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**ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS ASSESSMENT
IN THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY
EDUCATION SECTORS IN BANGLADESH**

English in Action (EIA) (2014) Policy Seminar Proceedings:
'English Language Skills Assessment in the Primary and Secondary
Education Sectors in Bangladesh'
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English in Action
House 1, Road 80, Gulshan 2
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
Phone : 88-02 882 2161, 882 2234
Fax : 88-02 882 2663
E-mail : info@eiabd.com

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Acronyms

ATEO	Assistant Thana Education Officer	MCQ	Multiple-choice question
AUEO	Assistant Upazila Education Officer	MEd	Masters in Education
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation	MOE	Ministry of Education
BEd	Bachelors in Education	MOPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
BISE	Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education	MTR	Mid-term review
BTV	Bangladesh TV	NAEM	National Academy for Education Management
CAFFE	Computers are Free For Everyone	NAPE	National Academy of Primary Education
CBA	Classroom-based assessment	NC	National curriculum
CBSE	Central Board of Secondary Education (India)	NCTB	National Curriculum and Textbook Board
CD	Compact disc	NGO	Non-governmental organisation
CEd	Certificate in Education	NSAs	National Student Assessment
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages	OU	The Open University (UK)
CLT	Communicative language teaching	PECE	Primary Education Completion Exam
DA	Dynamic assessment	PEDP III	Primary Education Development Programme III
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)	PO	Peer observation
DP	Development partners	PSC	Primary School Certificate
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education	PTI	Primary Training Institute
DPEd	Diploma in Primary Education	R&D	Research and development
DSHE	Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education	SA	Summative assessment
ELT	English language teaching	SBA	School-based assessment
EfT	English for Today	SBTD	School-based teacher development
EIA	English in Action	SSC	Secondary School certificate
EL	English language	TF	Teacher facilitator
ELTIP	English Language Teaching Improvement Project	TOEFL	Teaching of English as a foreign language
FA	Formative assessment	ToT	Training of Trainers
FIVDB	Friends in the Village Bangladesh	TQI2	Teacher Quality Improvement Project II
GOB	Government of Bangladesh	UCEP	Underprivileged Children's Educational Programme
HOTS	Higher order thinking skills	UEO	Upazila Education Officer
HSC	Higher School Certificate	UK	United Kingdom
HT	Head teacher	UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
ICT	Information and communications technology	URC	Upazila Resource Centre
IRT	Item reference theory	WAP	Wireless Application Protocol
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency	WB	World Bank
JSC	Junior School Certificate		



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Preface

An education system cannot produce great results without an effective assessment mechanism in place. Similarly, for sustainable effective change in pedagogy, assessment practices in classrooms also need to change.

While assessment remains an essential area for reform in the Bangladesh education system, English in Action (EIA) is privileged to have partnered with the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) and the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) to jointly organise this seminar titled, 'English Language Skills Assessment in the Primary and Secondary Education Sectors in Bangladesh', on 16 March 2014.

100 participants – including officials from the Government of Bangladesh, key policymakers, national and international educationalists and assessment experts, practitioners working in the development sector, donor representatives in Bangladesh, and teachers – attended.

It is my pleasure to share with you the outcomes from the policy seminar in the form of recorded proceedings. The key

recommendations, arising from seminar discussions and provided subsequently by the keynote speaker, highlight further the need for improvement in this area. In particular, strong emphasis was placed on the need to train both primary and secondary teachers and education officers on assessment practices. Seminar participants also suggested that formative assessment should receive greater importance in assessment policy in order to ensure systematic practice.

I hope these proceedings will act as knowledge resource for the policymakers and educationalists alike in the field of primary and secondary education assessment.

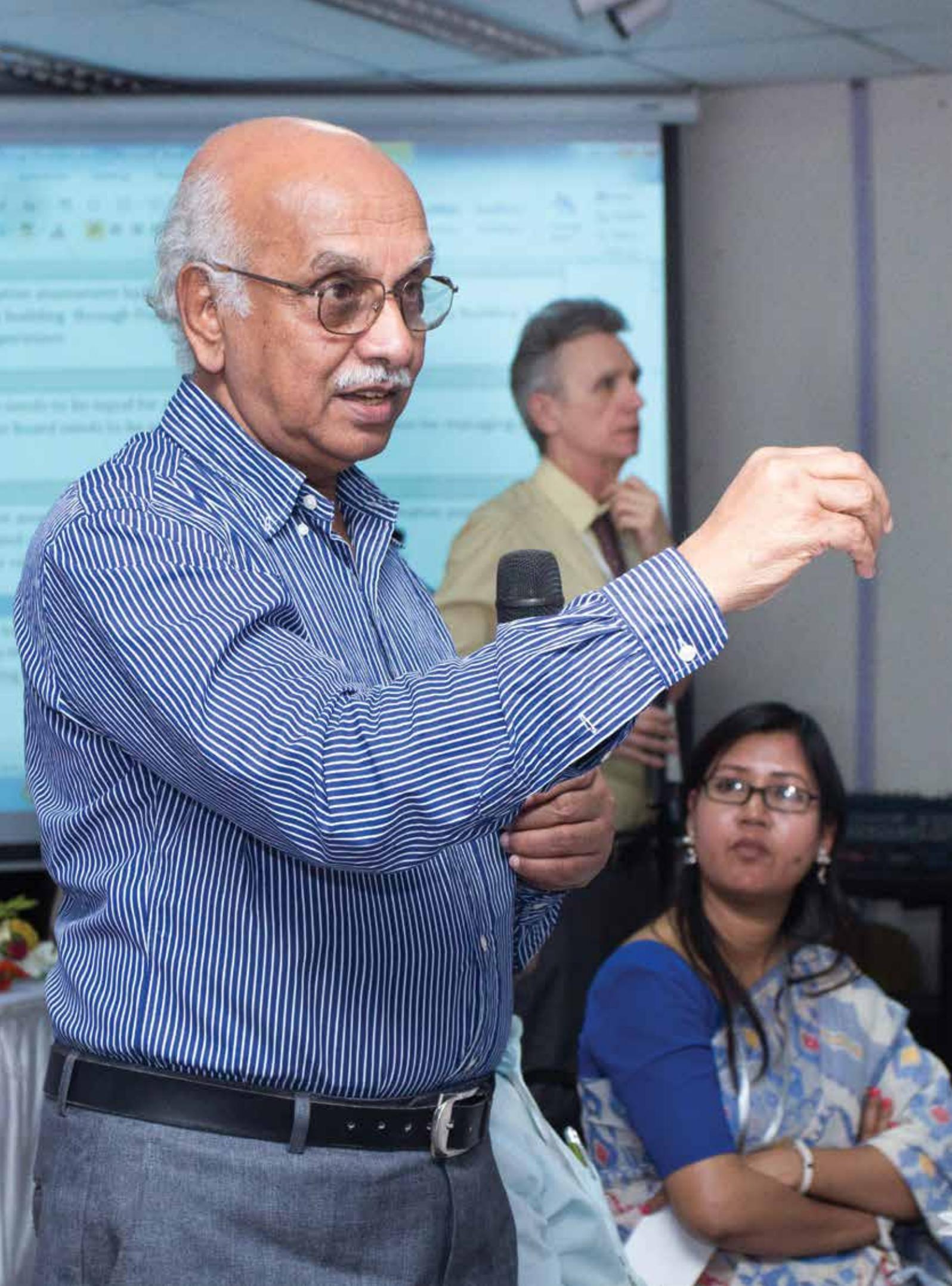
I would like to sincerely thank all the participants and contributors of this seminar, especially, MoPME, DPE, NCTB and DFID for their time and effort in making the seminar productive.

Finally, I thank and congratulate the organising committee, keynote speaker, panellists, presenters and colleagues for making the seminar a success.



Dr. Johan Bentinck

Team Leader
English in Action





1. Introduction

On 16 March 2014, English in Action (EIA) held a policy seminar in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on the theme of English language (EL) skills assessment. Co-hosted with the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) and the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), the seminar brought together officials from the Government of Bangladesh (GOB), key policymakers, national and international educationalists and assessment experts, practitioners working in the development sector, donor representatives in Bangladesh as well as teachers, in order to generate dialogue on policy and practice in EL skills assessment in Bangladesh's education system (primary and secondary).

The seminar comprised a series of speeches from key stakeholders and presentations from national and international experts and leading practitioners in the area, combined with group discussions on key issues regarding EL skills assessment. Important

matters were identified and debated, and policy recommendations were made accordingly.

This was the second policy seminar organised by EIA. A first seminar, titled 'Making Learning Effective through Professional Development for Teachers'¹, was held on 14 May 2012 and proved successful in generating discussion and recommendations on best practices within the field of continuous professional development for teachers. A third seminar, on the theme of women, English and appropriate technology for developing teaching and learning, will be held later in 2014.

This report presents a synopsis of the second seminar, including recommendations from the keynote speaker and group discussions, summaries of speeches, presentations, and group discussions.

¹ Recorded proceedings for the first policy seminar (2012) available at EIA website: www.eiabd.com under "Publications > Proceedings".



