Central level authorities. The teachers have to be primarily equipped with the knowledge and be well-trained in linguistics, stylistics, discourse analysis, ESP (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987) and computer technology. They are required to be able to prepare study materials for activities, field study and monitor the projects of the students. There should be language laboratories and, what's more, the English Departments have to collaborate with other Departments of their respective institutions like

Computer Science Department, Media Studies and other language Departments. There is a need of systematic monitor mechanism by the subject experts right from curriculum design to comprehensive and continuous assessments followed of evaluation of outcomes. In some cases, experts from industries and administrative Departments should be given chance to be a part of this teaching-learning system.

V. CRITICAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In fact, English in India needs to be reviewed both from literary and linguistic perspectives keeping in view its economic and professional utility and global changes. (Crystal, 2003). While talking about the syllabus of English major, earlier not so much were there relating to professional, industry-based and software-based studies. But in the changing situations, it is realized that the students of English major need orientation of professional and technical subjects. Now, there is ample scope in corporate sector both in India and abroad. In order to acquire the technical tools and techniques relating to employment, both students and teachers are required to be equipped with lectures with multimedia support; hands-on lab sessions; project-based learning; peer collaboration and group tasks; flipped classroom discussions; case studies of real-world applications. Additionally, there is a need of updating the knowledge and skills of teachers of English language at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. There is need of provisions of technical tools, software and gadgets to continue the reformative attempts of teaching and learning of English in India.

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Decoding Morality: A Digital Humanities Approach to Thematic Transitions in Medieval English Morality Plays

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Abstract

This research represents a multidisciplinary inquiry into 15th-century English Morality plays by integrating classical literary analysis with contemporary Digital Humanities (DH) frameworks. Focusing on the seminal text 'Everyman', the study employs 21st century computational tools to perform a quantitative linguistic analysis. While historical scholarship has predominantly utilised close reading and psychoanalytic lenses to interpret the protagonist's journey, this paper provides empirical data to validate these qualitative claims. The analysis reveals a significant thematic transition: a high density of materialistic words in initial stage which evolves into a spiritual vocabulary. Ultimately, this study argues that this data driven methodology is effective not only for archival texts but also for analysing narrative shifts in the most modern literary works.

Keywords: Digital Humanities, Everyman, Morality Plays, Computational

I. INTRODUCTION

The medieval morality play serves as a pivotal historical bridge, transitioning from early liturgical dramas and Miracle plays (which focused on the lives of saints) to the complex secular theatre of the Renaissance. Unlike its predecessors, the morality play utilized allegorical representations of abstract vices and virtues to guide the medieval audience toward a path of spiritual righteousness. Among these, the 15th century play 'Everyman' remains the most quintessential example, personifying concepts such as 'death', 'Fellowship', and 'Good deeds' to depict the universal human struggle against mortality.

Traditionally, scholarship on Everyman has been dominated by qualitative psychoanalysis and theological lenses, focusing on the deep symbolic layers of the text while these methods are invaluable, they often rely on subjective interpretation. This research proposes a paradigm shift by integrating Digital Humanities (DH) and computational tools such as Voyant. By shifting from a purely 'Close Reading' to a data driven 'Distant Reading' (Moretti, 2013), we can systematically quantify the linguistic shifts within the text. This provides a rigorous, empirical framework to demonstrate how the vocabulary of the play evolves from materialistic concerns to spiritual surrender, thereby validating traditional literary theories with concrete statistical evidence.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodological framework of this study is rooted in Computational Stylistics, shifting from traditional close reading to data-driven macro analysis. The research process was conducted in three different phases:

2.1 Data Acquisition

The primary source for this study is the digitized unabridged text of the 15th century morality plays, *Everyman*. The text was retrieved from the **Project Gutenberg** digital library to ensure an authentic and standardized version for analysis. Before processing, the corpus underwent 'Data Cleaning,' which involved the removal of non-dialogue elements such as stage directions, character names (tags), and editorial introductions. This ensured that the computational tools analysed only the thematic essence of the character interactions.

2.2 Computational Tools and Parameters

The analysis was performed using **Voyant Tools**, a web-based environment for digital text analysis. To refine the results, a specific 'Stop-word' filter was applied to exclude common functional words (e.g., *the, and, of, is*) that do not carry thematic weight. The study focused on two primary metrics:

- **Relative Frequency:** To track the density of specific 'Materialistic' vs. 'Spiritual' lexemes.
- **Corpus Trends:** To visualize how these word clusters fluctuate across the narrative arc of the play.

2.3 Categorization of Lexical Sets

For a systematic comparison, the vocabulary was divided into two thematic categories:

1. **Materialistic Set:** Words associated with worldly life, such as *Fellowship, Goods, Riches, Pleasure, and Gold*.
2. **Spiritual Set:** Words associated with the soul's journey, such as *Penance, Good Deeds, Account, Prayer, and Salvation*.

The text was analysed chronologically from the beginning (Everyman's worldly life) to the end (his final reckoning) to map the statistical 'cross-over' between these two lexical sets.

III. RESULTS

The computational analysis of 'Everyman' yields significant data regarding the thematic evaluation of the text. By mapping the predefined sets- Materialistic and Spiritual.

3.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

The following table illustrates the shift in word frequency at various stages of the play's progression.

NARRATIVE PROGRESS	Materialistic Lexemes	Spiritual Lexemes
25% (Worldly Life)	38	8
50% (Death's Entry)	20	25
75% (The Abandonment)	5	42
100% (The Reckoning)	0	55

As observed in Table 1, the play starts with a high frequency of worldly terms. At 50% mark, after Death's entry there is statistical shift in the number of lexemes seen as a 'Cross-over point' where spiritual vocabulary begins to dominate.

3.2 Discussion of Thematic shifts

The results provide an empirical foundation for the traditional psychological and theological observations made traditionally. This Data driven evidence mirrors the allegorical stripping of the protagonist's identity. Furthermore, this methodology proves to be a scalable model. Just as we have mapped this play, the same quantitative approach can be applied to all other works to analyze the thematic shifts in modernist and contemporary literature.

IV. CONCLUSION

The integration of Digital Humanities (DH) into the study of *Everyman* proves that computational analysis does not replace the human empathy required to read literature; rather, it provides a rigorous, empirical skeleton to support our critical instincts.

The findings of this research suggest that the structure of the 15th-century Morality play is mathematically deliberate, with the frequency of 'Worldly' vs. 'Spiritual' terms acting as a narrative anchor for the audience's moral education. However, the true significance of this study lies in its **methodological scalability**. The computational parameters established here—tracking thematic density and linguistic shifts—are not confined to archival texts. This framework serves as a potent model for analyzing narrative evolution in **Modern and 'Most Modern' literary works**, ranging from the internal monologues of Modernist fiction to the fragmented digital identities in contemporary literature.

In conclusion we can say, for the modern researcher especially in an interdisciplinary fields like comparative literature, these tools lead to a path that is more scientific and expansive understanding of human stories across all areas.

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The Humanistic Vision and Ethical Imagination in Vikram Seth's Fiction and Poetry

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Abstract

*This article examines the humanistic vision and ethical imagination in the fiction and poetry of Vikram Seth, a versatile transnational Indian English writer. Through a close analysis of his major works – including the poetry collections *The Humble Administrator's Garden* and *All You Who Sleep Tonight*, the verse novel *The Golden Gate*, the epic realist novel *A Suitable Boy*, and later works such as *An Equal Music* and *Two Lives* – the study demonstrates how Seth consistently foregrounds human dignity, compassion, moderation, and secular tolerance. Seth's writing navigates the tensions between individual desire and collective well-being, tradition and modernity, and personal freedom and social duty within postcolonial, diasporic, and hypermodern contexts. By blending formal mastery with empathetic realism and a light touch, Seth affirms the ethical importance of ordinary lives, cross-cultural connections, and humane coexistence in a fragmented world. The article argues that Seth's literary humanism offers a subtle yet powerful ethical response to the challenges of communal division, alienation, and ideological extremism, reaffirming values of empathy, relational ethics, and resilient pluralism.*

Keywords: literary humanism, ethical imagination, postcolonial India, relational ethics, cosmopolitanism, moderation of feeling.

