# Methods for Tapping the Competence of Hindi (L2) Learners[*]

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## Abstract

Adopting an appropriate methodology for eliciting data from students learning a foreign or second language (L2) has always been a tough task for tapping the competence of young learners' before they lose interest in the data elicitation tasks requires researchers to be skillful and perceptive. This work stems from the research study conducted by Kumar (2017). It highlights the methodological procedure followed for collecting data from (L1) Korean students who were part of the Semester Aboard program at the Department of Linguistics, University of Delhi for learning Hindi (L2) as a foreign language from August to December 2016.

**Keywords:** methodology, second language acquisition, generative approach, morphosyntactic categories, Hindi.

## 1.1. Participants

Twenty-two students participated in the study and were covered to provide data for various tasks. Of the 22 students, 14 were basic and 8 were intermediate learners. The group division was based on a placement test as well as an oral test conducted at the Department of Linguistics, University of Delhi (DU). The entire process of dividing students into two groups based on their fluency level will be discussed in detail in the following section.

Of the 14 Basic students, 4 were males and 10 were females. The Intermediate group had 5 male and 3 female students. In the case of basic students, the age range was 21 to 26 years with a mean age of 22.07 years. The standard deviation of their age was 1.43. The age of Intermediate students ranged from 21 to 23 years with a mean age of 22.25 years and with standard deviation of 0.88. The age range of all the students taken together is 21 to 26 years with a mean age of 22.13 years and a standard deviation of 1.24.

The time spent in India ranged from 0 to 76 weeks in the case of basic students and 0 to 34 weeks for intermediate students. The mean duration of the stay in India was 7.57 weeks with a standard deviation of 20.03 for the former group. It was 7 weeks with a standard deviation of 11.36 for the latter group. Overall, the range of stay in India varied from 0 to 76 weeks with a mean time of 7.36 weeks and a standard deviation of 17.08. These details regarding age and time spent in India or exposure to L2 are summed up in the table below.

**Table- 1.1:** Demographics of the L2 learners

| Participants | Number | M | F | Age in Years | | | Weeks in India | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Range | Mean | SD | Range | Mean | SD |
| Basic | 14 | 4 | 10 | 21-26 | 22.07 | 1.43 | 0-76 | 7.57 | 20.03 |
| Intermediate | 8 | 5 | 3 | 21-23 | 22.25 | 0.88 | 0-34 | 7 | 11.36 |
| Total | 22 | 9 | 13 | 21-26 | 22.13 | 1.24 | 0-76 | 7.36 | 17.08 |

The difference in age in the two groups, with the Basic group having a higher standard deviation in age, can be accounted for because the Basic group has a few students referring to resume their studies after a compulsory draft service in the army and thus having lost the basic linguistic skills of Hindi acquisition before joining the compulsory army service.

## 1.2. Hindi Teaching Programme

The students who volunteered their participation in the present research study came to Delhi (India) as part of an exchange programme between Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (HUFS), Seoul, South Korea, and the Department of Linguistics, University of Delhi, Delhi, India. The agreement signed between the two institutions allows the students from

Korea to do a semester abroad programme which consists of four months of teaching and examination followed by an internship in Korean companies working in the Hindi area of India or an extensive travel programme in the Hindi area. The name of the programme is— *Hindi and Indian Studies Learning Programme*; which has been operational since 1993 for more than 30 years. The main agenda of promoting this partnership is to teach Hindi as a foreign language to the students with the help of communicative strategies and enhance the communication skills of the students at large. A specific curriculum is designed to offer a wide range of classes covering various subjects related to Indian culture and society apart from Hindi grammar classes and oral practice. Students who provided data were part of the semester that began on 1st September 2016 and ended on 16th December 2016. Besides learning Hindi, they had the opportunity to get first-hand exposure to the following 12 various topics, that is, Indo-Arab relations, Indo-Iranian relations, Urdu literature, Punjabi culture, Sanskrit, Indian music, History, Indian Constitution, Indian Society, Buddhist history, IT, Extension education. Every day in the morning they used to have the first two classes for Hindi learning starting from 9:30 am to 10:30 am and 10:30 am to 11:30 am respectively. The medium of instruction in the morning classes was Hindi. Afternoon classes, preceded by a 15-minute break, were focused on Indian culture and society studies. These were usually taught in English but students were free to ask questions in English or Hindi. There was an informed break of 5-10 minutes between these two consecutive classes if desired by the students. As per official records, the total number of classes held during the semester was 371 but the attendance registered in the classes was as low as 50 % since some of them commenced their travel plans as per the availability of tickets and other logistics constraints. Availing the time for as much travel in India as possible is the motivation for the students to come for a Semester Abroad programme. Table 1.2 summarizes the time-table and the number of classes held throughout the semester.

**Table- 1.2:** Structure of classes

| Time Table | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Class | 1st | 2nd | Break | 3rd | 4th |
| Timing | 09:30-10:30 am | 10:30-11:30 am | | 11:45- 12:45 pm | 12:45-1:45 pm |
| Number of Classes | | | | | |
| Month | September | October | November | December | Total |
| Number | 102 | 106 | 105 | 58 | 371 |

The inherent flexibility permissiveness for their travel plans and their absence on a couple of days affixed to weekends or long holidays thus appear to be a crucial factor to impact the learning of some of them. This will be discussed later.