2. Policy Recommendations

2.1 Recommendations from the keynote speaker

Assessment and the curriculum

1. Embed formative assessment (FA) into teaching in systematic ways, informed by the experience from elsewhere; e.g. CBSE's (Central Board of Secondary Education – India) Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation.
2. Move from achievement testing (book-based) to proficiency testing (skill-based): tests to be independent of the curriculum, and focus on what the student can do with language in varied (unseen) unfamiliar situations at a given level. Make assessment inclusive, drawing on and adapting frameworks (such as CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) to reconceptualise competency-based teaching and testing in the Bangladesh context in terms of 'can-do' statements at different levels (e.g. Grade 10: B1-B2 levels of CEFR; Grade 8: A2-B1 levels; Grade 5: A1-A2 levels.)²
3. Language development is required in all skill areas, therefore assess all four skills – speaking, listening, reading, writing.
4. When designing assessment, practicality should not override academic considerations. It should not drive the assessment design – e.g. use of objective questions (multiple-choice questions – MCQ) due to large classes, insufficiently trained teachers, lack of time/cost, lack of trust in teachers – as this 'narrows the curriculum', affecting learners' language development. Ensure appropriate balance between what is academically sound and what is viable given the resources and context.
5. Recognise once a framework is made available for FA, teachers who already create learner-centred classrooms (e.g. those participating in EIA) will find it easier to implement FA, and realise the implications of this.
6. Adopt a multi-lingual approach to teaching and testing. Ensure competence in Bangla and use Bangla (L1) to teach English (L2). Use multilingual/bilingual norms in L2 assessment. Recognise a continuum, with L1 proficiency at one end and a learner gradually moving from proficiency in L1 and L2.
7. Visualise language learning goals as a continuum from primary through to end of secondary i.e. entire school curriculum (10 years), with goals defined clearly in all four skill areas, preferably through 'can-do' statements, before starting work at any given level.
8. Give equal focus/weight to formative (FA) and summative assessment (SA)/ assessment for learning (AfL) and assessment of learning.
9. Move from more FA at lower levels to more SA at higher levels.
 - i. Early years learning: Learners need more support, close monitoring and to build on this as they progress.
 - ii. Later: Include self- and peer-assessment in learning, using a

² As assessment drives learning (washback), if speaking and listening skills are assessed, they will also be taught in the classroom. Washback in such situations is likely to be positive.

variety of testing tools to make learners autonomous.

- iii. Last years: As they reach Grade 10, engage learners in benchmarks and encourage proficiency tests at the appropriate level.

Teacher professional development

1. Teachers need to be supported in terms of training, ongoing support and adequate time/space to carry out their work and to reflect on it for ongoing curriculum renewal. This needs to be specified and planned before implementing a framework.
2. Establish and carry out a specific professional development programme to support teachers to carry out credible assessment, with the aim to:
 - i. improve assessment skills, in particular, assessment of speaking and listening, and formative assessment. (Longer-term training required; more than one/three days)
 - ii. improve speaking and listening skills (to support teaching in communicative English)
 - iii. enable them to create learner-friendly, interactive classrooms so they can systematically carry out AfL (once a FA framework is in place).
 - iv. enable them to exercise their judgement and carry out assessment with integrity and honesty.
3. Establish a mentor scheme where teachers support each other in a non-threatening, conducive and learning atmosphere.
4. Concretise teacher-as-researcher role and encourage action research, sharing of experiences among teachers, vis-à-vis continuing professional

development. Promote self-monitoring and teacher research to improve teaching.

Overall

1. Once an assessment framework is in place through the Exam Board mandate, implement assessment framework via combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches for innovations to be sustained.
2. Draw up a long-term plan with stages and strategies clearly delineated, taking into account what is doable in the Bangladeshi context in terms of the test design and teacher development.
3. Learn from other contexts and work. For example, similarity between Bangladesh and India, therefore draw on the work already done. Also, draw on the work presented by the testing experts at the seminar.
4. Exploit possibilities of instituting a scheme for assessment.
5. Establish an on-going mechanism to monitor and feedback into the process to ensure learning for a better system – both in terms of design and teacher capabilities - one informing the other. R&D approach to assessment needs to be established (research and implementation go hand-in-hand).

2.2 Recommendations from group discussion

Formative assessment

1. Establish a rigorous teacher capacity-building programme (pre-service/in-service) to:
 - i. ensure proper training of teachers on formative assessment, especially in speaking and listening, and
 - ii. support implementation of formative assessment in school.

- (Good assessment scheme/design is not sufficient; adequate support for teachers to carry out credible assessment is critical.)
2. Build AUEOs' capacity to ensure proper monitoring and supervision of formative assessment in classrooms.
 3. Assess all four skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening – in formative assessment.
 2. Organise and provide thorough teacher training on summative assessment of speaking and listening skills.
 3. Develop a long-term plan for revision of the assessment and examination programme.
 4. Assess all four skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening – in summative assessment.

Summative assessment

1. Establish separate primary exam board for overseeing assessment activities.

Other

1. Encourage more listening and speaking skills practice in the classroom.



3. Background

3.1 English in Action

EIA is a nine-year (2008-2017) education programme, implemented by the Government of Bangladesh, aiming to develop the communicative English language (EL) skills of people in Bangladesh. The programme's goal is to contribute to the economic growth of the country by providing communicative EL as a tool for better access to the world economy. Its purpose is to significantly increase the number of people who are able to communicate in English, to levels that enable them to participate fully in economic and social activities opportunities, such as jobs.

The programme has initiated innovative ways of learning communicative English to different sectors of society, including primary and secondary students, teachers and adult learners. To enhance the quality of learning in schools, EIA uses a combination of existing and new methods, including interactive audio technology, mobile technology, print and audio-visual materials.

Along with EIA school materials and teacher professional development materials, a teacher training and support model based on peer learning was implemented for 18 months (2010-2011) during the project's pilot phase in 24 upazilas across Bangladesh. This phase covered 221 primary and 110 secondary schools and trained 751 teachers, of whom 68 were trained as teacher facilitators (TFs). Each EIA school had two teachers who received EIA materials, training and support. Evaluation on the pilot found, after 12 months of participating in the EIA programme, English classes of EIA teachers were more interactive and student-centred, and both teachers and students EL

competence improved (EIA 2012 b & c). The knowledge and experience gained from the pilot was incorporated into revised materials and the teacher training and support model.

EIA has since scaled up its activities, supporting 4,500 teachers in 2012 and a further 8,000 in 2013, totalling 5000 schools and 12,500 teachers so far. A similar model of school-based teacher development is utilised to that of the pilot, and EL expertise is provided through authentic videos of real teachers using innovative practices with their own classes. Recent evaluation (EIA 2014a & b, forthcoming) on the 2012 cohort of teachers (4,500) and their students found the programme had a similar impact with this larger-scale, localised and decentralised model of implementation.

EIA will be working closely with GOB over the next three years to embed innovative ways of learning English into the curriculum and institutional infrastructures both at the administrative and field level. The number of teachers who will be supported to use active teaching and learning pedagogy in their English classes is set to at least quadruple by 2017. Based on extensive research evidence and rigorous quality assurance frameworks, it is anticipated that teachers' and students' practice and EL competence will improve in the schools where EIA interventions are introduced.

Furthermore, as part of the EIA programme, BBC Media Action has introduced adult and community interventions using mobile phone, a local newspaper, television and the internet through BBC Janala. Models of media and adult learning have shown great results through these interventions with regard to reach and EL competence (BBC Media Action 2014a & b). The aim of these activities is to increase motivation and

access to learning materials for adults and reduce barriers to learning English. These activities include the *Amar Engreji* course provided through mobile, web, WAP, print, television and CD, along with the series *Mojay Mojay Shekha 2* on BTV and BTV World.

EIA works closely with the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) and the Ministry of Education (MoE), GOB, and is funded by UKaid from UK Government. A consortium of partners – BMB Mott MacDonald, BBC Media Action, The Open University (OU), UK, and two national NGOs: the Underprivileged Children’s Educational Programme (UCEP) and Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB) – are working together to implement the programme and achieve its goal collectively.

3.2 Seminar rationale

Educational reform is currently underway in Bangladesh, as demonstrated through the recent revisions of the curriculum across all subjects at both primary and secondary levels. Along with the newly revised textbooks and other supplementary materials, both formative and summative assessment measures for English need to be revisited in order to align targeted learning outcomes with the assessment topics and methods. As part of this process, for the first time, assessment at secondary level is not limited to reading and writing, but in line with the communicative approach to language teaching promoted in the Government textbook *English for Today* (Eft). The secondary formative assessment (FA) system has been modified to include the assessment of listening and speaking skills, as part of 20% marks allocated for School Based Assessment (SBA) across all four language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking.

As stated above, EIA is currently working with 12,500 teachers in primary and secondary schools throughout Bangladesh. Through EIA’s approach to teachers’ professional development, aided by the delivery of mediated, authentic classroom video via accessible mobile technology, teaching techniques and materials to support the Government textbooks, teachers are encouraged to focus on a communicative approach to teaching all four skills. This approach enables them to practice FA as an on-going evaluative process with their students in the classrooms. At the same time, it is crucially important that summative assessment (SA) measures are fully in line with the targeted curriculum and indeed drive the communicative approaches of Eft and EIA.