Vikram Seth emerges as one of the most versatile and accomplished writers of contemporary Indian English literature. A master of multiple genres—poet, novelist, travel writer, librettist, and children's author—Seth is widely recognised as a truly transnational literary figure whose works effortlessly traverse cultural, geographical, and linguistic boundaries. In an age dominated by global consumerism and identity politics, Seth's oeuvre presents a profoundly humanistic worldview grounded in empathy, moderation, ethical reflection, and a deep respect for the quiet dignity of ordinary human experience.

Seth's fiction and poetry are characterised by formal elegance, narrative expansiveness, and a distinctive "lightness of touch" that never sacrifices emotional or moral depth. Whether depicting the vibrant socio-political landscape of post-Independence India in *A Suitable Boy* (1993) or the glossy yet lonely world of 1980s Californian professionals in the verse novel *The Golden Gate* (1986), Seth consistently explores the complex interplay between individual aspirations and larger socio-cultural forces. His works advocate for secular tolerance, compassionate understanding, and ethical coexistence amid the fractures of caste, class, religion, and modernity.

A Suitable Boy, Seth's magnum opus, stands as a monumental achievement in Indian English fiction. Set in the early 1950s, the novel weaves together the personal and the political through the story of Lata Mehra's search for a suitable husband, while offering a panoramic portrait of a newly independent nation negotiating land reforms, communal tensions, electoral politics, and cultural transitions. By placing an inter-religious love story at its

emotional centre, Seth blurs the boundaries between private desires and public realities, ultimately championing moderation, compromise, and secular humanism as essential virtues for India's diverse democracy.

In contrast, *The Golden Gate* dazzles with its technical brilliance, composed entirely in sonnet stanzas. This witty exploration of urban modernity, loneliness, and fleeting relationships in Silicon Valley serves as a subtle ethical critique of hyper-individualism while celebrating the redemptive possibilities of genuine human connection and emotional restraint.

Seth's poetry further deepens this humanistic vision. Collections such as *The Humble Administrator's Garden* and *All You Who Sleep Tonight* reveal a poet who effaces the lyric "I" to focus on ordinary moments, cross-cultural encounters, nature, displacement, and small epiphanies. Through accessible forms and empathetic observation, the poems transform everyday experiences into sites of ethical reflection and cosmopolitan connection.

This article investigates the humanistic vision and ethical imagination that unify Seth's diverse body of work. It argues that Seth articulates a consistent humanist-ethical perspective: one that upholds human dignity through compassion and emotional moderation, navigates moral dilemmas with secular tolerance, and affirms individual agency within socio-political constraints. The study proceeds through four analytical sections – on his poetry, *The Golden Gate*, *A Suitable Boy*, and *An Equal Music together with Two Lives* – before offering a concluding synthesis of Seth's enduring literary and ethical relevance in the contemporary world.

Vikram Seth emerges as a versatile master of multiple literary genres, excelling simultaneously as a poet, travel writer, novelist, and author of children's stories. He is widely regarded as one of the first truly transnational Indian writers in English, whose works effortlessly cross cultural and geographical boundaries while presenting a profoundly humanistic worldview in an era dominated by global pop culture and consumerism.

A Suitable Boy (1993) stands as a quintessential Indian novel in English. Through its linguistic inclusiveness – seamlessly incorporating Hindi, Urdu, and English idioms – it reaffirms Jawaharlal Nehru's ideals of secularism and inclusive nationalism. The novel offers a nuanced exploration of modernity in the postcolonial Third World, illustrating how tradition and progress are negotiated in the fabric of everyday Indian life. It also confronts the enduring problem of communal violence that has repeatedly destabilised India and the subcontinent in the post-Independence period. By integrating an inter-religious love story as a subplot, Seth blurs the boundaries between public and private spheres, demonstrating how personal relationships inevitably intersect with and reflect the broader political realities of the nation.

In contrast, Seth's earlier verse novel *The Golden Gate* (1986) dazzles as a sophisticated virtuoso performance. Composed in sonnet stanzas inspired by Byron and mediated through Charles Johnston's celebrated translation of Pushkin's Eugene Onegin, the work captures the freedoms, contradictions, and casual rhythms of 1980s Californian life. The metrical discipline of the form provides a subtle counterpoint to the occidental liberties of its characters, creating a witty and formally inventive critique of modern urban existence.

Readers enchanted by the light-footed elegance of *The Golden Gate* may initially find the apparent narrative straightforwardness of *A Suitable Boy* somewhat disconcerting. Yet both novels reveal Seth's distinctive blend of formal mastery and humane insight. The epic opens at the wedding of Lata Mehra's sister in the fictional town of Brahmpur in 1950, just three years after Partition. On this festive occasion, Hindu and Muslim families mingle harmoniously among the flowers in the groom's garden, with no overt tension visible. Lata's widowed mother, Mrs. Rupa Mehra, is determined to secure a "suitable boy" for her headstrong daughter – one who is Hindu, of the appropriate caste, and socially respectable. Seth skilfully weaves multiple character strands into a richly textured tapestry that gradually unfolds into a panoramic portrait of a nation in transition.

The emotional and thematic weight of Lata's love story far surpasses that of a conventional Western romance. It encompasses not only her personal desires but also the fortunes of her family, her community, her gender, and a rapidly transforming India. Among her suitors, the most attractive – and least "suitable" – is the Muslim youth Kabir, whose charm challenges communal boundaries. Amit Chatterji, the sensitive poet and writer who bears a striking resemblance to Seth himself, shares deep intellectual affinity with Lata but feels almost too similar ("Yes,

I'm the clever one," he remarks with resigned humour). By comparison, the conventionally eligible Haresh Khanna, though practical and of the right caste, irritates the emancipated Lata with his small eyes, paan-chewing habit, and anglicised pronunciation of "Cawnpore" instead of Kanpur.

Through Lata's dilemma and the intersecting lives of four families, Seth crafts an intimate yet expansive portrait of post-Independence India. Balancing satire with earnestness, humour with tragedy, the novel advocates moderation, compassion, and secular tolerance as essential values for a diverse democracy navigating the tensions of caste, class, religion, and social reform. Ultimately, *A Suitable Boy* celebrates the quiet dignity of ordinary lives amid the currents of history, offering a subtle yet powerful plea for ethical coexistence in a fractured yet resilient nation.

Lata's final decision forms the aesthetic and ethical core of *A Suitable Boy*. It arrives at the latest possible moment, casting a retrospective light across the novel's interconnected narratives and revealing a mature acceptance of compromise and human frailty. This resolution invites comparison with the memorable image in George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, where a candle is held up to illuminate innumerable spots on a cracked mirror—each flaw suddenly visible yet held within a larger, forgiving whole.

Lata's characteristic indecision—"I like everything," she says brightly, "but at different times"—sustains a delicate tension between personal choice and the novel's broader political canvas. Her dilemma holds in balance weighty themes: the dismantling of vast feudal estates through land reform, the enduring keel of rural traditions that have persisted in India for millennia, and the sudden eruptions of violence, often fuelled by religious fervour. Throughout the novel, Seth's deep sympathy suffuses every page. He extends compassionate attention to the ageing courtesan Saeeda Bai, whose hidden vulnerabilities nearly prove fatal; to her cherished green parakeet; to the prodigiously mathematical child who discerns Euclidean patterns on the ceiling of a tent; to the pompous English don railing against James Joyce; and even to a solitary man offering a brief prayer on his rooftop. For one poignant paragraph, Seth's usually modest and mimetic prose rises to a heightened register. This short meditation on death underscores the sad yet reassuring recurrence of ordinary things—an atomised yet continuous cycle that echoes throughout the novel and finds its cultural parallel in the sacred, ever-flowing waters of the Ganges. Hovering above the entire narrative like a kite on a sacred thread is the quiet promise of reconciliation.