As far as the academic background of the students is concerned, most of them were in the 6th semester/3rd year of their course at their home institution, i.e., HUFS. They all belonged to either the College of Oriental Languages or the College of International and Area Studies of the university. The specific departments they were associated with were the Department of Hindi and the Department of Indian Studies. Apart from Hindi being their major-1 subject, they were studying various other subjects of multidisciplinary relevance as major-2 or minor subjects. Some of them had a break in learning due to various reasons. The complete information about educational background has been compiled in the following table 1.3.

**Table- 1.3:** Academic background of students

| Code | Age | Gender | Semester/Year | Subject: Major-1 | Subject: Major-2 / Minor | Break (in learning in years) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| KS1 | 21 | F | 6th/3rd | Hindi | International Economics and Law | No |
| KS2 | 22 | F | 6th/3rd | Hindi | Business Administration | Yes (1) |
| KS3 | 21 | M | 6th/3rd | Indian Studies | Advertising Public Relations Branding | No |
| KS4 | 21 | F | 6th/3rd | Indian Studies | International Finance | No |
| KS5 | 22 | F | 6th/3rd | Hindi | Business Administration | No |
| KS6 | 24 | M | 6th/3rd | Hindi | Public Administration | Yes (2 ½) |
| KS7 | 23 | M | 6th/3rd | Hindi | Political Science and Diplomacy | Yes (2) |
| KS8 | 22 | F | 4th/2nd | Hindi | Political Science and Diplomacy | Yes (1) |
| KS9 | 22 | F | 5th/3rd | Indian Studies | TESOL and English Linguistics | Yes (1) |
| KS10 | 21 | F | 4th/2nd | Indian Studies | Political Science and Diplomacy | Yes (1) |
| KS11 | 22 | F | 6th/3rd | Hindi | International Economics and Law | No |
| KS12 | 21 | F | 5th/3rd | Indian Studies | Chinese Interpretation and Translation | No |
| KS13 | 21 | F | 6th/3rd | Hindi | Political Science and Diplomacy | No |
| KS14 | 26 | M | 6th/3rd | Hindi | Economics | Yes (5) |
| KS15 | 23 | M | 6th/3rd | Hindi | Political Science and Diplomacy | Yes (2) |
| KS16 | 23 | M | 6th/3rd | Hindi | Political Science and Diplomacy | Yes (2) |
| KS17 | 23 | M | 6th/3rd | Hindi | Political Science and Diplomacy | Yes (2) |
| KS18 | 23 | M | 6th/3rd | Indian Studies | Computer Science and Engineering | Yes (2) |

| KS19 | 22 | M | 4th/2nd | Indian Studies | Statistics | No |
|------|----|---|---------|----------------|------------|-----|
| KS20 | 21 | F | 6th/3rd | Hindi | International Economics and Law | No |
| KS21 | 22 | F | 6th/3rd | Hindi | International Economics and Law | No |
| KS22 | 21 | F | 6th/3rd | Hindi | Spanish | Yes (½ ) |

### 1.3. Tasks and Materials

The collection of data for this study comprised two phases, that is, pre-administration and post-administration, as one of the primary intentions was to notice the growth in performance or any positive shift in the acquisitions by comparing data at two points. Pre-administration included the (a) background information questionnaire, (b) video description task, (c) acceptability/grammaticality judgement task, (d) sentence selection task, and (e) structured elicitation. The study restricted itself to using only two tools in the second turn, i.e., (a) paragraph writing task, and (b) acceptability/grammaticality judgement task.

**Table- 1.4:** Approximate duration of the tasks

| Task | Approximate Duration |
|------|---------------------|
| *Pre-Administration / First Data* | |
| Background Information Questionnaire | 15-20 minutes |
| Video Description Task | 30-40 minutes |
| Acceptability / Grammatical Judgement Task | 20-50 minutes |
| Sentence Selection Task | 15-30 minutes |
| Structured Elicitation | 4-6 minutes (per participant) |
| *Post-Administration / Second Data* | |
| Paragraph Writing Task | 30-35 minutes |
| Acceptability / Grammatical Judgement Task | 30-50 minutes |

As mentioned in the previous section, the classification of students into basic and intermediate learners was done based on tests conducted by the Department of Linguistics, DU. So, in the following section, I will discuss the methodology adopted by the department to conduct the proficiency test.

### 1.3.1. Proficiency Test

To ensure a better teaching environment for the students, the Department of Linguistics conducts a proficiency test every semester to group them into different classes based on their contemporary knowledge of Hindi. The same was done for the batch that was covered under this study. The test had five different questions and each question consisted of 5-10 items to be answered. It was administered manually to be answered manually. The first question contained sentences that had to be completed by filling in the blanks. The second one had some words required to be used in sentence construction. The third question asked students to correct the wrong sentences. The fourth one required them to fill in the blanks, and the last question required the students to write 5 full sentences in Hindi on one of the topics provided therein. Some of the questions from the original test are shown in Table- 1.5.