At this key juncture, with changes underway in both textbook and assessment reform, EIA organised its second policy seminar, on the theme of EL skills assessment.

3.3 Seminar objective

To explore the nature of assessment reforms which will best support the communicative English language teaching and learning approaches promoted by the Government of Bangladesh, and how these might be effectively implemented.

3.4 Seminar details and programme

This policy seminar was a full-day event held on Sunday 16 March 2014 at the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) in Mirpur, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Organised by EIA and co-hosted by DPE and National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), the seminar involved collaboration with the British Council, UNICEF and the National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE).

The seminar programme consisted of:

- Speeches from the EIA Team Leader, Guest of Honour, Special Guest, Chief Guest, and Chairman
- Keynote presentation, followed by a series of other presentations
- Parallel group work sessions discussing key assessment issues in relation to: primary formative assessment; primary summative assessment; secondary formative assessment; secondary summative assessment.
- Closing remarks.

An agenda for the seminar can be found in Appendix 1.

3.5 Seminar participants

Over 100 stakeholders were invited to the seminar; all were sent the policy concept note (Appendix 2) to provide background information to the event. Of those, 80 attended from a range of organisations – both national and international – from GOB, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), international donors in Bangladesh, development organisations and educational institutions. Furthermore, teachers who had been participating in the EIA programme also attended.

A mix of representatives from EIA consortium partners also attended –

personnel from EIA Office (BMB Mott MacDonald), The Open University (OU) UK, and the Underprivileged Children's Educational Programme (UCEP). In total, the seminar involved 100 participants, including EIA personnel.

Guests of principal importance:

- Chief Guest: Mr. S.M Ashraful Islam, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME)
- Guest of Honour: Ms. Sarah Cooke, Country Representative, UK Department for International Development (DFID) Bangladesh
- Special Guest: Mr. Shyamal Kanti Ghosh, Director General, Directorate of Primary Education (DPE)
- Chairman: Professor Md. Shafiqur Rahman, Chairman, National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB)
- Md. Siddiqur Rahman, Project Director, Project Management Unit, English in Action, Directorate of Primary Education (DPE)
- Keynote presenter: Professor Rama Mathews, Delhi University.

A list of those who attended, including project staff, can be found in Appendix 3.





**Secondary
Formative**

Group

4. Proceedings

4.1 Overview

Registration and pre-seminar networking was followed by: an initial opening and welcome by Zaki Imam (EIA Institutionalisation and Sustainability Coordinator); speeches from EIA Team Leader and Guests, a keynote presentation and other presentations; group discussions with all seminar participants; and closing remarks.

Speakers (in order of speaking)

1. Dr. Johan Bentinck, EIA Team Leader
2. Guest of Honour: Ms. Sarah Cooke, Country Representative, DFID Bangladesh
3. Special Guest: Mr. Shyamal Kanti Ghosh, Director General, DPE
4. Chief Guest: Mr. S.M. Ashraf Islam, Additional Secretary, MoPME
5. Chairman: Professor Md. Shahiqur Rahman, NCTB

Presentations

Seven presentations were given on the theme of English language (EL) skills assessment within the international and Bangladesh context:

1. Keynote: 'English language assessment at primary and secondary levels: Imperatives and challenges', Professor Rama Mathews, Delhi University
2. 'International trends in ELT assessment: Implications for Bangladesh', Dr. Prithvi Shrestha, The Open University (UK), and Farhan Azim, EIA
3. 'Developing HOT skills through assessment', Dr. Merle C. Tan and Professor S. Tapan, UNICEF

4. 'A Presentation on Formative Assessment in Secondary Education Sector in Bangladesh: National Curriculum 2012', Mohammad Abdur Rahim, NCTB
5. 'Competency Based Assessment in Primary Education especially for Grade-5 in Bangladesh', Khandker Din Mohammad, NAPE
6. 'Measuring learning', Md. Mezaul Islam, DPE
7. 'Assessing speaking and listening skills: can technology help?', Dr. Deborah Wyburn, British Council, and Luke Doyle, CAFFE.

Group discussions

Seminar participants divided into four groups (and two sub-groups within each of these) to take part in parallel small group discussions with a view to identify and debate issues relevant to EL skills assessment in Bangladesh's education sectors. Each of the eight groups were allocated one of the following areas to discuss issues in relation to:

1. Primary formative assessment
2. Primary summative assessment
3. Secondary formative assessment
4. Secondary summative assessment

4.2 Speeches

► Welcome address: Dr. Johan Bentinck English in Action Team Leader

Johan Bentinck began by welcoming the guests – Chief Guest Mr. S.M. Ashraf Islam, Additional Secretary, MoPME, Government of Bangladesh (GOB); Special Guest Mr. Shyamal Kanti Ghosh, Director General, DPE; Guest of Honour, Ms. Sarah Cooke, Country Representative,

DFID Bangladesh; Chairman, Professor Md. Shafiqur Rahman, NCTB; and Md. Siddiqur Rahman, EIA Project Director, DPE – and participants, as well as those working with EIA, and EIA colleagues. He thanked the collaborators EIA worked with to organise the event: DPE for hospitality and preparations; NCTB; the British Council; UNICEF; and NAPE.

He welcomed the audience of the seminar on the assessment of English language (EL) skills. He said the EIA programme had worked in the area of communicative language teaching (CLT) for the last six years, with an overall objective to increase social and economic opportunities of Bangladeshis by developing their English language (EL) competence. Stemming from this, he questioned whether secondary school and higher education graduates' communicative English was good enough to access the labour market and other economic opportunities.

He said the assessment system to date had mostly focused on reading and writing, and that EIA was very keen for more emphasis to be placed on speaking and listening. He also said this was an opportune moment for the seminar, during the Primary Education Sector Development Programme's Mid-term review (MTR), when valuable input could be given regarding priorities to be taken forward. He concluded by wishing all participants an excellent seminar, with lots of structured and informal interaction, and thanked everyone for participating.

► **Guest of Honour speech: Ms. Sarah Cooke**

Country Representative, Department for International Development (DFID) Bangladesh

Sarah Cooke welcomed the Chief Guest, Special Guest, Chairman, the EIA Team Leader and the seminar participants and said it gave her great pleasure to attend the event and be in the company of many

people committed to making Bangladesh a better place for learning and teaching.

She explained she had been Country Representative for DFID Bangladesh for 18 months and in that time had learned and seen examples of the great achievements Bangladesh has made in increasing enrolment in school, particularly girls, and progress made towards the Millennium Development Goals. She said she was proud that UKaid programmes in Bangladesh had contributed to that progress, including the EIA partnership with the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) which is delivering interactive and child-centred EL classrooms. But she said the real credit for progress should go to the hard work of Bangladesh's teachers.

She continued her speech with comments on assessment in general, focusing on three areas: 1) the role of assessment/why we assess what we learn; 2) what is already being done in relation to assessment; and 3) the need for a coherent approach. On the first issue, why we assess what we learn, she said the challenge for the assessment system remains to ensure quality of education and completion of studies. She said good education is about creating effective teachers who can meaningfully engage the children in their classes in learning. She said learning also needs to be effectively measured, both while it is taking place – formative assessment (FA) – and after it has occurred – summative assessment (SA).

She went on to say that assessment findings are both useful to those who supervise teachers directly and for the teachers themselves to inform their own instruction. She said assessment also underpins communication with parents, communities and policymakers. She explained an effective education system has children that

are not only enrolled but also learning, and that data on on-going learning achievement can improve teaching and learning practices by informing teacher training, curriculum development and textbook design. She stated that through assessment, those most in need can be identified before becoming marginalised and dropping out, and that research demonstrates there is a strong link between high quality classroom assessment and better student educational attainment. She said DFID recognised this and published an Education Position Paper³ in 2013 stating that learning is at the centre of DFID's approach to education. She said DFID's learning framework, presented in the paper, illustrates the multiple and interrelated elements that impact on learning and that DFID regarded assessment as the most important of these.

On the second issue, what is being done to assess learning, she said the recent curriculum and textbook reforms, primary completion exams with a focus on competency-based testing, and the national students assessment (NSA) are beginning to bear fruit in changing classroom practice and the process of teaching and learning across both primary and secondary sectors. She stated the Bangladesh Government now recognises that closely aligned to textbook change, reform is needed in the assessment process and that the Government is working to implement those changes. She said she understood also this has been greatly reflected in the recent discussions around the MTR of the Primary Education Sector Programme. She told seminar participants that EL is considered an important skill, and explained language assessment should include assessing all four competencies – reading, writing, speaking and listening. She then said although speaking and listening

skills are currently not included in the exam system, they should have a place in any reform of assessment practice that is taking place.

On the third issue, why we need a coherent approach to assessment, Ms. Cooke recognised that seminar participants may be involved in working on reform initiatives in partnership with donors or other organisations. She stated there was much happening in this area and gave examples of: the World Bank offering technical support to NAPE in their work on competency-based assessment and also to DPE on NSA; UNICEF providing technical support to DPE on FA; and NCTB including assessment as an important element in national curriculum revision. She said it was important that all current assessment processes are brought under a policy framework that provides a common approach to how these initiatives link up and contribute to the common goal. She informed participants that in the absence of an assessment policy in Bangladesh, a taskforce had recently been formed at DPE including Government and donor organisations (including DFID) with the aim to produce an assessment policy guideline, and the fact that assessment policy reform is now on the agenda, with a taskforce set up, is optimistic. She said this underpinned the recognition of a coherent approach to assessment.