The movement and music of Seth's prose require time to absorb fully. Its unobtrusive yet powerfully rational sweetness gradually draws the reader into its distinctive way of seeing the world. By the novel's end, Seth employs adjectives with such glancing, internal subtlety that they resonate completely only for those who have journeyed the full distance with him. It is rare to encounter a European-style narrative of such complexity and emotional depth rendered with so little pretension or neurotic intensity; the virtual absence of Freudian introspection remains one of the book's most distinctive marks. Seth's seemingly egoless style allows India's inherent confusion—and its persistent tendency toward coherence—to emerge with remarkable clarity and minimal distortion.

Set in a fictionalised North India, *A Suitable Boy* captures a precise historical moment as the nation transitions from a feudal order to a modern democratic society. Seth translates the textures of North Indian life into English with remarkable fidelity, charting the evolving dynamics within the postcolonial family. The novel projects a distinctly Indian perspective on human relationships, emphasising that life depends on mutual contact, cooperation, and interconnectedness. These elements form the bedrock of both personal fulfilment and social harmony. While Western societies often celebrate individualism, non-Western traditions—particularly in India—place greater faith in the networking and solidarity of community. Socio-cultural structures and prevailing value systems shape patterns of relationships and influence basic human instincts such as love, hatred, jealousy, passion, and infatuation. Through this lens, Seth affirms the humanistic importance of relational ethics, where individual desires must be weighed against the claims of family, community, and a changing nation.

The socio-cultural fabric of Indian society also shapes key institutions such as marriage. In traditional Indian contexts, arranged marriages have long prevailed, prioritising familial compatibility, caste, community, and

social stability. Although the landscape has evolved considerably in the twenty-first century—with greater acceptance of individual choice—the novel contrasts this system with Western notions of love marriage, which typically emphasise prior familiarity and personal romantic compatibility between partners. *A Suitable Boy* must therefore be interpreted within the specific socio-cultural milieu of post-Independence India. Through this lens, Seth emerges as an authentic spokesperson for India's complex identity, its rich cultural heritage, and the realities of a nation in transition.

Deeply culture-specific, the novel portrays individuals who have inhabited a centuries-old Hindu-Islamic socio-cultural and intellectual world. The interconnected lives of the Mehra, Chatterji, Khans, and Kapoors are rendered with acute sensitivity to both human emotions and the prevailing socio-cultural structures. In a tradition-bound society like India, matters such as marriage, employment, and professional choices rarely remain confined to the private sphere. Unlike the individualism celebrated in many nineteenth-century European realist novels, Indian life is embedded within larger networks of family, community, caste, class, and religion. Consequently, personal passions and social norms frequently stand in tension, generating profound ethical dilemmas.

Human relationships, in Seth's portrayal, encompass a wide spectrum of emotions. Lata Mehra experiences deep inner turmoil because of her passionate love for the Muslim youth Kabir. This relationship places her in a painful predicament, complicated by religious and communal variables. Far from finding peace, Lata feels alienated from her own self during the affair, as if she has become someone else. Even after turning toward Haresh Khanna, she grapples with uncertainty and loneliness. She repeatedly weighs her personal longing and intense passion against the demands of societal stability, familial order, and long-term harmony. In doing so, Lata embodies the novel's central ethical conflict: the need to balance individual desire with collective well-being.

Beyond the personal, *A Suitable Boy* explores the interplay between literature and the construction of Indian nationalist identity. Seth employs a mimetic mode, grounding his narrative in historical references that help constitute the idea of India as a unified yet diverse nation. Drawing implicitly on Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities," the novel illustrates how literature contributes to shaping national and cultural identity. Since Independence, Indian English novels have played a significant role in crafting images of the nation. Seth's fiction, especially *A Suitable Boy*, adopts the framework of nineteenth-century European realism while engaging the sociological complexities and discursive instabilities of both an "imagined" and a lived India.

Seth does not shy away from the factionalism, caste divisions, class tensions, or religious fundamentalism that threaten the secular-socialist ideal of the nation-state. He acknowledges the multiple realities and myths surrounding India without dismissing illusions of unity. A memorable passage captures this spirit: "We should think above divisions, splits, cliques! We must pull along like a team, a family, a battalion....this is India, Hindustan, Bharat, the country where faction was invented before the zero. If even the heart is divided into four parts can you expect us Indians to divide ourselves into less than four hundred?" (Seth). Rather than expressing scepticism toward the nation-state as a fictional construct, Seth upholds a resilient vision of secular India that honours differences while resisting disintegration. He recognises growing political disillusionment and the rise of leaders driven more by power than principle, yet affirms the country's enduring capacity for coexistence.

Seth's own background—where higher education once seemed distant—mirrors his attempt to reconcile diverse elements of life into a comprehensible whole. Marginal figures such as the jatav Jagat Ram (whose presence at Lata and Haresh's wedding remains peripheral) and the landless labourer Kaccheru highlight the limits of middle-class visibility. The English-educated Indian elite, exemplified by characters like Arun Mehra, often render subaltern lives invisible, while colonial legacies linger in Westernised lifestyles that turn individuals into "mimic men."

Literary humanism, in Seth's work, affirms the inherent worth of individuals, the authenticity of their emotions, and the universality of human vulnerability. It draws on secular and cosmopolitan traditions rather than religious dogma, emphasising reason, empathy, and the quiet dignity of everyday existence. Ethics, meanwhile, surfaces in the moral dilemmas his characters and narrators face: the tension between personal desire and social

duty, tradition and modernity, and communal harmony versus ideological extremism. Seth consistently navigates these conflicts with compassion, moderation, and a refusal of absolutism.

Across his diverse genres, Vikram Seth articulates a subtle yet consistent humanist-ethical vision: one that upholds human dignity through compassion and emotional moderation, navigates moral dilemmas with secular tolerance, and affirms individual agency amid socio-political pressures, ultimately advocating ethical coexistence in a fragmented, postcolonial, and globalized world. This introduction will be followed by four analytical sections – on his poetry, *The Golden Gate*, *A Suitable Boy*, and *An Equal Music* together with *Two Lives* – before a concluding synthesis of his enduring relevance.

In his poetry collections, Vikram Seth enacts a quiet humanism by effacing the lyric self and elevating the commonplace – nature, displacement, love, and small epiphanies – as sites of ethical reflection and compassionate connection. He counters modernist alienation with accessible formal elegance and secular openness, directing attention away from the poet's ego toward shared human experiences.

This effacement of the self is a hallmark of Seth's craft. Critics note that "the modern voice of his poems is not particularly interested in itself: the self is firmly effaced," allowing him to write of the ordinary and the commonplace with ease. There is a distinctive "lightness of touch" even when addressing serious subjects, which produces wonderfully refreshing poetry and underscores a humanistic restraint that values clarity and empathy over dramatic self-expression.

Travel-themed poems in *The Humble Administrator's Garden* (1985) and *All You Who Sleep Tonight* (1990) exemplify this approach. Pieces inspired by Seth's time in China and Tibet portray cross-cultural encounters with kindness and without exoticism. Ordinary moments – sharing a meal, exchanging glances with local children, or observing everyday hospitality – highlight shared human vulnerabilities rather than cultural superiority. These poems affirm a secular cosmopolitanism rooted in mutual recognition and compassion, transforming transient meetings into ethical reflections on connection amid displacement.

Nature sonnets and reflective lyrics further celebrate moral beauty in "common things." Employing traditional forms such as sonnets and rhyme schemes, Seth finds ethical significance in the quiet rhythms of daily life – changing seasons, modest landscapes, or fleeting emotions. The disciplined structure mirrors emotional restraint and tolerance, suggesting that moderation and attentiveness foster humane understanding. This neo-formalist blend of older verse traditions with contemporary idiom allows Seth to affirm the dignity of ordinary existence without sentimentality.

Displacement and anti-war poems extend this humanism into sharper ethical critique. Works such as "A Doctor's Journal Entry for August 6, 1945" (often associated with his broader poetic concerns) present the suffering of ordinary people caught in historical violence, critiquing ideological passion and war's dehumanising force while quietly celebrating individual resilience and the persistence of human empathy.

Through these strategies, Seth's poetry establishes a foundational humanist ethic grounded in the dignity of the everyday. This poetic foundation of ordinary dignity evolves into the ethical complexities of urban modernity in *The Golden Gate*.