**Table- 1.5:** Sample of Proficiency Test

प्रश्न १. नीचे दिए गये वाक्यों को पूरा करें (Complete the sentences) :
१. मेरा घर कोरिया में _____ में है ।
२. क्या आपने खाना _____ ?
३. मेरी दोस्त _____ मुझे पत्र लिखा ।
४. आप उस _____ से यह सवाल पूछिए ।
boy

प्रश्न २. नीचे दिए गये शब्दों को वाक्यों में प्रयोग करें :
१. अच्छा लगना
२. जल्दी- जल्दी
३. के साथ

प्रश्न ३. नीचे दिए गये वाक्यों को ठीक करें (Correct the following sentences) :
१. मैं स्कूल जाना था ।
२. आप लालकिला गया था ।
३. लड़की सेब खाया ।

**Table- 1.6:** List of nouns used in proficiency test

|  | Devanagari | IPA | Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | घर | gʰər | *home* |
| 2. | कोरिया | korija | *Korea* |
| 3. | खाना | kʰana | *food* |
| 4. | दोस्त | dost | *friend* |
| 5. | पत्र | pətrə | *letter* |
| 6. | लालकिला | lal-kila | *The Red-fort* |
| 7. | भाई | bʰai | *brother* |
| 8. | सवाल | səval | *question* |
| 9. | बच्चे | bətʃtʃe | *children* |
| 10. | स्कूल | skul | *school* |
| 11. | चाय | tʃaj | *tea* |
| 12. | हिंदी | hindi | *Hindi* |
| 13. | सेब | seb | *apple* |
| 14. | माता | mata | *mother* |
| 15. | कमरा | kəmra | *room* |
| 16. | दिल्ली | dilli | *Delhi* |
| 17. | पिता | pita | *father* |

**Table- 1.7:** List of verbs used in proficiency test

|  | Devanagari | IPA | Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | लिखना | likʰna | *write* |
| 2. | मिलना | milna | *meet* |
| 3. | पूछना | putʃʰna | *ask* |
| 4. | अच्छा लगना | ətʃtʃʰa ləgna | *like* |
| 5. | जाना | dʒana | *go* |
| 6. | खाना | kʰana | *eat* |
| 7. | आना | ana | *come* |
| 8. | है | hɛ | *be* |

The written test was followed by an Oral test in which students were engaged in short conversations. They were asked a few questions such that they could describe themselves in Hindi easily. The test aimed to examine the oral fluency of the students. It lasted 5 to 10 minutes for each participant.

Students who scored below 50% in both tests were given a basic group classroom and those who scored above were allowed to study in the intermediate classroom.

### 1.3.2. Pre-Administration

Many researchers raised doubts about the reliability of the results inferred from one task. To overcome the issue of unreliability that arises specifically from the acceptability judgement task, Murphy (1997) proposed the use of a test battery that includes more than one method for data elicitation. Her proposal has been adopted in second language acquisition research and used successfully by researchers like Duffield and White (1999), Yuan (2001), Joo (2003), and Ranjan (2016) to name a few.

Subsequently, to sustain the validity of the data collection methodology, I introduced four different tasks apart from the background information questionnaire. They will be in focus in the ensuing sections. Total time spent in the pre-administration or first data collection was around 1 month.

A separate reliability test of the instruments, namely the Acceptability / Grammaticality Judgement Task, Sentence Selection Task, and Structures Elicitation was done with 10 native speakers before setting up the final outline of the tasks. Two tasks, that is, sentence selection and structured elicitation suffered from methodological faults and hence their results were not considered in the end. Still, they will be discussed in the upcoming sections to offer some direction for future research works.

### 1.3.2.1. Background Information Questionnaire

The questionnaire that was used for gathering background information was not limited to asking questions like age, gender, language proficiency group, knowledge of other languages, year/semester of their course, etc. from the subjects. It

involved many motivation and attitude-based questions apart from some other general questions relevant to classroom learning/teaching. These questions were introduced after bearing the results of Agnihotri & Sawhney's (1998) work in mind. Their paper scrutinized the Tamil children's proficiency in Hindi in Delhi in a social psychological framework and concluded that variables like attitude towards the Hindi teacher, parental encouragement, and interest in foreign languages have a positive role to play in acquiring Hindi. Along similar lines, some questions that were included were— do you see any sustainable career for yourself after learning Hindi, do you actively think about what you have learned in Hindi classes, how do you think about the people speaking Hindi, what do you think is their attitude towards you, how do you think you learn Hindi the most, how frequently do you speak Hindi, which language do you speak outside the classroom, what was your age when you started learning Hindi, do you find your teachers' effort motivating enough to learn Hindi, do you think material used for teaching in the classroom is good enough to learn Hindi etc.

The questionnaire has as many as 32 questions and students spent 15 to 20 minutes recording their choices. Analyzing the correlation between these questions and the parameters of Hindi that are not present in Korean was the principal motivation behind making a long questionnaire. The study primarily aimed at investigating whether assumptions like traveling across the country or mixing up with the L2 speech community more frequently, gender, age, early age of acquisition, and knowledge of other foreign languages do have any positive impact on acquiring morpho-syntactic rules of Hindi.