She concluded her speech saying it was great to be discussing, innovating and experimenting, but that the ultimate aim of the seminar was to jointly reflect with the Government on: 1) how can we ensure innovative models of assessment are embedded in national systems, structures and frameworks; and 2) how this seminar can influence policies and strategies at the macro-level.

³ See DFID (2013)

She thanked everyone present, especially those involved in organising the seminar, and congratulated those for achievements in the field of education, saying she hoped that they would continue together to improve the quality of learning experience for all students across Bangladesh.

► **Special Guest speech:**
Mr. Shyamal Kanti Ghosh

Director General, Directorate of Primary Education (DPE)

Mr. Shyamal Kanti Ghosh addressed the EIA Team Leader, Chief Guest, Guest of Honour, Chairman and seminar participants and thanked all on behalf of DPE, the main implementing agency of primary education in Bangladesh. He stated the focus of seminar was the assessment of English language (EL) skills.

He said there was no doubt that EL has an important role in communicative language throughout the world, but before assessing students, it was important to ensure their learning through effective classroom practices. He then referred to the Primary Education Sector Development Programme's MTR, saying it had given suggestions on how all four language skills can be provided through the assessment system; not only reading and writing but also listening and speaking, and that new measures of assessment should be introduced.

He explained that DPE is currently conducting national student assessments (NSA) in Bangla and Maths. He said the curriculum has not yet been finalised, but once it had, the next step would be to allocate time to developing teachers classroom practices in relation to this, including preparing them to conduct assessment. He said that in the next round of NSA (2015) science maybe included,

and after that EL assessment would also be considered, but recognised at this moment more time is required.

Mr. Ghosh stated that Bangladesh has a long tradition of using the British/Colonial system of education so the country is in a better position to use English as a foreign language than other foreign languages. He said he hoped that those who had experienced working in Bangla-medium primary schools who follow the Bangla NCTB curriculum guide could visualise practical scenarios and give suggestions for the assessment of EL in the future.

He thanked all participants and encouraged valuable suggestions and recommendations that could be introduced into the system, but implementing these depended on the capacity of DPE, of schools, of teachers and other aspects such as the curriculum and teachers development initiatives.

► **Chief Guest speech: Mr. S.M. Ashraful Islam**
Additional Secretary, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME)

Mr. S.M. Ashraful Islam addressed the Chief Guest, Special Guest, Guest of Honour, Chairman, Keynote presenter, Professor Rama Mathews from Delhi University, and Dr. Prithvi Shresthra from The Open University (UK), and expressed his great pleasure to be at the seminar.

He said the Bangladesh constitution had entrusted the country with producing a young generation that is socially responsive and economically productive. He stated that MOPME – with almost 64,000 schools, 400,000 teachers and 20 million students – had gone a long way towards achieving 'quantity' in primary education, and now quality was sought. He explained that to achieve quantity and quality, certain policy guidelines had been put in place,

for example the National Education Policy (2010) (MOE 2010), the National Skills Development Policy (2011) (MOE 2011) and the Non-Formal Education Policy (MOPME 2006), and legal and regulatory reforms. In relation to education reform, he said a new primary curriculum had been developed which would be trialled this year, and from 2015 onwards the final, world-standard curriculum would be in place which would make Bangladeshi children economically productive.

Mr. Islam said EL is no longer just a language; it is a 'technology' that enables someone to communicate with the world, enhancing their employability and productivity. He acknowledged there are many opportunities for Bangladesh – such as call centres – and that these could not be missed. He said Bangladesh is adopting innovative approaches throughout the country in different areas, for example Digital Bangladesh (www.digitalbangladesh.gov.bd/), and that ICT was starting to be used for teaching and learning purposes (in classrooms). He acknowledged there were ICT components to EIA and that the project had made participating teachers' classroom pedagogy more communicative; this had been done through teacher professional development, enabling teachers to use modern methodologies in the classroom. He also mentioned MOPME had been collaborating with Dhaka University with regards to the accreditation of the new foundation teacher training course – the Diploma in Primary Education – an initiative supported by DFID and EIA.

He then highlighted the enormity of the primary education system – the large number of teachers (almost 400,000) with that number expected increase through recent recruitment drives, and establishment

of new schools – and that improving the system would take a lot of work. He said there are almost 64,000 primary schools in Bangladesh and one teacher in each should be trained in EL pedagogy. He emphasised the simple, 'doable' nature of EIA, with clear objectives, which is improving the quality of the teaching, and that 12,500 teachers (primary and secondary) had been trained already, resulting in change in teachers' practices.

He hoped the policy seminar, with its diverse audience from various fields, would generate good suggestions to help move towards improving quality in education. He said participants' suggestions would be valuable, but MOPME would not be able to implement all of these. He thanked the event organisers and said he was looking forward to the discussion.

► **Chairman speech: Prof. Shafiqur Rahman**
Chairman, National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB)

Professor Shafiqur Rahman said it was his pleasure to be selected chairperson of the discussion and acknowledged NCTB had been working with EIA for a long time. He explained NCTB is responsible for the curriculum and textbook for all parts of Bangladeshi education system (primary and secondary). He informed the participants that the new versions of the textbooks were currently being trialled, after which they would be finalised and distributed to students for the 2015 academic year.

He stated that English is a crucial subject, but that Bangladesh is weak in it. He asked the seminar participants to make good and 'real' recommendations which they would be able to take forward and implement in the future.

4.3 Presentations

Presentation 1 (Keynote): Prof. Rama Mathews, Delhi University

'English Language Assessment at Primary and Secondary Levels: Imperatives and Challenges'

Part 1: Imperatives in language assessment

- Language is a skill subject, rather than a content subject.
- Assessment usually excludes learners – needs to become inclusive (what can students do with language?)
- Assessment drives learning – strong washback
- Practicality should not override academic considerations
- In a multilingual context, we need to (judiciously) use L1 (first language) to teach L2 (second language), but use multilingual/bilingual norms in L2 assessment; do not want learners to be good users of only L2.

Part 2: Assessment Design

- Need to visualise language goals from primary to when learners leave school as a continuum (10-year curriculum)
- Include assessment of all skills: speaking, listening, reading, writing
- Move from achievement testing to proficiency testing
- Formative as well as summative (standards-based benchmarks): CEFR (Common European Framework for Languages)?
- Move from more formative at lower levels (primary) to more summative at higher levels
- Types of tools:
 - Use a variety to assess formally and informally
 - Test a variety of skills and abilities
 - Assess through individual as well as group tasks
 - Teachers and students as assessors
 - Self- and peer-evaluation

Part 3: Implementation questions

- Training in assessment has taken a back seat
- More often than not we assess what teachers can manage, given their competence; notion of integrity/ethics
- Good assessment scheme/design is not sufficient; adequate support for teachers to carry out credible assessment is critical.
- Good balance between what is academically sound and viable given the resources – both material and human.
- The future?

- Long-term plan which takes into account what is doable in the Bangladeshi context, both in terms of test design and teacher development – good balance needed.
- On-going mechanism to monitor and feedback in to the process to ensure our learning for a better system – in terms of design and teacher capabilities, one informing the other.
- Proposals:
 - EIA’s approach to capacity-building teachers is clearly demonstrated: classrooms are more interactive, communicative. Next step?
 - Learn from other contexts
 - R&D (research and development) approach to assessment: research and implementation to go hand-in-hand.
 - Teacher’s agency in this whole process is central: teachers not just as implementers of policies.
 - Combination of top-down and bottom-up approach to curriculum renewal, including assessment.

[Subsequent to this presentation, and arising from the seminar, the keynote speaker provided a series of recommendations, included in Section 2].

Presentation 2: Dr. Prithvi Shrestha, OU UK, & Farhan Azim, EIA

‘International Trends in ELT Assessment: Implications for Bangladesh’

Language assessment: what do we mean?

- “In the context of language teaching and learning, ‘assessment’ refers to the act of collecting information and making judgments about a language learner’s knowledge of a language and ability to use it.” Chapelle & Brindley, Universities of Iowa State & Macquarie (cited in Fulcher <http://languagetesting.info/whatis/lt.html>)
- Language assessment:
 - A social and political activity? (McNamara 2011)
 - Consequences for wider society
 - Political decisions
 - Economic activities

Why assess a learner’s language abilities?