Seth's verse novel *The Golden Gate* (1986) presents a humanist critique of hypermodern American society by exploring loneliness, fleeting relationships, and the moral costs of individualism. It ultimately advocates companionate love and emotional moderation as ethical antidotes to alienation.

Written entirely in sonnets inspired by Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*, the novel depicts the lives of young professionals in 1980s San Francisco. Protagonist John Brown, a successful Silicon Valley executive, embodies the isolation of tech-driven modernity. The sonnet form itself becomes a moral decision, imposing rhythmic restraint that mirrors the ethical need for emotional moderation amid careerist excess (Thendral). John's tech-driven isolation opens the novel, as he places a personal ad seeking connection. His evolving friendship and romance with Janet Hayakawa, and later with Liz Dorati, raise ethical questions of commitment versus personal freedom

in a society that prizes individualism. John's rigid independence and discomfort with deeper emotional demands highlight the moral costs of unchecked autonomy.

Scenes of urban parties and casual encounters further expose the absurdity of contemporary relationships. Superficial gatherings and fleeting flirtations satirise the hedonism and materialism of yuppie culture, yet Seth affirms the redemptive power of genuine human bonds. Through witty, light verse, the novel critiques how modern urban life fosters suspicion and emotional disconnection while suggesting that curiosity, empathy, and shared vulnerability can restore meaning.

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AI Chatbots and Musical Intelligence as Pedagogical Tools: Enhancing English Speaking and Listening Skills in Higher Education

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Abstract

In today's competitive educational environment in India, English is a key factor in a student's success in their professional career, but many colleges or universities are unable to offer them real-life, individual speaking practice. This research aims to explore the synergistic effect of the Theory of Multiple Intelligences (TMI), which consists of musical-rhythmic intelligence, towards the improvement of speaking and listening skills of university students using an AI Chatbot. This study explores the possibilities of combining rhythmic and tonal aspects of music with the adaptive and interactive capabilities of generative AI to address some of the pedagogical challenges and to foster intrinsic motivation. The study was qualitative, involving 15 students who were interviewed using a semi-structured approach to obtain an understanding of the experiences they had with these digital and musical tools. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data to identify patterns in skill acquisition, engagement, and emotional resilience. The findings indicate that by implementing music activities and effective filter lowering using AI chatbots, the learning atmosphere is low-anxiety and immersive, facilitating students to feel comfortable taking language risks. There were significant improvements in listening skills reported, and the use of chatbots offered a patient practice partner for listening in context and fluency. Besides, the music and activities related to rhythm learned from AI improved pronunciation and oral communication. The findings also highlight the need for overcoming multiple challenges, including the danger of over-automation, the emergence of "imposter syndrome" with AI, and the digital divide. The study finds that such emerging technologies are transformative, but there should be a balance in pedagogical approaches that would run on human mentorship, digital literacy, and human-centric communication that would result in the successful and ethical implementation.

Keywords: AI Chatbots, Musical Intelligence, Indian Higher Education, English Language Teaching, Speaking and Listening Skills, Qualitative Research.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the current globalized economy, English is now the 'language of technology, business and international communication and exchange' (Zhou et al., 2025). The ability to speak English is increasingly being viewed as a key factor in both economic mobility and professional success, especially for those pursuing higher education in the fast-growing field of engineering and information technology (IT) in India (Rana, 2026; Shashidhara et al., 2026). However, there are several consistent problems, such as limited access to individualized learning, the absence of opportunities for students to interact with the language in a meaningful manner for speaking, and unequal teaching quality, which most higher education institutions in India encounter (Rana, 2026; Shashidhara et al., 2026).

To address these pedagogical gaps, teachers have begun using Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences as a model for more inclusive and effective teaching. It assumes that students absorb knowledge through different channels, such as musical intelligence, which refers to sensitivity towards rhythm, pitch, and intonation (Dastidar & Choudhury, 2018; Viandi et al., 2025). With respect to English Language Teaching, music can be used as an effective mediational instrument, as music and popular culture can be incorporated in the ELT curriculum, which can boost the motivation of learners as well as enhance communication ability in the engineering colleges in India (Indira and Lakshmi, 2010; Vinodh and Kesari, 2021). Instructors can design more personalized and interesting learning activities by aligning students' primary intelligence types with instructional activities, such as music-assisted pronunciation training (Zhang et al., 2025).

Concurrently with the theoretical changes, Artificial Intelligence is rapidly becoming a game-changer in the field of education. For instance, AI-powered chatbots like ChatGPT have shown promise in serving as dynamic language practice partners that can give immediate feedback and facilitate continuous learning outside the confines of the classroom (Setyawan & Pramudita, 2025). The results of the study conducted by the author with undergraduates in India suggest that there is statistically significant improvement in all four language skills using AI in mobile learning. Empirical studies with students from Indian undergraduate classes show statistically significant improvements in all four language skills when using AI in mobile learning (Rana, 2026). In fact, in the Indian education sector, voice-based chatbots have been found to be in high demand because of their capability to boost the speaking confidence of students in an open-ended manner by conversing with them (Shashidhara et al., 2026).

Although the idea of using both musical intelligence-based pedagogy and AI-based tools is beneficial for music education, there is a lack of research that investigates the potential synergy between these approaches. This study seeks to close this gap by examining the integration of musical intelligence, specifically through the rhythmic and tonal qualities of language, with AI chatbot interactions and their specific impact on the speaking and listening skills of the students in the higher education system in India. This study aims to provide a framework that integrates musical intelligence and the interactive power of AI.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Foundation: What does Musical Intelligence in ELT mean?

The use of music in English Language Teaching is mainly attributed to Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, which considers musical-rhythmic intelligence as a unique cognitive ability that includes processing rhythm, pitch, and timbre (Dastidar & Choudhury, 2018; Viandi et al., 2025). MI has been used as a mediating process in the Indian education system to transcend the 'English for Specific Purposes' and create intrinsic motivation (Indira & Lakshmi, 2010). Research in Indian engineering institutes suggests that using a musical approach (including the use of popular English culture and rhythmic patterns) has a significant impact on the speaking ability of students in multilingual class environments (Dastidar & Choudhury, 2018; Indira & Lakshmi, 2010). In addition, music is a multimodal method, where the combination of both audio and visual perceptions helps to improve pronunciation and vocabulary acquisition, and it is a "low-anxiety" teaching method suitable for both primary and tertiary students (Viandi et al., 2025; Vinodh & Kesari, 2021).

2.2. An overview of AI Chatbots in Higher Education in India

With the advent of Generative AI, new opportunities have arisen to solve some of India's biggest learning challenges, including the lack of personalised practice and teacher shortages (Rana, 2026). Recent research on UG students in India shows that:

- **Skill Acquisition:** Using AI-powered mobile learning and ChatGPT, the students' performance in all the major language learning skills improved significantly, with significant improvement observed in fluency and vocabulary (Rana, 2026; Roy & Swargiary, 2024).
- **AI Solutions:** AI applications such as ELSA Speak and ChatGPT helped engineering students improve their pronunciation accuracy and confidence in communicative skills, especially in rural environments (Subramaniyan & Asharudeen, 2025).
- **Voice-Based Interaction:** A voice-based chatbot with open-ended conversations is highly demanded in low-resource Indian schools, and in direct association with this, there is a significant boost in student speaking confidence (Shashidhara et al., 2026).

2.3 Impact of AI Chatbots on Speaking and Listening Skills

The literature highlights the effectiveness of AI chatbots for receptive and productive oral skills development. The interactive and adaptive qualities of AI offer students personalized feedback that may not be available in a traditional classroom setting (Setyawan & Pramudita, 2025; Zhou et al., 2025). AI is presented as a "flexible and user-friendly" tool, but scholars stress that it should not be used to the learners' detriment and that it should promote their autonomy in learning (Rana, 2026; Roy & Swargiary, 2024).

2.4 The convergence of AI and musical intelligence

One of the new and emerging practices in digital pedagogy is the application of AI in music generation and "singing AI" as a tool to foster a connection between musical intelligence and language development (Jamaludin et al., 2025). Educational songs engaging students in listening comprehension and improving vocabulary retention are produced by using different tools such as the Suno AI platform (Nuc & Klusáčková, 2026; Solehudin et al., 2025).