### 1.3.2.2. Video Description Task (VDT)

Writing tasks give a clear picture of the structures that are believed to be legitimate by L2 learners. As the writer has more time to recover the forms in comparison to the production task. It was also expected to predict the types of constructions learners tend to avoid by overusing or replacing certain forms. Such relevant information makes the writing tasks more sustainable when we are looking for the influence of L1 on the interlanguage.

I selected two video clips for the video description task the students were required to do. The first clip was taken from the Bollywood (Hindi) movie "*Gol Maal*" released in 1979. Students were shown the initial 9:10 minutes of the movie and asked to describe it in their own words on the paper sheet given to them. The second clip was a Thai advertising film of the duration about 7:45 minutes. As opposed to the first clip, it was a silent and highly emotive movie. Students took 15-20 minutes for each task. They took more interest in the second video and thereby wrote a few extra sentences. It seemed to be a natural psychological consequent behavior since a silent clip invariably offers more imaginative space to respond as opposed to a language-bound clip.

Following instructions were given to them verbally before every task:
1) You can ask the Hindi word to denote any activity or thing you want to use.
2) In case of any confusion, you can use the English words also.
3) Use of offline or online dictionaries, translators, etc. is not allowed.
4) Referring to notebooks or any sort of textbook is not allowed.
5) Use only task sheets given to you to provide your views or responses.
6) Use only a pen to write or mark anything on the sheet, and avoid using a pencil and eraser.

The researcher along with a friend to assist personally monitored every test to ensure the procurement of original data and support them whenever it was required.

### 1.3.2.3. Acceptability / Grammaticality Judgement Task (AJT/GJT)

The present study which examines rules related to inflectional morphology and syntax seeks to make acceptability/grammaticality judgement task more viable as specified by White (2003: 200). She argues that while recording their choices in grammaticality judgement task L2 learners do not have to retrieve forms themselves from their mental lexicon as they speak. To substantiate her claim, she further draws support from the studies of Ionin & Wexler (2002) and White (2002). A former study concludes that L2 learners fail to judge non-finite forms as being fully grammatical even though they often produce them. A later study reports that the Turkish speaker who could not supply determiners in spontaneous production was found good at rating the same constituent in other tasks. So, one of the best methods to tap the learner's competence is *acceptability / grammatical judgements task*.

As mentioned earlier, there were a total of 10 different morpho-syntactic categories of Hindi grammar analyzed in this study. To test all those categories, the researcher compiled an AJT task containing 60 sentences. There were 3 correct and 3 incorrect tokens for each morpho-syntactic category or rule resulting in 6 tokens altogether to test one category. It was sought to ensure that no filler or distractor crept in as there were already 54 other sentences from 9 different categories to serve the purpose for the rest of the 6 sentences of 1 category. No context situation or short story was provided before these items, and each of the items entailed one complete sentence as shown in Table- 1.5. Students had binary options, i.e., 'good' and 'not good', to mark their choices. The task began with giving instructions 3 to 6 followed in VDT. It was carried out using paper and pen. The time taken to finish the task by each participant was around 20-50 minutes. Table-1.8 depicts the category-wise outline of AJT.

**Table- 1.8:** Ten morpho-syntactic categories with correct and incorrect tokens (First Data).

| A. | NUMBER (Abstract Noun Plural) |
|---|---|

| Category-1: Masculine (NumPlM) | |
|---|---|
| भारत में **बहुत सारे धर्म हैं** | | *भारत में **बहुत सारे धर्म है** | |
| bʰarət mẽ bəhʊt sare dʰərm hɛ̃ | *bʰarət mẽ bəhʊt sare dʰərm hɛ |
| 'India has many religions.' | |

| Category-2: Feminine (NumPlF) | |
|---|---|
| भारत में **बहुत छुट्टियाँ होती हैं** | | *भारत में **बहुत छुट्टियाँ होती है** | |
| bʰarət mẽ bəhʊt tʃʰʊʈʈijã̄ hoʈi hɛ̃ | *bʰarət mẽ bəhʊt tʃʰʊʈʈijã̄ hoʈi hɛ |
| 'There are many holidays in India.' | |

| B. | GENDER (Grammatical- Inanimate Singular) |
|---|---|

| Category-3: Masculine (GenSgM) | |
|---|---|
| हमारे विद्यालय में एक **बड़ा पेड़** है | | *हमारे विद्यालय में एक **बड़ी पेड़** है | |
| həmare vidjaləjə mẽ ek bəɽa peɽ hɛ | *həmare vidjaləjə mẽ ek bəɽi peɽ hɛ |
| 'There is a big tree in our school.' | |

| Category-4: Feminine (GenSgF) | |
|---|---|
| सोनू हमेशा **काली चाय** पीता है | | *सोनू हमेशा **काला चाय** पीता है | |
| sonu həmeʃa kali tʃaj piʈa hɛ | *sonu həmeʃa kala tʃaj piʈa hɛ |
| 'Sonu drinks black tea.' | |

| C. | ASPECT (Progressive) |
|---|---|

| Category-5: Present (AspPrPrs) | |
|---|---|
| बच्चा माता के साथ खेल **रहा** है | | *बच्चा माता के साथ खेल**ना** है | |
| bətʃtʃa maʈa ke saʈʰ kʰel rəha hɛ | *bətʃtʃa maʈa ke saʈʰ kʰelna hɛ |
| 'Child is playing with mother.' | |