- Main purpose: Make decisions
 - high-stakes and low-stakes
 - selection; placement; diagnosis (formative); progress (formative); grading (summative); teacher performance; suitability of a programme or policy (Bachman & Palmer 1996; McNamara & Roever 2006)

A historical perspective of language assessment

- Focus on accuracy until 1970s – grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension and essay

- Focus on communication:
 - Advent of communicative language teaching (CLT) in the 1970s (Hymes 1972)
 - Real use of language in a social context
 - Shift towards a social dimension of ELT
 - Beginning of communicative language testing and assessment (Canale & Swain 1980)
 - Move towards assessing students' language skills in a range of contexts (Taylor 2006)

Classroom-based language assessment

- Rise of classroom-based language assessment in developed and developing countries (Davison & Leung 2009)
- Different terms used: Teacher-based assessment; alternative assessment; assessment for learning; school-based assessment; formative assessment
- Definition of classroom-based language assessment: 'any reflection by teachers (and/or learners) on the qualities of a learner's (or group of learners') work and the use of that information by teachers (and/or learners) for teaching, learning (feedback), reporting, management or socialization purposes.' (bold mine, Hill & McNamara 2012, p. 396)
- Increasingly supported by government policies
- Continuous evaluation cycle (being tried in India)

Dynamic assessment (DA):

- "approach to understanding individual differences and their implications for instruction ... [that] embeds intervention within the assessment procedure" (Lidz & Gindis 2003 p.99).
- Focus on future language abilities rather than past ones
- Often used in clinical psychology and special needs education (Haywood & Lidz 2007)
- Recently tried in classroom-based language assessment (Lantolf & Poehner 2011; Shrestha & Coffin 2012)

Language portfolio:

- 'a systematic and selective collection of a student's work that has been assembled to demonstrate a student's motivation, academic growth and level of achievement' (Norton & Wiburg 1998, p.237)

Technology in language assessment

- Computer-based assessment
- Use of mobile devices
- Internet
- Digital Bangladesh

Impact of assessment

- Teaching and learning
- Wider society
- Both positive & negative

Case studies from other countries

- Hong Kong (Berry 2011; Hamp-Lyons 2009): Predominantly exam-oriented education system; assessment reform in 1990s; further reform in 2000s: move towards assessment for learning; emphasis on link between assessment and teaching and learning; Basic Competency Assessment – low-stakes; enhance teaching and learning; oral assessment for English language (EL); school-based assessment (SBA) in 2001; comprehensive professional development materials for oral English SBA; resistance from teachers and negative attitudes of school personnel; need for an increased understanding of SBA among stakeholders.
- Japan (Sasaki 2008): Introduction of communicative EL syllabus in 1990s; emphasis on practical communication skills (impact of globalisation); use of criterion-referenced assessment (i.e. meeting criteria); commercial tests used by higher secondary schools; emphasis on teacher professional development.
- Macedonia (Murchan et al. 2012): Medium of instruction in four languages in schools: Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish and Serbian; teachers solely responsible for assessment in primary schools (teacher autonomy); launch of SBA in 2008 (on-going); development of assessment standards and ethics; comprehensive professional development of teachers, administrators regarding assessment; repository of print and digital learning resources on assessment.
- Malaysia (Lan Ong 2010): Primarily dominated by centralised public examinations; primary education – external exam on reading skills in English; lower secondary – external exam of EL; subjects like geography and science through SBA as well; secondary – public examination (written) and SBA (oral); special arrangements for students with special needs; SBA in use; new assessment system from 2011: combination of SBA, external, psychometric and physical activity assessment; concerns among teachers: lack of clarity in terms of their role; top-down approach; time constraints; professional development.
- New Zealand (East & Scott 2011): Assessment reform in foreign language education (e.g. French); equal weighting of listening, speaking, reading and writing; one-third classroom-based assessment; focus on communicative and authentic language tasks; assessment of spoken interaction; collection of students' spoken and written interactions (inside and outside classroom); student selection of evidence guided by teachers (language portfolio).
- Thailand (Prapphal 2008): Curriculum reform in 1999 – move towards CLT; introduction of SBA by government; but emphasis on standardised EL tests due to university entry requirement – TOEFL (Teaching of English as a foreign language) scores; huge impact of university entry requirement on school assessment; teachers not supported professionally; lack of language assessment literacy among teachers; private tutoring and coaching schools for test preparation.

English in Action study

- EIA: Large-scale EL development programme, implemented by GOB, funded by UKAid.
- Aim: To contribute to Bangladesh’s economic development by providing EL as a tool for better access to the world economy.
- Target audience: primary teachers and students; secondary teachers and students; adult learners.
- Implementation: 2008–2017; three phases: pilot, up-scaling, institutionalisation.
- Background:
 - 1974: Qudrat-e-Khuda Education Commission reported need to introduce external and internal examinations for student assessment
 - 1977: NCTB stated assessment should be a continuous process
 - 1986: English became a compulsory subject from grade one to twelve
 - During 1990s’: Increased focus on using ‘communicative approach’ to ELT
 - 1992: Multiple choice questions (MCQ) introduced
 - Since 2004: School-based assessment (SBA) functioning at secondary level.
- EIA assessment study objective: To explore level of alignment between secondary EL curriculum and current assessment practices.
- Key findings:
 - Most teachers had partial views on the concept of curriculum.
 - Communicative approach removes students’ fear of learning English and being assessed.
 - ‘Question and answer’ technique is used most for formative assessment (FA) purposes.
 - EIA teachers were assessing all four language skills through FA techniques.
 - Teachers believe assessment and feedback have two roles in learning – help students to perform better; help teachers improve their teaching.
 - SBA is not implemented properly in all schools – lack of standardised practice.
 - Assessment of listening and speaking skills remains neglected in summative assessments.

Presentation 3: Dr. Merle C. Tan & Prof. S. Tapan, UNICEF

‘Developing HOT Skills Through Assessment’

HOT skills and related terms

	<p>Inquiry Skills</p> <p>Basic thinking processes: Observing; asking questions; measuring; classifying; inferring; finding patterns; predicting; communicating</p>
	<p>Integrated thinking skills: Formulating hypothesis; fair testing - identifying variables & controlling variables; collecting & organising data; interpreting data; making conclusions.</p>
<p>Literacy skills</p>	<p>Higher order thinking (HOT) skills: Critical thinking; creative thinking; problem solving; decision making (Real-life context)</p>

Some issues on assessment: policy implications

- Assessment structure and practices (SBA/CBA project, UNICEF 2013)
 - No clear national policy for assessment; there is a memo circular on schedule of terminal examinations
 - Pre-primary education programme has policies on assessment
 - New marking and distribution system for Grades 1 to 5.
- Need to review the national curriculum (NC) and national examinations
 - Textbooks and classroom instruction depend on NC; statements of competencies must be beyond 'knowing'
 - Classroom-based assessment is geared towards PECE or NSA:
 - Should assess inquiry skills that could be assessed in paper and pencil test
 - Items should model increasing levels of difficulty; Factual K →
Conceptual understanding → Reasoning, and performance assessment
 - National Assessment Cell exists. National exams, PECE and NSA, managed by different groups: CBA is under NCTB.
 - Schools (visited) without intervention programs from DPs (development partners) and NGOs (non-governmental organisations) use interactive teaching/learning approaches, but classrooms still teacher dominated; group work limited to routine activities.
 - Experimental or lab schools of teacher training institutions apply some innovative assessment strategies
- Need for a national framework assessment, to guide:
 - implementation of Diploma in Education Programme
 - test framers and reviewers
 - Assistant Upazila Education Officers (AUEOs), Assistant Thana Education Officers (ATEOs) and school heads on training and monitoring
 - classroom teachers and pupils
- Close coordination between and among DPE, NAPE and NCTB on curriculum and assessment-related matters.

Presentation 4: Mohammad Abdur Rahim, NCTB

'A Presentation on Formative Assessment in Secondary Education Sector in Bangladesh: National Curriculum 2012'

Learner assessment

- Measuring learner achievements from certain teaching-learning activities
- Measuring learning outcomes achieved by learners previously set in the curriculum

Ways of assessment

- Based on time and type, there are two major kinds of assessment:
 - Formative or continuous assessment: Assessing learners during a lesson or after a certain part of a lesson
 - Summative assessment: Assessment after a certain period or programme, e.g. terminal assessment, final examination, and so on.
- Positive aspects of formative or continuous assessment:
 - Helps identify learner's learning weaknesses and work out preventive measures instantly.
 - Provides opportunities to observe learners' practical work and offer guidance for improvement
 - Assessment can be done in less time, with less expenditure; and strategies for prevention can be taken in phases.
 - Some special skills, e.g. listening, speaking, reading etc., can be assessed, quickly and at low cost
 - Affective aspects of learners, especially their individual and social behaviour, values, etc., can be done for further corrections
 - Through learner assessment, teaching-learning methods and techniques are also assessed to measure strengths and weaknesses and bring about necessary changes.
- Continuous assessment for Class VI–X: Two kinds:
 1. Subject-specific knowledge and psychomotor factors:
 - Continuous assessment of subject-specific knowledge and psychomotor factors
 - Every subject has 20% marks allocated to continuous assessment
 - Marks distribution for continuous assessment of each subject:

Assessment area	Marks
Class work	10
Homework and investigation work	05
Class test	05
Total	20

- Class work:
 - Activities done by a learner during the teaching-learning process in class
 - Varies from one subject to the next
 - Includes narrating or writing answers, drawing (picture, table, graph, chart), discussions and debates, role play, practical work, and so on.
 - Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are considered as class work.