AI-Supported Composition: Learners can utilize AI to write meaningful lyrics and create music, which will enable them to practice their vocal clarity and correct vowel sounds by singing along with the guidance of AI (Jamaludin et al., 2025).

Motivation and Engagement: Experimental results indicate that students recall significantly more vocabulary in the subsequent tests after listening to a song created by AI rather than a traditional one (e.g., a mean score of 6.2 for vocabulary retention, while a mean score of 4.2 for the traditional method was obtained) (Nuc & Klusáčková, 2026).

Immersion Listening: The studies have shown that AI-generated songs can provide an "emotionally rich language environment" that can stimulate interest in the target culture and systematically develop listening skills (Boguslavskaya & Khuong, 2026; Liu & Xu, 2025).

To conclude, literature indicates that the synergy of MI and AI has the potential to revolutionize ELT by fostering more inclusive, emotionally resonant, and scientific language acquisition (Boguslavskaya & Khuong, 2026; Jamaludin et al., 2025).

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

The primary aim of this study is to explore the pedagogical synergy between Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, specifically musical-rhythmic intelligence, and Artificial Intelligence chatbots in enhancing the English speaking and listening competencies of students in Indian higher education. By integrating AI, the research seeks to develop a holistic framework for language acquisition in competitive academic environments.

3.1. Research Objectives

To achieve this primary aim, the study addresses the following specific objectives:

1. To study the impact of combining musical-rhythmic activities and AI chatbot interactions on the development of receptive (listening) and productive (speaking) skills
2. To examine the role of MI-AI integration in fostering emotional resilience and creating a "low-anxiety" learning environment
3. To identify the perceived benefits and challenges of using AI-generated music and conversational agents.
4. To propose a pedagogical framework with educational theories to address the unique needs of Indian English Language Teaching

3.2. Research Questions

Based on the objectives above, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How does the integrated use of musical intelligence activities and AI chatbots influence the perceived development of English speaking and listening skills among university students in India?
2. In what ways does the convergence of music and AI technology contribute to reducing the "affective filter" and enhancing students' emotional resilience during language practice?
3. What are the primary pedagogical and technical challenges students face when engaging with an AI-MI supported language learning model?
4. To what extent do students perceive the use of AI-generated music and lyrics as an effective mediational tool for vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation?

IV. METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a qualitative research design to examine the area of English Language Teaching convergence of the domains of Musical Intelligence and Artificial Intelligence. This is chosen because it offers students a level of insight into their perceptions, experiences, and "truths" of using digital and musical tools in their interactions with one another (Dewi et al., 2020; Mahmudova, 2026). This approach emphasizes the learners' lived experiences to capture the multifaceted emotional and cognitive changes that occur when AI and MI (Melisa et al., 2022; Wang, 2024) are integrated into traditional language learning.

4.1 Participants

Purposive sampling is used to select 15 students from MIT Art, Design and Technology University, Pune, India. The limited number of respondents in this sample size enables qualitative discussion of different viewpoints and keeps the data volume manageable for thematic extraction (Mahmudova, 2026; Wang, 2024).

4.2 Data Collection: Semi-Structured Interviews

The main data collection tool is a semi-structured interview, which is a flexible yet focused tool, allowing participants to share information on their learning experiences (Karataş et al., 2024; Wei, 2023).

Structure and Flexibility: The interviews are built on the themes of the impact of AI application, advantages, disadvantages, and the effectiveness of music-integrated activities (Karataş et al., 2024; Wang, 2024).

Conduct and Context: Each interview was conducted for about 15-20 minutes and was carried out in a comfortable setting to ensure that the responses are clear and deep (Guan et al., 2024; Karataş et al., 2024).

Thematic Focus: Students' attitudes towards AI-assisted feedback, their levels of motivation in relation to MI activities (e.g., singing, rhythmic activities), as well as their confidence in speaking and listening (Melisa et al., 2022; Wei, 2023) are explored through open-ended interview questions.

4.3 Data Analysis

The qualitative data obtained from the interviews were analyzed by thematic analysis. The analysis follows the frameworks developed by Braun and Clarke or Creswell, and includes the following steps:

Data Familiarization: Rewriting and reading the interview transcripts several times (Guan et al., 2024; Melisa et al., 2022).

Coding: Coding main parts of the text (Guan et al., 2024; Melisa et al., 2022).

Theme Identification: Aggregating codes into more general themes in terms of the experiences of the participants with AI and MI (Guan et al., 2024; Melisa et al., 2022).

The qualitative model allows the study to go beyond skill assessment, revealing the mechanisms and reasons behind the effect of these new technologies and theories on the whole learner (Guan et al., 2024; Mahmudova, 2026).

V. RESULTS

Thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with 15 students gave insights into the role of Musical Intelligence and AI chatbots in English speaking and listening skills. The outcomes are grouped into four main themes, which represent the variety of learning experiences of the participants.

5.1 Student Engagement in AI-Assisted Learning

The introduction of AI chatbots was called a "refreshing and captivating" experience, transforming traditional learning into an interactive adventure, by participants (Wei, 2023).

Immersive Atmosphere: Students observed that the dynamic experience of AI exercises and the instant feedback were more effective at keeping their attention than the traditional format, which they described as creating an "immersive atmosphere" (Wei, 2023).

Engagement Through Challenges: The interviewees described interactive AI tasks as "puzzles they wanted to solve," which demonstrated a move towards active engagement in learning (Wei, 2023).

5.2 The impact on Receptive and Productive Skills

The interviews were detailed examples of how AI-based teaching specifically addressed speaking and listening skills.

Listening Skill Improvement: Students noted that they could "take in the main ideas better" and "use language in a contextually appropriate manner". The chatbot was frequently characterized as a "practice partner with enduring patience," providing a consistent model for listening practice

Contextual Vocabulary and Fluency: Participants valued the ability to utilize resources like ChatGPT for "contextual vocabulary learning" and for "immediate feedback on word usage," which directly aided in their communicative fluency.

Pronunciation and Accuracy: A significant number of students reported that they noticed a great improvement in pronunciation and accuracy of their speech, citing the flexibility and interactivity of the digital tools as a key part of this.

5.3 Emotional Resilience and "Low-Anxiety" Environment

One of the main findings was the considerable decrease in the affective filter. AI-based teaching was a springboard to create a "positive and supportive learning environment" (Wei, 2023).

Risk-Taking: Students indicated that they felt more comfortable with taking risks and making mistakes, creating a growth mindset.

AI Chatbots helped students at all levels of achievement to become more engaged and build confidence. One student explicitly mentioned the process brought him/her a "sense of hope" about his/her academic development.

5.4 Challenges and Human-centric concerns

Although the digital pedagogies appeared positive, the qualitative data revealed critical issues that affect the overall effectiveness of digital pedagogy:

Language Barriers for LAs: Some LAs struggled to keep up with the speed of AI speech, causing them to sometimes feel "frustrated" and "demotivated".

Both teachers and students reported issues of "over-reliance on technology" and the potential for technology to reduce the human element in learning, such as the "cultural nuances".

The participants also expressed that self-directed learning demands require "strengthened self-directed learning skills" for successful integration, while some students suffered from being "distracted" or practicing "unrelated practices" without pedagogical guidance

Overall, the interviews indicate that the introduction of AI and MI tools is a 'transformative' experience in terms of engagement and skills development, but does require a human hand to interpret the cultural and conversational nuances and is dependent on digital literacy levels. To sum up, the in-use of AI/MI tools is a 'transformative' experience in terms of engagement and skill acquisition; however, the success of their use requires the continued presence of a human element to interpret the cultural and conversational nuances and digital literacy levels.

VI. DISCUSSION

The qualitative interview analysis is synthesized with the existing academic research, which shows that the blending of the concepts of 'Musical Intelligence' and 'Artificial Intelligence' in English Language Teaching can make a difference. The following discussion deepens the themes emerging from the results, based on the affordances and risks that are identified in recent scholarly work.