| Category-6: Past (AspPrPst) | |
|---|---|
| गीता शाम को फ़िल्म देख **रही** थी | | *गीता शाम को फ़िल्म **देखी** थी | |
| giʈa ʃam ko film dekʰ rəhi ʈʰi | *giʈa ʃam ko film dekʰi ʈʰi |
| 'Gita was watching a movie in the evening.' | |

| D. | ASPECT (Perfective) |
|---|---|

| Category-7: Present (AspPfPrs) | |
|---|---|
| मोहन किताब लेने घर **गया है** | | *मोहन किताब लेने घर **जाना है** | |
| mohən kiʈab lene gʰər gəja hɛ | *mohən kiʈab lene gʰər dʒana hɛ |
| 'Mohan has gone home to bring a book.' | |

| Category-8: Past (AspPfPst) | |
|---|---|
| विनय कल कक्षा के बाद बाज़ार **गया** | | *विनय कल कक्षा के बाद बाज़ार **जाता था** | |
| vinəj kəl kəkʃa ke baɖ bazar gəja | *vinəj kəl kəkʃa ke baɖ bazar dʒaʈa ʈʰa |
| 'Vinay went to the market after class yesterday.' | |

| E. | ERGATIVITY (Past tense, Perfective Aspect, & Transitive Verb) |
|---|---|

| Category-9: Sub.+ vɛ, D.O+ Ø (ErgNe) | |
|---|---|
| मैं**ने** आम का जूस पीया | | *मैं आम का जूस पीया | |
| mɛ̃ne am ka dʒus pija | *mɛ̃ am ka dʒus pija |
| 'I drank mango juice.' | |

| Category-10: Sub.+ vɛ, D.O+ ҡo (ErgNeKo) | |
|---|---|
| मोहित **ने** बच्चों **को** खिलाया | | *मोहित **ने** बच्चों **का** खिलाया | |
| mohiʈ ne bətʃtʃõ ko kʰilaja | *mohiʈ ne bətʃtʃõ ka kʰilaja |
| 'Mohit made children play (with him).' | |

Selection of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and other lexical items was done after interacting with students at the beginning of the semester and going through the writing content of their class notebooks and assignment sheets.

**Table- 1.9:** List of nouns used in acceptability/grammaticality judgement task (First Data)

| | Devanagari | IPA | Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | भारत | bʰarət | *India* |
| 2. | संगीत | səŋgi:t | *music* |
| 3. | धर्म | dʰərm | *religion* |
| 4. | छात्र | tʃʰaʈrə | *student* |
| 5. | विचार | vitʃar | *thought* |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6. | छुट्टी | tʃʰuʈʈi | *vacation* |
| 7. | अंधेरा | ənd̪ʰera | *dark* |
| 8. | आवाज़ | avɑz | *sound* |
| 9. | किताब | kit̪ab | *book* |
| 10. | कहानी | kəhani | *story* |
| 11. | विद्यालय | vid̪jaləjə | *school* |
| 12. | पेड़ | peɽ | *tree* |
| 13. | पुस्तकालय | pʊst̪kaləjə | *library* |
| 14. | वायुयान | vajujan | *airplane* |
| 15. | चाय | tʃaj | *tea* |
| 16. | बच्चा | bətʃtʃa | *child* |
| 17. | बात | bɑt̪ | *conversation* |
| 18. | दीवार | d̪ivar | *wall* |
| 19. | घोड़ा | gʰoɽa | *horse* |
| 20. | माता | mat̪a | *mother* |
| 21. | पत्र | pət̪rə | *letter* |
| 22. | राजा | radʒa | *king* |
| 23. | रानी | rani | *queen* |
| 24. | फ़िल्म | film | *movie* |
| 25. | घर | gʰər | *house* |
| 26. | कक्षा | kəkʃa | *class* |
| 27. | काम | kam | *work* |
| 28. | आम | ɑm | *mango* |
| 29. | जूस | dʒus | *juice* |
| 30. | सेब | seb | *apple* |
| 31. | भाई | bʰai | *brother* |
| 32. | बाज़ार | bɑzar | *market* |
| 33. | हाथ | hɑt̪ʰ | *hand* |
| 34. | तस्वीर | t̪əsvi:r | *picture* |
| 35. | कपड़ा | kəpɽa | *cloth* |

**Table- 1.10:** List of adjectives used in acceptability/grammaticality judgement task (First Data)

| | Devanagari | IPA | Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | कई तरह | kəi t̪ərəh | *many types* |
| 2. | बहुत सारा | bəhʊt̪ sara | *too many* |
| 3. | अपना | əpna | *our* |
| 4. | हमारा | həmara | *our* |
| 5. | एक | ek | *one* |
| 6. | बड़ा | bəɽa | *big* |
| 7. | मेरा | mera | *my* |
| 8. | छोटा | tʃʰoʈa | *small* |
| 9. | काला | kala | *black* |
| 10. | गंदा | gənd̪a | *dirty* |