- Homework:
 - Evaluate a learner's capacity to think and value
 - Create scope for incorporating ideas gained from classrooms
 - Facilitate thinking ability and creativity of learners
 - Take preparation by learners for creative questions/MCQs
 - Investigation work
 - Helps identify learner's problem solving skills and thinking abilities
 - Duration to be decided by the teacher
 - Steps followed in investigation work: 1. problem identification; 2. planning and designing investigation tools/schedule/questionnaire for collecting data; 3. data collection by learners - a basic feature of investigation; 4. collecting data from families, neighbours and locality as much as possible.
 - Class test
 - Class test after each chapter
 - Keep records of higher marks
 - Keep answer scripts of class tests on record after being seen by examinees
 - Conduct class tests in periods specified for particular subject
 - As usual activities in other periods on the day of the class test
2. Affective factors: Continuous assessment of values
- Assessment of a learner's behaviour and attitude
 - Particular incident in school – not sufficient to assess a learner's behaviour and social values
 - Participating different activities by learners besides his/her class work, including daily assembly, sports, cultural activities, study tours, observing national days, religious festivals, science fairs, Maths olympiads, boy scouts, girls guides and preservation of environment and ecology activities.

Presentation 5: Khandker Din Mohammad, NAPE

'Competency Based Assessment in Primary Education, Especially for Grade 5 in Bangladesh'

Background

- Primary Education Completion Examination (PECE) introduced nationwide by GOB in 2009, providing school leavers with a certificate of completion and proficiency, and identifying those eligible for receiving scholarships for entry into Grade 6.
- Examination has been improved in recent years, but there are still many limitations with regards to quality:
 - Examination content reflects teaching in the classroom and consists mainly of recall questions

- Examination is limited to the assessment of knowledge and skills.
- Little reference to knowledge and skills required by pupils in real life
- Examination measures achievement at a low taxonomic level.

Introduction

- Development of assessment is seen as a key to improvements in quality of education.
- GOB, with development partner support, has improved quality of examination through developing competency-based test items.
- NAPE responsible for developing new test items in six subjects: Bangla, English, Science, Mathematics, Religion (Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism), and Bangladesh and Global Studies
- 2012: 10% of competency-based items integrated into traditional examination format; 2013: 25% of items; 2014: 40-50% expected.

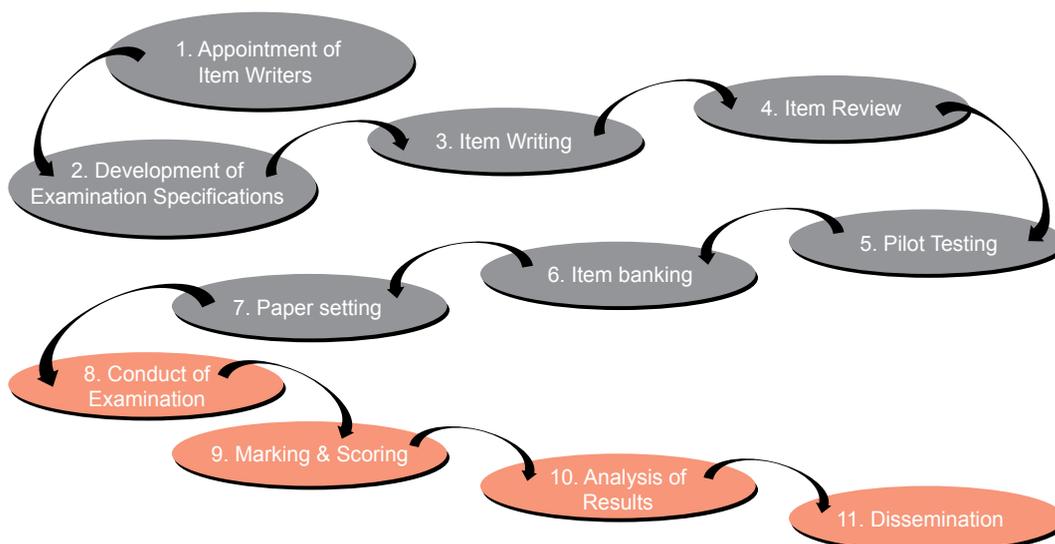
Objective of competency-based PECE

- To improve quality of Grade 5 Completion Examination in line with international good practice and specific needs of Bangladesh.

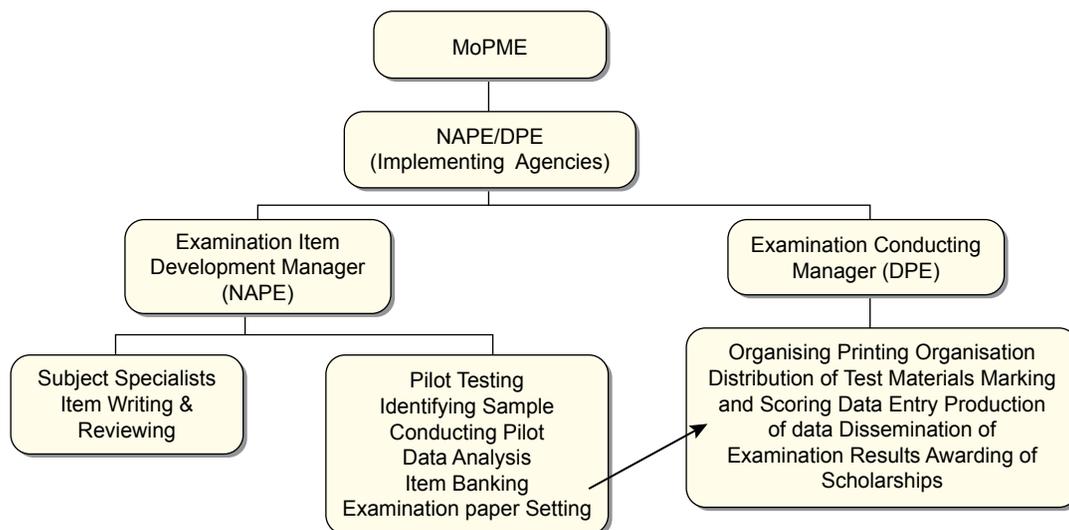
Grade 5 Completion Examination Framework

- Purpose of Grade 5 Completion Examination
- Specifications of Grade 5 Completion Examination
- Identifies roles and responsibilities of agencies involved
- Subject Test Construct
- Timetable for development
- Development procedures – piloting, large-scale testing, data collection and analysis, and so on.

Competency-based item development process used in PECE: 2012 and 2013



Organisations involved in implementing PECE:



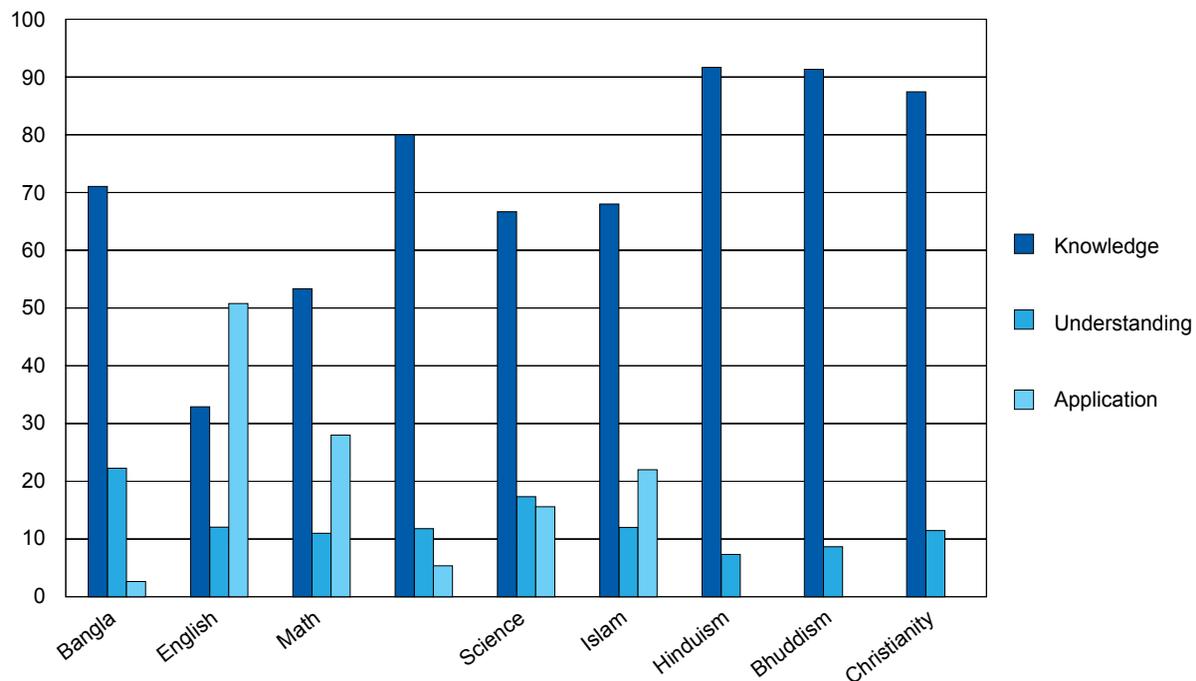
Predetermined competencies for each subjects by NCTB

	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Total
Bangla	3	4	3	4	14
English	4	8	7	12	31

Math	30
Science	18
Bangladesh & Global Studies	16
Religion	
1. Islam	05
2. Hinduism	09
3. Christianity	16
4. Bhuddism	15

Current scenario of competency-based assessment

(Zohurul Haque et al. 2010, Identifying areas of development of PECE, NAPE research, p 49)



Sample question used in Class 5 English

1. Write only the answer on the answer paper. 1 X 10 =
10

a) What is the land area of our country?

i) 1.47.570 square kilometres ii) 1.47.570 killometres
iii) 1.45.550 square kilometres iv) 2.45.550 killometres

b) What is the main rivers of our country?

i) The Mahanandha, the Surma ii) The Pagla, the Gural
iii) The Padma, the Jamuna iv) The Chitra, the Buriganga

c) How long is the Cox's Bazar sea beach?

i) about 100 Km ii) about 130 Km
iii) about 120 Km iv) about 300 Km

d) How many crores of people live in Bangladesh?