6.1 The positive synergy in receptive and productive skills

The use of AI in music education directly supports aspects of core language learning, as well as offering a multimodal approach to learning. The results of this study are compatible with the studies that found that AI-aided music education can be a worthwhile way to develop vocabulary, practice grammar, and enhance pronunciation (Jamaludin et al., 2025). Through the use of AI for lyric writing and directed singing, students have the opportunity to experience accurate English vowels and pronunciation while developing both their musical and language skills (Jamaludin et al., 2025).

Moreover, the learning of listening skills is the focus of AI chatbots, a key component of linguistic interaction that is likely best learnt through repeated interactions in natural, informal settings (Zhou et al., 2025). Data indicate that more effective and efficient learning environments can be created using interactive AI-based learning rather than lecture-based instruction, enabling students to learn new content faster and to stay more engaged with content (Yin & Guo, 2024). These AI tools can be particularly helpful for students from overseas or multilingual students who might find classroom difficulties more challenging in their native languages than in English (AI-Shallakh, 2024).

6.2 Emotional Dimensions and Psychological Safety

One of the most important results that emerged from one of the themes was the decrease in anxiety on the part of students and the building of confidence. Music and AI's cross-disciplinary nature create a space that is inclusive and enjoyable for all students, whether they have previous musical experience or not (Jamaludin et al., 2025). The challenges of moving to AI-driven teaching, though, add a complicated emotional dynamic. While AI tools can be linguistic aids and academic productivity, they also carry emotional risks such as dependency and what Domingo (2025) calls "AI-Induced Impostor Syndrome" (AI-I-I), which is the sense that students are not self-authentic.

To address these dangers, teachers need to incorporate SEL into their discussions and use of AI, focusing on reflection, discussion, and mentorship (Domingo, 2025). Moreover, the literature indicates that direct contact is still crucial even when employing advanced AI-assisted virtual artists, as students can feel tired and lose focus if they are not able to interact with them in person (Yin & Guo, 2024).

6.3 The proposed MI-AI Pedagogical Framework for ELT in Indian Higher Education

This study is based on the findings and supported by literature; it is proposed that English Language Teaching in Indian higher education should be based on the Musical Intelligence – Artificial Intelligence (MI-AI) Integrated Framework. The framework combines Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, Communicative Language Teaching, Sociocultural Theory, and Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis with the new AI technologies. It demonstrates the synergy of musical-rhythmic activities and AI-based language learning tools in cooperative learning to manage learner anxiety, boost learner autonomy, and strengthen the learner's speaking and listening skills, while maintaining ethical and human-centered pedagogical practices.

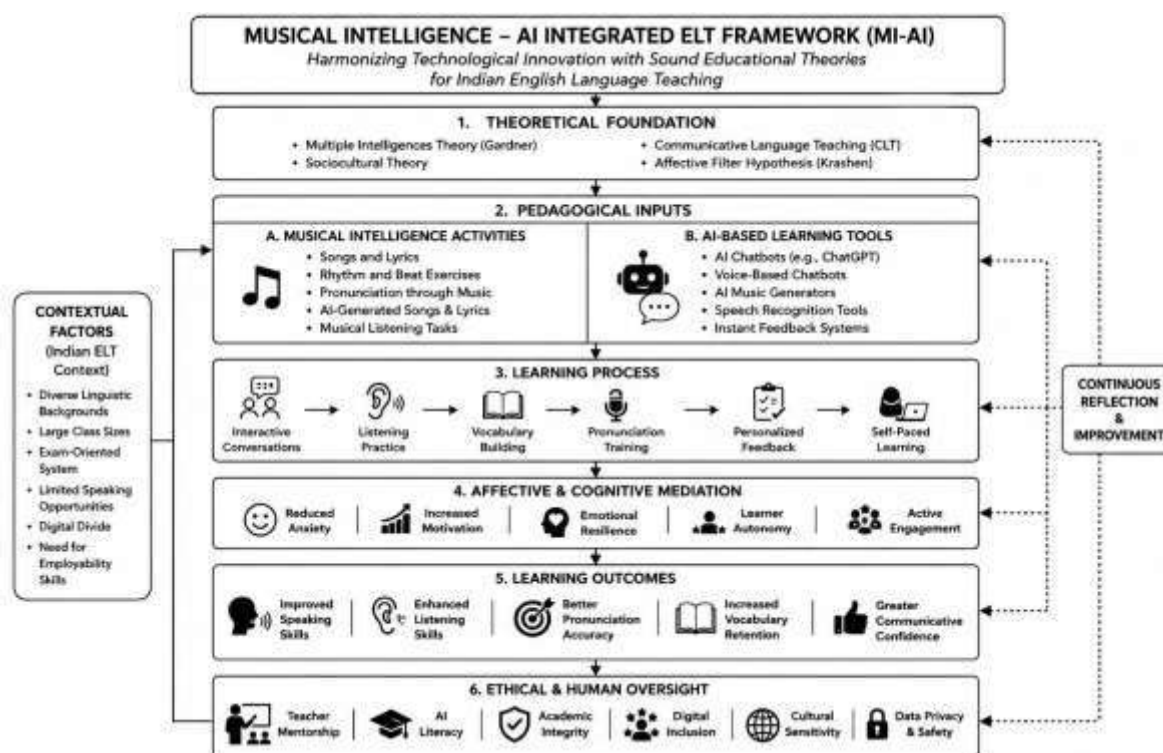


Fig.1. MI-AI Integrated Framework for English Language Teaching

English language teaching in higher education in India is put forward in the form of the MI-AI Integrated Framework as depicted in Figure 1. The framework is designed to promote learner autonomy, to motivate learners to speak and listen through interactive practice, personalized feedback, and music-related learning experiences. Ethical application of AI and teacher guidance are key components to effective and responsible implementation.

6.4 Ethical integration and academic integrity

The issues mentioned in the study on over-reliance and digital literacy are echoed in other educational discussions about the ethical use of AI in higher education. With the increasing integration of these tools into teaching and learning, there are many challenges to deal with, specifically in terms of academic integrity and the prospect of critical thinking skills being undermined (Arkharova, 2026).

Digital and AI literacy: The need for 'AI literacy' to tackle complex issues of plagiarism, copyright, and unethical use of multimedia resources (Bran & Grosseck, 2024).

Balanced Pedagogy: It is crucial to adopt a sociocultural and critical pedagogy approach that encompasses AI as a "cultural agent" (Sultana et al., 2026). Teachers should strive to be balanced in the teaching-learning process that fosters process-based learning and morals-based cooperation between disciplines (Sultana et al., 2026).

To conclude, while AI and Musical Intelligence are considered “transformative” in enhancing engagement and skill development, their application should be handled with ethical awareness, and the human touch remains essential to handle cultural and conversational nuances (Al-Shallakh, 2024; Domingo, 2025; Sultana et al., 2026).

VII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The use of Music and Artificial Intelligence in ELT is a good pedagogical opportunity, and there is limited research done in this area in the context of Higher education in India. While the positive effect of MI activities on engineering students has been reported earlier (Dastidar & Choudhury, 2018; Indira & Lakshmi, 2010), and the positive effect of AI chatbots on improving students' speaking and listening skills has been proven (Setyawan & Pramudita, 2025; Zhou et al., 2025), the application of both methods in one study has not been attempted before. Researchers tend to consider these interventions in isolation without appreciating the value of the rhythmic and tonal features of music for helping generative AI (Jamaludin et al., 2025; Nuc & Klusáčková, 2026) to interact adaptively and conversationally. There are some caveats to this information, however. The study is qualitative in nature, and the number of participants (n=15) is small, which limits the generalizability of the study findings (Mahmudova, 2026; Wang, 2024). Since the data used in this study are qualitative, they are the students' perceptions of the gains made rather than empirical and objective values (Karataş et al., 2024; Wei, 2023). Further, the study was conducted in only one university, which might not represent the diverse socio-economic and technological situations of the Indian educational landscape (Javed, 2024).