**Table- 1.11:** List of verbs used in acceptability/grammaticality judgement task (First Data)

| | Devanagari | IPA | Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | है | hɛ | *is* |
| 2. | होना | hona | *be* |
| 3. | बताना | bət̪ana | *tell* |
| 4. | सुनना | sunəna | *hear* |
| 5. | पीना | pina | *drink* |
| 6. | मानना | manəna | *obey/follow* |
| 7. | दौड़ना | d̪əuɽna | *run* |
| 8. | खेलना | kʰelna | *play* |
| 9. | लिखना | likʰna | *write* |
| 10. | पढ़ना | pəd̪ʰna | *read* |
| 11. | घूमना | gʰumna | *roam around* |
| 12. | देखना | d̪ekʰna | *see* |
| 13. | कर लेना | kər lena | *do (something completely)* |
| 14. | जाना | dʒana | *go* |
| 15. | काटना | kaʈna | *cut* |

| 16. | धोना | ɖʰona | *wash* |
| 17. | खिलाना | kʰilana | *make play someone* |

### 1.3.2.4. Sentence Selection Task (SST)

Joo (2003) studied 59 native (L1) Korean speakers learning English as a foreign language (L2) using two test instruments, namely picture sentence selection and sentence selection task. The findings of her paper are based on two queries. First: Do Korean learners of English develop native-like knowledge of English locative alteration, including the narrow range constraints that are not alike in English and Korean? Second: Does the L1 transfer impact the acquisition of the English locative alternation (Mackey & Gass, 2012, p.38)? Joo (2003) concluded that even though L2 learners tended to struggle with narrow-range constraints on the English locative alterations, they could handle a broad range of constraints in English as well as Korean. Besides, the particular pattern of difficulty in learning L2 was not related to the influence of L1.

Not only are results noteworthy, but also her instruments used to collect data, especially the sentence selection task in her research work. Therefore, this study relied on sentence selection as a third tool for data elicitation keeping the sample size in view which had a bigger strength of low proficiency learners.

Like previous tasks, it was also done with the help of pen and paper. The task sheet contained 10 different images corresponding to 10 different morpho-syntactic rules of Hindi. Every image was presented with 5 sentences. Out of those 5, 2 sentences were correct and the other 2 incorrect. The fifth option was there for the participant if he/she failed to decode the image. Table- 1.9 gives a better idea of what has been just described.

**Table- 1.12:** Sample of sentence selection task (First Data)



a) काला घोड़ा दौड़ लगा है।
kala gʰoɽa ɖɔuɽ ləga hɛ
'*The black horse has started to run.'

b) काला घोड़ा दौड़ता है।
kala gʰoɽa ɖɔuɽʈa hɛ
'The black horse runs.'

c) काला घोड़ा दौड़ रखा है।
kala gʰoɽa ɖɔuɽ rəkʰa hɛ
'*The black horse run already.'

d) काला घोड़ा दौड़ रहा है।
kala gʰoɽa ɖɔuɽ rəha hɛ
'The black horse is running.'

e) कोई भी नहीं (None of above)

### 1.3.2.5. Structured Elicitation (SE)

To study the acquisition of clitics in L2 Spanish, Zyzik (2006) carried out research that involved 50 native speakers of English learning Spanish as L2. In the study, the procedure used for collection of data was different from the current trend. Each participant was presented with a pair of pictures that characterized similar activities, but from different perspectives. In each pair, the researcher described the first picture keeping the target verb in view, and then asked the participant to describe the activity of the second picture. On similar lines, I designed the fourth task for pre-administration data collection.

In the task, students were shown 10 pairs of pictures on my laptop screen. Each pair was formed concerning the grammatical rules that are being examined in the research study. I described the first picture of each pair by keeping the target morpho-syntactic rule in mind and soon after asked them to describe the second picture. The sentence that I produced

for describing the first picture of each pair is termed a "source sentence" in Table- 1.10, and the one they uttered for describing the second picture is labeled as "target sentence" in Table- 1.11.

The recording of their responses was done with a professional Sony digital voice recorder (model no. ICD-UX533).

**Table- 1.13:** Sample of structured elicitation—A (First Data)



Source Sentence:

अध्यापिका ने बच्चों को खिलाया।

əd̪ʰjapika ne bət̠ʃt̠ʃõ ko kʰilaja

*'Teacher made children/students play.'*

**Table- 1.14:** Specimen of structured elicitation—B (First Data)



Target Sentence:

Structured elicitation task also suffered procedural shortcomings and its results were not included in the end. To illustrate, I repeated the source sentence twice which in turn gave the participant enough hints to produce a similar kind of target structure. The evidence of the task being faulty came from those target sentences which are almost similar to the source sentences. Moreover, the ability to produce sentences showing correct agreement of gender, number, and other grammatical categories that were seen missing in the writing task as well as AJT/GJT gave us good reasons to doubt the sustainability of this tool.

### 1.3.3.Post-Administration

The total time I had at my disposal to complete the second collection of data was only the last fifteen days of their semester. Considering the erratic availability of students in the classrooms and time constraints, the study was confined to collecting data only from two tasks that are described in detail in the ensuing sections.

### 1.3.3.1. Paragraph Writing Task (PWT)

Unlike the first data, the writing task involved in the second data was not based on the video description method. The participant students were given the following topic to write their views on as part of the activity.