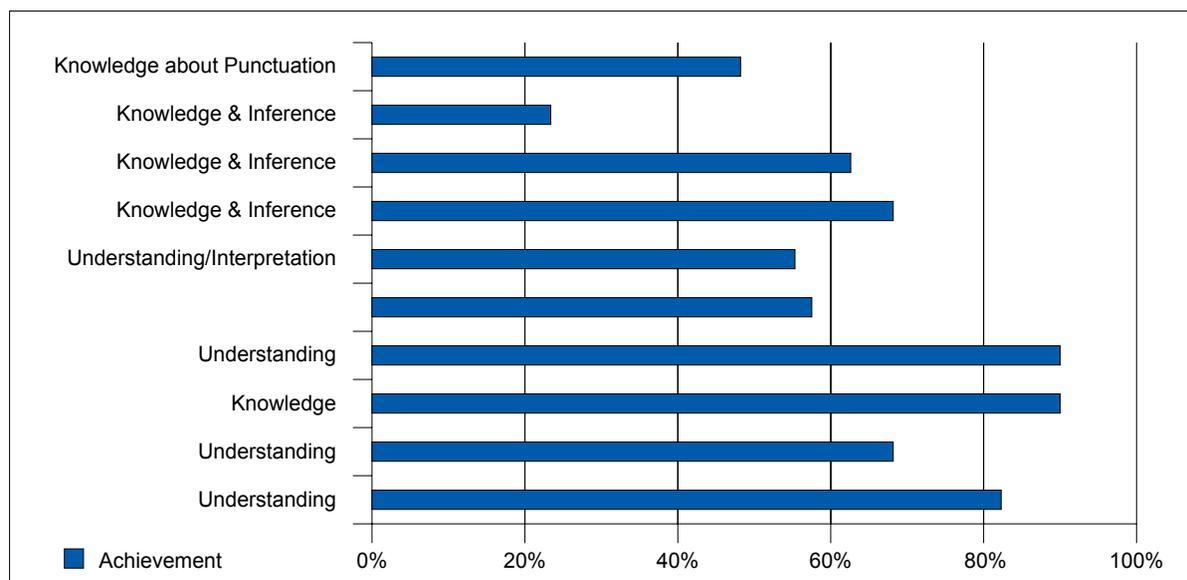
i) about 16 crores ii) about 15 crores
iii) about 12 crores iv) about 13 crores

(Model Question 2013 (English) of Grade 5, Gazipur)

What messages do we get from this?

- Most of items are directly from book exercise and knowledge type? Where are the understanding and application items?

Skills tested in PECE 2012



Results of EL Test items according to competency/skill assessed

10 items used and Competency number: Reading 5

Improving test items incrementally

Proposed changes	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Competency-based items, testing student abilities: knowledge, understanding & application	10%	25%	50%	75%	100%

- In 2012 and 2013, 10% and 25% of test was competency-based testing, mainly student knowledge and understanding.
- Agreement required regarding percentage improvement for 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Challenges in competency-based assessment

- Curriculum dissemination training not yet done; practitioners need orientation and training on a continuous basis.
- Textbook items mostly knowledge-based; teacher training on competency-based item development needs to be undertaken and used to assess student learning in the classroom.
- Using pictorial items like charts, graph, table to assess student skills and attitudes.
- Improving seating arrangements and ensuring good physical facilities for the examinees.
- Ensuring use of agreed marking and scoring system.

What has been done by NAPE?

- Master trainer group of 120 Upazila Resource Centre (URC) Instructors/ Assistant Instructors and AUEO has been developed in 2013.

- 1279 URC Instructors/Assistant Instructors and AUEO given ToT (training of trainers) on test item development, marking and scoring in 2013.
- 73,195 teachers and HTs given training on test item development, marking and scoring in 2013.
- Approximately 300,000 teachers given orientation training on competency-based item development through sub-clusters in 2012.
- All AUEOs given day-long orientation training on competency-based item development in 2012.

What should be the impact of the PECE?

Students should become:

- Independent learners
- Creative thinkers
- Problem shooters
- Good judges
- Empowered
- Critical thinkers and learners
- National assets for the global village

This will result in the achievement of the aims and objectives of primary education.

Presentation 6: Md. Mezaul Islam, DPE

'Measuring Learning'

Measuring Learning: Responses & means

- 'The probability of remaining a poor reader at the end of fourth grade, given a child was a poor reader at the end of first grade, was .88 the probability of remaining an average reader in fourth grade, given an average reading ability in first grade, was .87.'
- Poor readers at end of Grade 1 require intensive instructional support to reach Grade 3 reading outcomes.
- 'Current difficulties in reading largely originate from rising demands for literacy'.
- Globally, interest has grown on large-scale assessments for reform and accountability to ensure the quality of education
- Following global interest, MoPME has reformed the evaluation systems:
 - a) Public (external) examinations (PECE: 2009-2013)
 - b) National assessments (NSA-2006, 2008, 2011 & 2013); and MoPME initiates special attention on SBA & CBA through PEDPIII.

Standards terms and definitions

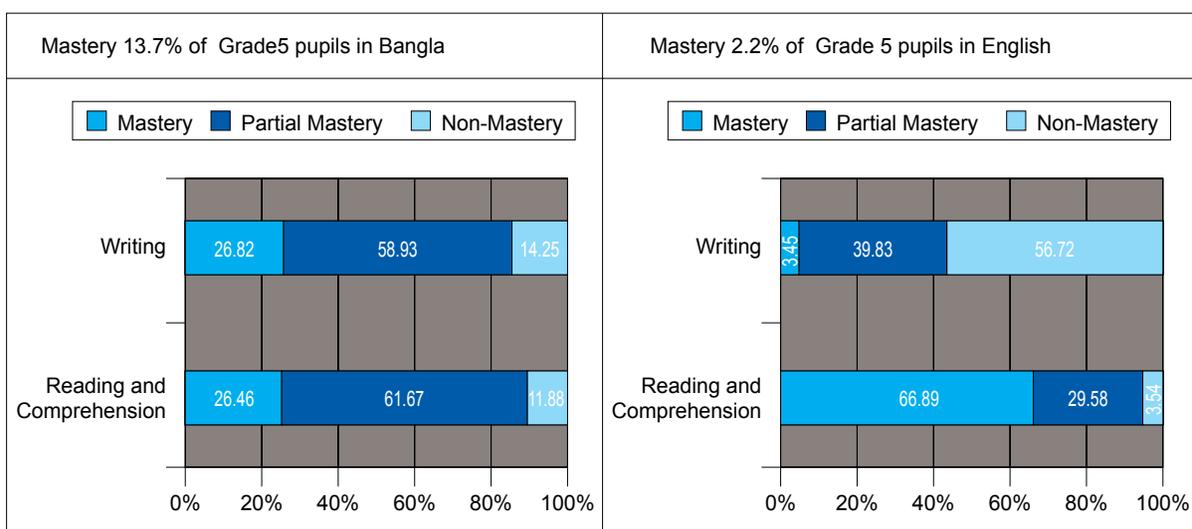
- Academic content standards: General statements of what students should know and be able to do

- Indicators (benchmarks, sub-skills): Specific learning expectations for particular grade level or grade span.
- Scoring guides (rubrics): Specific descriptions of proficiency on tasks; provide evidence student met standard.
- Performance task: Single evaluation or activity to determine student progress toward attainment of standard(s) and indicators.
- Performance assessment: Collection of related performance tasks students do to develop their own understanding of concepts and skills found in the standards and indicators.
- Good item: In terms of IRT (Item Reference Theory), good item should have: a discrimination index higher than 0.4; a fit mean square index close to 1.