In addition, students' digital literacy was not uniform, making it challenging to apply AI tools consistently, and this could significantly impact the effectiveness of the intervention on students. Furthermore, the study provides insights into possible long-term implications, such as AI-induced impostor syndrome and reliance on automated feedback, which could impact learners' autonomy (Domingo, 2025; Sultana et al., 2026). Lastly, given the lack of a control group and longitudinal data, it is challenging to separate out the long-term effect of the MI-AI integration from other factors of instruction that were taking place at the same time. Future research should provide further validation of the results of this preliminary study using mixed-methods and multi-institution cohorts.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The integration of Musical Intelligence and Artificial Intelligence is important for English Language Teaching in Higher Education in India. The study has demonstrated that the rhythm and tone of music, merged with the adaptive and interactive nature of AI, may provide feasible solutions to resolve the issues of English speaking and listening skills. This change from traditional to interactive to digitalized environments opens new opportunities and ensures a student-centered and personalized learning experience.

This study's results highlight the impact music and AI have on the emotional experience of the classroom, beyond just their role in teaching skills. AI compositions and voice-recognized chatbots foster a "low-anxiety" learning atmosphere that allows students to take the linguistic risks necessary to develop confidence in their language usage, as they repeat their ideas in real, spoken language. These tools provide an effective, scalable answer to communicative fluency in the environment of competitive academic study, especially for Engineering students.

The journey to effective digital pedagogies, however, is not a smooth one. This study has shed light on the challenges associated with the digital divide, the potential for excessive dependence on automated systems, and the psychological effects of AI-driven feedback. The digital divide, the risk of relying too heavily on automated systems, and the psychological impact of the feedback provided by AI are all important considerations that require careful management. As technology advances, questions of data privacy and the importance of preserving human-centric mentorship hold a central place in ensuring that innovation doesn't diminish the pedagogical integrity or cultural nuances of teaching.

In conclusion, the future of English language education in India hinges on a balanced blend of technological innovation and robust educational principles. If the Educator can see AI and Musical Intelligence as partners rather

than a replacement for teaching, he will have a framework for Language Learning for a sustainable future that is engaging and highly effective. Embracing technology and opportunities to make these tools a learning asset, not a liability, is essential as we move into the digital age, and we should still be focused on not just language, but emotional and cognitive resilience in a learner's ability to succeed throughout life.

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Breaking Boundaries: Gender, Identity and Resistance in the Poetry of Kamala Das and Imtiaz Dharker

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Abstract

Kamala Das and Imtiaz Dharker are the two most popular and accomplished poets of the twentieth century. They won critical acclaim as their poetry drew the attention of so many critics and scholars. They have analyzed their poetry from various perspectives. The exploration of their poetry reveals a despairing world in which the dark forces of life threaten to destroy any vestiges of redemption. Imtiaz Dharker and Kamala Das convey their complex states of mind. That is why there is a great deal of inner landscape in their works. In their writing they use various objects of nature as objective correlatives for their mental feelings. The use of this technique gives an aura of fresh air to the world of their poetry, which is mostly obsessed with anguish and anxiety. Their works thematic their personal suffering, humiliation, betrayal, psychological breakdowns, debauchery and feminine oppression. Inherently nihilistic, their poetry is an attempt to evolve a symbolic order out of chaos. Inequalities have existed since the dawn of civilization and women have been fighting against all sorts of discriminations: legal, economic, religious and social. The various factors responsible for their suppression were misogyny, romantic glorification and patriarchy. Irrationally romanticized, they were not allowed to play a significant role as independent, self confident individuals. This was compounded by other unjust social, political and biological factors which produced a rationale or opposition to their rights. As a consequence, they did not enjoy a comfortable position in society. This Research Paper is a comparative study between Imtiaz Dharker and Kamala Das. It is entitled "Breaking Boundaries: Gender, Identity and Resistance in the Poetry of Kamala Das and Imtiaz Dharker".

Keywords: Identity, Anxiety, Suppression, Imtiaz Dharker, Kamala Das

Sylvia Plath experienced the world as an arena of various power struggles: life against death, victor against victim, male against female. Her poems as well as the only novel *The Bell Jar* she wrote can be seen as attempts to mediate these antagonisms. She felt life as a chaos of conflicting oppositions and counter forces and tried to co-ordinate these counter forces by corresponding to her art and life. Thus Plath's own inner and outer life provided not only form, but also matter for her writing. She wrote about her own emotions and about actual events, places and people. In turn, her

writing shaped her life; her fictive metaphors provided temporary states to the “*chaos of conflicting oppositions*” and thus structured her experience. A strong feeling of her own independence, rebellion against male domination, resentment and protest against male domination, resentment and protest against women who were passively perpetuating the human values and mindless domesticity are freely expressed in all her works. In a male-dominated society she sought to establish her identity as a woman and an outstanding writer. The quest for identity becomes the main theme in her short novel *The Bell Jar*, and in almost all her poems. She extends her range to comprehend the social and cultural history of the West in her poems such as *Fever 1030*, *Daddy*, *Lady Lazarus*, *Death and Co*, *Cut*, *Mary's Songs*, *Tulips*, *The Moon and the Yew Tree*, etc.

Like other woman writers, marriage and family life made it difficult for Plath to realize potential. Although she was conscious that writing and family life do not go together, yet she remained determined to indulge in both. In this connection Judith Kroll's remark about her is significant:

She was Earth Mother and the fruits of her body and fruits of her mind were inextricably intertwined.

Suzanne Juhsaz elaborates this further:

Plath is the women poet of our century who sees the problem, the situation of trying to be a woman poet of our century who sees the problem, the situation of trying to be a woman poet with the coldest and most undedredeeming clarity, and whofinds no solution.

Kamala Das was nurtured in an atmosphere of poetry. Poetry came to her effortlessly and in later life she had only to decide the medium of its expression. She is a bilingual writer. Apart from her poems in English she has also published a number of short stories in Malayalam known for their provocative themes and crisp, enchanting style. She started writing poetry at the age of six. Her first poem was, as we gather from *My Story*, about a doll that had lost its head and had to remain headless for eternity. She believes that just as God leaves a ‘potent fragment’ of himself in his creation so does the poet. This potent fragment of the poet represents his personality. This is why, in *My Story* Das asserts that: ‘*A poet's raw material is not stone or clay but her own personality.*’

Imtiaz Dharker is one among these poets, who register their voice against sexism, violence, religion exploitation etc. She was born in Pakistan and brought up in Scotland, and she divides her time between London and India and writes for the cause of females of Indian subcontinent. There are different themes of her poetry of Imtiaz Dharker such as: home, freedom, journeys, geographical and cultural displacement, communal conflict, religious exploitation and gender politics etc. In the realms of the Post-Modern literature Imtiaz Dharker occupy a very significant position as a rebel against the tradition of marginalization of women in Indian subcontinent society. She is widely acclaimed as revolutionary poet for having raised in poetry her voice rebelliously against cultural displacement, communal conflict, religious exploitation and gender politics which is the causal factor of feminine disturbance. In order to awaken the idealistic women from their age-old slumber, she started writing poetry and her poetry protests against the injustices and the persecution to which pious women have long been subjected in the name of religion, even though which is not mentioned in religious books. She protests against the passivity and the timidity of the pious religious women who spends her life silently in the false religious society. She makes poetry as a vehicle for the expression of her resentments and indignation against such false religious society. She is a contemporary Indian poetess quite conscious of her artistic design and purpose as well as her responsibility towards the hopes and oppressions, the concerns and anguishes, of womankind. Her poetic voice imbued with feminist angst and anxiety sensibility is typically her own and it cannot be confused with anyone else's. She experienced the world as an arena of various power struggles: false religion against female, victor against victim, male against female, master against

servant. Her poems as well as the drawings can be seen as an attempt to mediate these antagonisms. She felt life as a chaos of conflicting oppositions and counter forces and tried to co-ordinate these counter forces by corresponding to her art and life. Thus Dharker's own inner and outer life provided not only form, but also matter for her writing. She wrote about her own emotions and about actual events, places and people of three countries i.e. Pakistan, India and UK. In turn, her writing shaped her life; her metaphors provided temporary states to her diaspora life and thus structured her experience. A strong feeling of her own independence, rebellion against male domination, also resentment and protest against male domination, resentment and protest against women who were passively perpetuating the human values and mindless domesticity are freely expressed in all her works. In a male-dominated society she sought to establish her identity as a woman and an outstanding writer. The quest for identity becomes the main theme in almost all her poems. She extends her range to comprehend the social and cultural history of the West in her poem "Over the Moon". Like other woman writers, marriage and family life made it difficult for Dharker to realize potential. Although she was conscious that writing and family life do not go together, yet she remained determined to indulge in both. She divides her time between London and India. She eloped to marry Indian, Maharashtrian Hindu who lives in Bombay and was a journalist, Anil Dharker, a Hindu by birth. Because of that, her family completely cut her off and she did not see or hear from them for the next fifteen years (Dharker in de Souza 1999, 112). After the death of her first husband Anil Dharker, she married with Simon Powell. At present time she divides her time between the United Kingdom and Mumbai. She habitually describes herself as a Scottish Muslim Calvinist, born in Lahore and adopted by India. It is this feminine experience that experiences her poetry and drawings.