"**भारत में आपके चार महीने**" (*Your four months stay in India*)
The task began by giving all (i.e. 1 to 6) of the instructions, while the first activities of a collection of data. Each participant was given 30-35 minutes to complete the paragraph. Almost every student wrote more sentences for this task perhaps because the topic appeared general and related to them.

*1.3.3.2. Acceptability / Grammaticality Judgement Task*

The second AJT/GJT was different from the first one at least in one way. The number of sentences which was 60 in the previous AJT was reduced to 50 in the second AJT. This was done specifically to regain the interest of the students in providing data. Each category had 2 correct and 2 incorrect tokens respectively causing a total of 4 tokens to test one category. The fifth one was created by introducing the blank in the sentence where the desired category was expected to be filled in by L2 learners.

The task of 'fill in the blank structures' was also included as a new step to maintain the effectiveness of the tool even after reducing the time consumption in rating the overall sentences. There was not much change in the selection of nouns, verbs, etc. Many of them were repeated a second time as well so that learners could easily grasp the meanings and only focus on the syntactic and morphological agreement part. Participants took 30-50 minutes to complete the task. Table- 1.12 allows us to peep into the entire outline of the second AJT.

**Table- 1.15:** Ten morpho-syntactic categories with correct and incorrect tokens (Second Data)

| A. | NUMBER (Abstract Noun-Plural) |
|---|---|

**Category-1: Masculine**

| जापान में भी **कई धर्म हैं** | | ∗जापान में भी **कई धर्म है** | |
|---|---|
| dʒapan mẽ bʰi kəi dʰərm hɛ̃ | ∗dʒapan mẽ bʰi kəi dʰərm hɛ |

*'Japan has many religions.'*

**Category-2: Feminine**

| इस वर्ष सीता ने **बहुत छुट्टियाँ ली हैं** | | ∗इस वर्ष सीता ने **बहुत छुट्टियाँ ली है** | |
|---|---|
| is vərʃ sita ne bəhʊt tʃʰʊʈʈijã̃ li hɛ̃ | ∗is vərʃ sita ne bəhʊt tʃʰʊʈʈijã̃ li hɛ |

*'Sita has taken many leaves this year.'*

| B. | GENDER (Grammatical: Inanimate-Singular) |
|---|---|

**Category-3: Masculine**

| मेट्रो स्टेशन के पास एक **छोटा पेड़** है | | ∗मेट्रो स्टेशन के पास एक **छोटी पेड़** है | |
|---|---|
| mɛʈro sʈeʃn ke pas ek tʃʰoʈa peɽ hɛ | ∗mɛʈro sʈeʃn ke pas ek tʃʰoʈi peɽ hɛ |

*'There is a small tree near the metro station.'*

**Category-4: Feminine**

| दीपक को **मीठी चाय** पसंद है | | ∗दीपक को **मीठा चाय** पसंद है | |
|---|---|
| dipək ko miʈʰi tʃaj pəsənd hɛ | ∗dipək ko miʈʰa tʃaj pəsənd hɛ |

*'Dipak likes sugary tea.'*

| C. | ASPECT (Progressive) |
|---|---|

**Category-5: Present**

| छोटा बच्चा पानी पी **रहा** है | | ∗छोटा बच्चा पानी पी **रहना** है | |
|---|---|
| tʃʰoʈa bətʃtʃa pani pi rəha hɛ | ∗tʃʰoʈa bətʃtʃa pani pi rəhna hɛ |

*'The young child is drinking water.'*

**Category-6: Past**

| विजय कल सुबह टी.वी. देख **रहा** था | | ∗विजय कल सुबह टी.वी. **देखता** था | |
|---|---|
| vidʒəj kəl subəh ʈ.v. dekʰ rəha tʰa | ∗vidʒəj kəl subəh ʈ.v. dekʰta tʰa |

*'Vijay was watching TV yesterday morning.'*

| D. | ASPECT (Perfective) |
|---|---|

**Category-7: Present**

| प्रकाश पैसे लेने बैंक **गया है** | | ∗प्रकाश पैसे लेने बैंक **जाना है** | |
|---|---|
| prəkaʃ pɛse lene bɛ̃nk gəja hɛ | ∗prəkaʃ pɛse lene bɛ̃nk dʒana hɛ |

*'Prakash has gone to the bank to withdraw money.'*

**Category-8: Past**

| प्रीति शनिवार को आगरा घुमने _____ | |
|---|
| priʈi ʃənivar ko agra gʰumne_____ |

*'Prity (went) to Agra on Saturday.'*

| E. | ERGATIVITY (Past tense, Perfective Aspect & Transitive Verb) |
|---|---|

**Category-9: Sub.+ vɛ, D.O+ Ø**

| _____ अपना मुँह धोया | |
|---|
| _____əpna mõh dʰoja |

*'(I/He) washed my/his face.'*

| Category-10: Sub.+ vɛ, D.O+ ко | |
|---|---|
| दीपिका **ने** बच्चों **को** बिठाया। | *दीपिका **ने** बच्चों **का** बिठाया। |
| ɖipək ne bətʃtʃõ ko biṭʰaja | *ɖipək ne bətʃtʃõ ka biṭʰaja |
| *'Dipak made children sit.'* | |

