

# Children and teachers as co-researchers in Indian primary English classrooms

## Researchers

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## Research focus:

We know very little about what children think about learning English and what they would like to do in English classes because no one ever asks them or involves them in any way when it comes to decisions about learning.

We do not know whether primary English teachers (in this case in India) would find it feasible and beneficial to work with children as active partners/ co-researchers in exploring their own classrooms.

## Methodology

We organised 3 workshops for volunteer teachers (about 25 teachers) to come together 3 times over a period of one and a half years. In the first workshop we discussed ways in which children could be involved in classroom investigations and then every teacher went back to their classrooms to try out some ideas. Then in the second workshop we came together to share successes and challenges and then everyone returned to their classrooms to try out new ideas or carry on with their previous ideas for longer. In the last workshop each teacher presented their data from their classrooms showcasing the children's work and initiative and reflecting on their own journeys of professional development.

## Key findings:

- The children suggested creative ideas, gained confidence and became fully engaged in their English lessons;
- The teachers reported that the children also improved their English skills.
- The teachers radically changed their ideas about teaching/learning and became more open to handing decisions over to the children.

## To find out more:

Pinter, A., R. Mathew and R. Smith (2016) [Children and teachers as co-researchers in Indian primary English classrooms](#). (ELT Research papers 16.03). London: The British Council.

Pinter A. & R. Mathew (2017) [Teacher development opportunities in an action research project: Primary English teachers working with children as co-researchers in India](#). In E. Wilden and R. Porsch (eds) *The professional development of primary EFL teachers* Munster/New York: Waxman, pp 141-152