The way Imtiaz Dharker addresses about the dilemma of subaltern women in oppressing societies remembers the opinion made by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in "Can the Subaltern Speak?". It can be argued, though, that one difference between Spivak's opinion on the silencing of the gendered subaltern and Imtiaz Dharker's point of view on the same theme is that the latter is not as gloomy, in spite of what it might seem at first sight. In her poetry, Imtiaz Dharker offers some examples of women who manage to break free and speak up for themselves, or of women who find a way to speak, for example in the form of the possessed women of *I speak for the devil*. According to the poet, this is one of the strategies used by women to discover a tone of voice in circumstances of repression, even if that entails giving up their own voice – and thus their private agency – in favour of what the others consider to be the devil's voice. In "I need", a poem from "The terrorist at my table", there is a sort of counterpoint to bleak poems like the aforementioned "Another woman", where the speaker wants to see a young boy bathing at the well, and boldly says:

I need to go to Crawford Market
through the piles of fruit
and buy a whole sack
of ripe mangoes
to suck and suck

till nothing is left but dry seeds (Dharker: *The terrorist at my table*, 104).

The poem ends with a mysterious "I need you to come back" (ibid), where longing for what seems to be a lover is mingled with the flavours from both Britain and of her other country, Pakistan. The speaker longs to eat 'sarson da saag, and hot makki di roti', but also bacon and eggs, claiming that "my greed has no nationality" (*The terrorist at my table*, 103). The last poem of *I speak for the devil*, "Exorcism", is a type of freedom, nearly a liberating moment, where the persona tries to get free from the idea of being haunted:

I'm letting all the bad things
fall away. I'm no one
but myself,

no one possesses me. (Dharker: I speak for the devil, 119)

Imtiyaz Dharker and Kamala Das experienced the world as an arena of various power struggles: life against death, victor against victim, male against female. Their poems as well as other fictions they wrote can be seen as attempts to mediate these antagonisms. They felt life as a chaos of conflicting oppositions and counter forces and tried to co-ordinate these counter forces by corresponding to their art and life. Thus their own inner and outer life provided not only form, but also matter for her fiction. She wrote about her own emotions and about actual events, places and people. In turn, their writing shaped their life. A strong feeling of their own independence, rebellion against male domination, resentment and protest against male domination, resentment and protest against women who were passively perpetuating the human values and mindless domesticity are freely expressed in all their works. In a male-dominated society there sought to establish their identity as women and outstanding writers.

Like other women writers, marriage and family life made it difficult for both Dharker and Das to realize potential. Although they were conscious that writing and family life do not go together, yet they remained determined to indulge in both. Their poetry is indeed a complex affair but what is now undisputed is the authenticity of the poems, which in their rich and torturing ambiguities, suggest a daring new aesthetic. They sprang directly from a struggle with the soul-shattering experiences of real life, concerning father, mother, children, husband, grandmother, marriage inner demon, existential burden, human suffering and what not. Viewed as a whole their poems are mainly concerned with themselves. They provide keen insight into their fear, **anguish, anxiety** compulsion, and obsession. Their poetry is therefore self-centered, autobiographical and confessional.

In both Kamala Das and Imtiyaz Dharker **anguish and anxiety** are more important in the sense that right from their childhood both of them has a very sensitive soul. They were very anxious about the things and they got some blows throughout their life, which added to their anxiety and this anxiety forced them to groan with agony. Both these intensely unhappy women are in search of happiness. Kamala Das, like Sylvia Plath spend in her life in the **anguish and anxiety**. Firstly, her careless parents, then, her early marriage to a relative as punishment for not doing well in mathematics, her own and her husband's infidelity, all lead her to loneliness. She was a victim of circumstances and sexual humiliations. All her quests for true love failed. She found herself in a custom ridden, orthodox society dominated by men who looked different and acted different. She could not adjust herself to this situation and, therefore, she highlighted the anguish and anxiety of her mind through her poems. According to her, modern women need freedom, self respect and they are prepared to shoulder responsibility. So, both these women had failed relationships with their male partners, who resulted in increased sensitivity and so show an aversion to the male principle of dominance and subjection. They scorn hypocrisy and are painfully aware of their dominance and sexual subjection. This is the reason that they write about death, disease, and destruction. The poetry of both these poets portrays death as dreadful, but their general approach towards it is a positive one. For them, death not only destroys all forms of the false self but also becomes a means of self-generation and rebirth into a new existence. Life for both these poets is different. It's more challenging for Dharker nwho wants everything, but for Das, after loneliness and longing, it provides her with the anchor of her devotion to Lord Krishna. In the case of Sylvia Plath the constant restlessness and several hurts that haunted her world, led her to commit suicide, but forces of spirituality pulled Kamala Das to live.

In order to awaken the Indian women from their age-old slumber, Kamala Das started writing poetry and her autobiography 'My Story'. This is a revolutionary approach with a feminist perspective. She has dealt with all those problems confronting the matriarchal society of India. In an interview, Kamala Das stated frankly, the purpose of her writing *My Story*:

*I needed to disturb society out of its complacency.
I found the complacency a very ugly state. I wanted
to make women of my generation feel that if men could*

do something wrong, they could do it themselves too.

I wanted them to realize that they were equal,

I wanted to remove gender difference.

Kamala Das's poetry protests against the injustices and the persecution to which women in India have long been subjected to. She protests against the passivity and the timidity of the Indian women and against their subservience to their husbands. In the sixties, when Kamala Das started writing, the Indian women had hardly any voice in society. Kamala recognized herself as one of the victims of the prevalent orthodox attitude towards the Indian women and of male domination. Her husband's ill-treatment of her and his cruel neglect of her feminine needs prompted her to give vent to her grievances in her poems. She makes poetry a vehicle for the expression of her resentments and indignation. The narrators in her poems assert their feminine identity as a neglected class of Indian society. Her poems have ushered in a new kind of morality where the time-honoured virtues of timidity, submissiveness, and dependence are thrown overboard. In this new morality, women speak authoritatively and aggressively, trying to demolish the concept of male dominance and male egotism. Her poetry is largely devoted to her candid confessions of her sex-life. She unhesitatingly and fearlessly employs certain shocking expressions which even a male writer would be reluctant to use. She records her personal concerns and predicament in her poems. There is nothing ugly and forbidden for her. She is the only woman poet of India who has attained world-wide recognition. In her poetry, the theme of body is related to her perennial theme of love. Her attitude to her own body is ambivalent: she both likes and dislikes her body.

In short, in their poetry Imtiaz Dharker and Kamala Das conveys their complex states of mind. That is why there is a great deal of inner landscape in their poems. In their poetry they use various objects of nature as objective correlatives for their mental feelings. The use of this technique gives an aura of fresh air to the world of their poetry, which is mostly obsessed with anguish and anxiety. This technique of reminiscence and projecting the inner or mental landscape into the external landscape shows that their poetry is subliminal and cerebral in nature. Though this makes their poetry somewhat esoteric and obscure on one hand but on the other it gives it a fascinating resonance. Thus, a study of their poetry leads us to recognize their significant role as a rebel for her selfless dedication to the struggle against women's marginalization and victimization. Their literary venture was deliberately and whole heartedly designed for women's emancipation, upliftment and empowerment. Their writings can be conclusively reckoned as feminist in theme, design and tone.

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