**Table- 1.16:** List of nouns used in acceptability/grammaticality judgement task (Second Data)

|  | Devanagari | IPA | Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | संगीत | səŋgiːṭ | *music* |
| 2. | जापान | dʒɑpɑn | *Japan* |
| 3. | धर्म | d̪ʰərm | *religion* |
| 4. | विचार | vitʃar | *thought* |
| 5. | वर्ष | vərʃ | *year* |
| 6. | छुट्टी | tʃʰʊṭṭi | *vacation* |
| 7. | आवाज़ | avaz | *sound* |
| 8. | दादी | d̪ɑd̪i | *grandmother* |
| 9. | कहानी | kəhani | *story* |
| 10. | मेट्रो-स्टेशन | mɛṭro-sṭeʃn | *metro-station* |
| 11. | पेड़ | peṛ | *tree* |
| 12. | कक्षा | kəkʃa | *class* |
| 13. | पुस्तकालय | pusṭkaləjə | *library* |
| 14. | कोरिया | koria | *Korea* |
| 15. | हवाई – जहाज | həvai- dʒəhadʒ | *airplane* |
| 16. | चाय | tʃaj | *tea* |
| 17. | लड़का | ləṛka | *boy* |
| 18. | बात | baṭ | *conversation* |
| 19. | लाल –किला | lal-kila | *Red-fort* |
| 20. | दीवार | d̪ivar | *wall* |
| 21. | घोड़ा | gʰoṛa | *horse* |
| 22. | पानी | pani | *water* |
| 23. | टी.वी. | ṭ.v. | *television* |
| 24. | पैसा | pɛsa | *money* |
| 25. | बैंक | bɛ̃nk | *bank* |
| 26. | समोसा | səmosa | *samosa* |
| 27. | गीत | giːṭ | *song* |
| 28. | आगरा | agra | *Agra* |
| 29. | पत्र | pəṭrə | *letter* |
| 30. | जयपुर | dʒəjpur | *Jaipur* |
| 31. | मिठाई | miṭʰai | *sweets* |
| 32. | कॉफ़ी | kɔfi | *coffee* |
| 33. | मुँह | mõh | *mouth/face* |
| 34. | मनाली | mənali | *Manali* |
| 35. | शाही-पनीर | ʃahi-pənir | *Shahi-panir* |
| 36. | फल | pʰəl | *fruit* |
| 37. | बच्चा | bətʃtʃa | *child* |
| 38. | लोग | log | *people* |

**Table- 1.17:** List of adjectives used in acceptability/grammaticality judgement task (Second Data)

|  | Devanagari | IPA | Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | बहुत सारा | bəhuṭ sara | *too many* |
| 2. | कई | kəi | *many* |
| 3. | अच्छा | ətʃtʃʰa | *good* |
| 4. | छोटा | tʃʰoṭa | *small* |
| 5. | मीठा | miṭʰa | *sweet* |

| 6. | बड़ा | bəɽɑ | *big* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7. | सफ़ेद | səfeḏ | *white* |
| 8. | भारतीय | bʰɑrṯijə | *Indian* |
| 9. | गर्म | gərm | *hot* |

**Table- 1.18:** List of verbs used in acceptability/grammaticality judgement task (Second Data)

| | Devanagari | IPA | Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | आना | ɑnɑ | *come* |
| 2. | है | hɛ | *is* |
| 3. | लेना | lenɑ | *take* |
| 4. | पसंद होना | pəsənḏ honɑ | *like* |
| 5. | सुनना | sunnɑ | *hear* |
| 6. | चलना | tʃəlnɑ | *walk* |
| 7. | पीना | pinɑ | *drink* |
| 8. | देखना | ḏekʰnɑ | *see* |
| 9. | करना | kərnɑ | *do* |
| 10. | घूमना | gʰumnɑ | *roam around* |
| 11. | जाना | dʒɑnɑ | *go* |
| 12. | खा लेना | kʰɑ lenɑ | *eat (something completely)* |
| 13. | लिखाना | likʰnɑ | *write* |
| 14. | धोना | ḏʰonɑ | *wash* |
| 15. | बैठना | bɛʈʰnɑ | *sit* |
| 16. | काटना | kɑʈnɑ | *cut* |

### 1.4. Conclusion

The discussion in this work provided and established a closer look at the methods used at two points in time for the collection of data. The argument behind selecting 4 tasks for the first data collection and discarding 4 options the second time is also discussed to bring forth the issue of real-time constraints that empirical studies have to face more often.

In a bid to make AJT more reliable, many studies first present short stories to create a context for the sentences that are supposed to be rated for their grammaticality. For illustration, in Ranjan's (2106) work that focuses on the acquisition of ergative case in L2 Hindi-Urdu, a short story precedes the sentences that are to be rated in the acceptability judgement task. This effort brings more clarity to the task. However, these possibilities did not look practical due to the following constraints imposed by the real time situation.

1) Most of the informants were low-proficiency learners.
2) A limited time was available for the elicitation task.
3) Data elicitation did not go as smoothly as it had been appearing initially. Students turned disinterested by the time they were asked to participate in more than one data collection activity.

The same reasons can be accounted for by giving the option of a binary scale rather than a Likert scale for rating the responses in AJT/GJTs. This was done to make the task easier and more interesting.

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