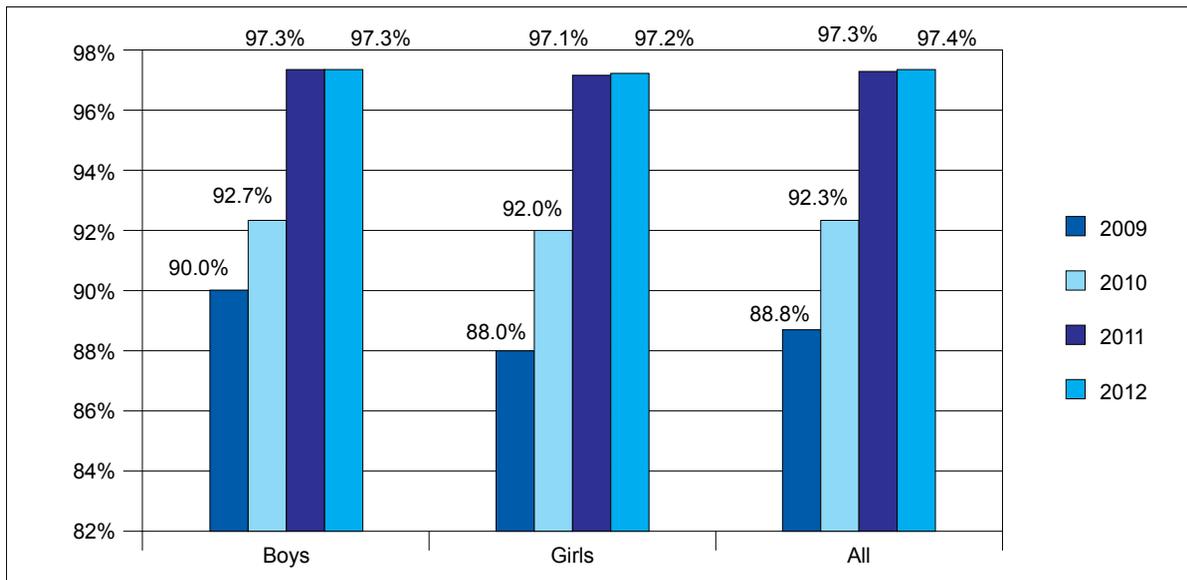
Performance assessment is powerful

- Establish clear learning targets
- Require students to 'show what they know'
- Expect all students to be proficient
- Use consistent and fair scoring guides
- Provide multiple opportunities to revise and improve
- Improve critical thinking ability
- Prepare students to answer, 'What do I do when I don't know the right answer?'
- Provide realistic method of interdisciplinary instruction
- Students determine their own performance levels
- Students describe what each performance level looks like
- Teacher asks students during activity to self-assess and set personal goal for improvement

Achievement of Bangla and English in NSA 2008



- Consider what students' need for success: in school, life, and on our high-stakes tests?
- Improving reading needs attention on many aspects to achieve reading mastery

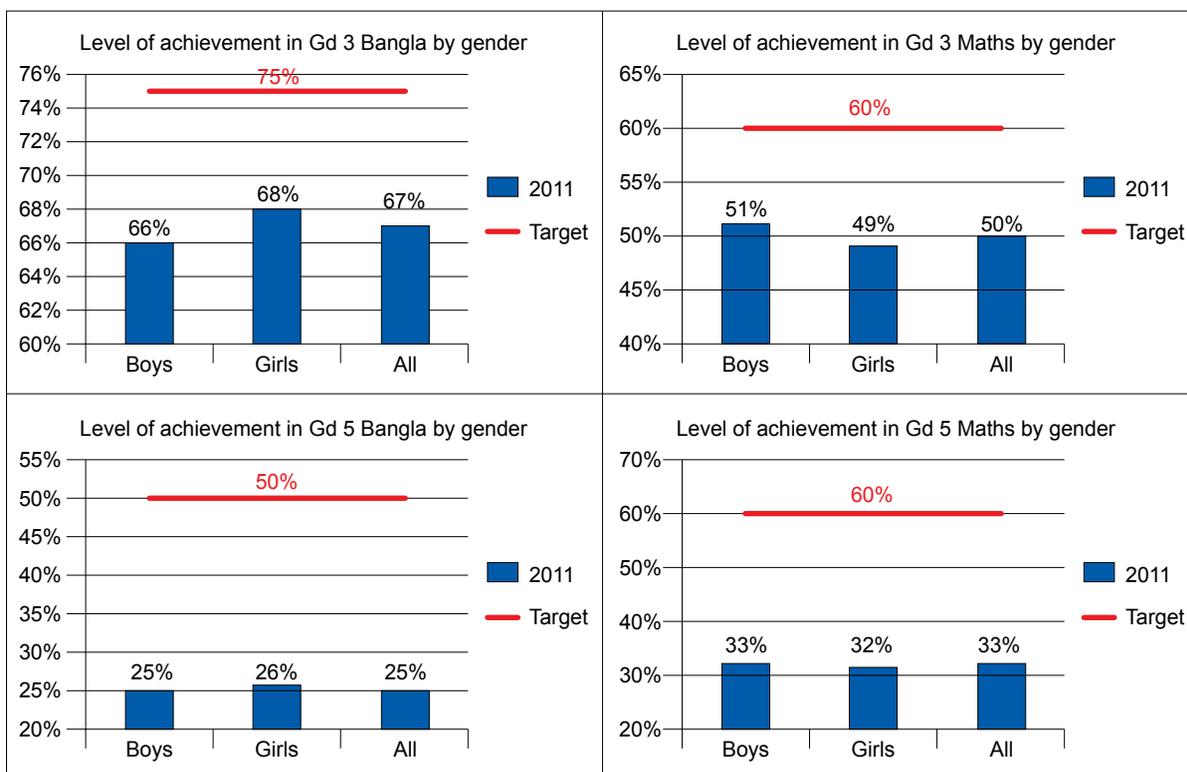


Grade 5 PECE results 2009-12

Mean achievement of Gd5 in NSA 2008 by score interval
Score 40% and above Bang. 94.70% and Eng. 91.36%

Sub	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90-100
Ban	0.24	1.45	3.6	7.3	12.7	21.0	27.2	21.4	5.11
Eng	0.43	2.12	6.11	13.2	24.2	26.5	18.3	8.3	0.86

Learning outcome results in NSA 2011



- Reading and comprehension of Bangla is important not only for Bangla, but also for understanding all other subjects.

Scoring guide: the heart of performance assessment

- De-mystify the grading process!
- Share with students what 'proficient' and 'exemplary' work looks like in terms of specific, observable criteria
- Students then realise, 'If I do this, then I have met or exceeded the standards!'
- Performance criteria shared before students begin work
- Contain specific language understood by all: students, teachers, parents
- Referred to frequently during completion of task
- Provide immediate feedback for improving work quality
- Used to assess completed task

Task (letter): 'Typical day in the wilderness'

- Write a letter to a friend or family member telling them about a typical day in your life in the wilderness; include historical content you have learned.
- Include as many parts of your day as you can. Use five of your senses as you describe the day to help the reader imagine it. Use correct letter format with correct spelling and mechanics.
- Proficient: Correct form of friendly letter is used; letter is time-sequenced; letter includes morning, afternoon and evening activities; description of day includes meeting basic needs; descriptive language includes use of all five senses; letter includes historical content.
- Exemplary: All proficient criteria met PLUS: includes comparisons and contrasts to 'big city' life; letter includes personal meaning derived from experiences.

Task (letter) scoring guide: 'Progressing' and 'not yet met'

- Progressing:
 - Parts of friendly letter missing, specifically _____
 - Following information is out of sequence _____
 - Letter leaves out portion of day _____
 - Certain basic needs not addressed _____
 - Descriptive language needed for following senses _____
 - Letter needs historical content _____
- Not yet met:
 - Task requirements not met
 - Missing one or more of following: a. completed friendly letter; b. time-sequencing; c. day's activities; d. how basic needs met; e. descriptive language for all five senses; f. historical content.

Ever wondered?

- So many standards, so little time! How can teachers effectively teach and assess them all?
- Our curriculum has been 'inch deep, mile wide'; would 'inch wide, mile deep' not better meet student learning needs?

TIMSS Report compare with Bangladesh

Math Topics	Length of Textbooks
US – 78 in 180 days	U.S. 4th grade math–530 pages
Japan – 17 in 253 days	International math–170 pages
Germany – 23 in 220 days	U.S. 4th grade science–397 pages
	International science–125 pages
B.desh Math 5-14 in 228 days	B.desh Math G5–144 pages
B.desh Bangla 5-23 in 228 days	B.desh Bangla G5–125 pages
B.desh English 29 in 228 days	B.desh English G5–108 pages

Presentation 7: Dr. Deborah Wyburn, British Council & Luke Doyle, CAFFE

'Assessing Speaking and Listening Skills: Can Technology Help?'

English Curriculum (revised 2013)

- Purpose of teaching English at primary level is to help students develop competence in all four language skills in English through meaningful and enjoyable activities. Primary curriculum has been revised in the light of the National Education Policy (2010) (MOE 2010) which emphasises learning English for communicating, locally and globally. (p.150)
- Emphasis on listening and speaking as the foundation on which to develop reading and writing skills. Content for pronunciation, stress and intonation have been specified for each class. (p.150)

What teachers say...

- Emphasis in new curriculum on speaking and listening; but SAs focus exclusively on reading, writing and grammar.
- Large class sizes make FA of speaking and listening skills difficult.
- Difficult to teach through dialogue as students cannot respond adequately.
- Teaching aids, such as flash cards and posters, are not widely used.
- Most teachers do not have access to audio-visual materials (as suggested in curriculum document).
- Teachers do not have a Teacher's Guide
- Students do not have adequate opportunities to practice speaking and listening skills outside school.

Reflections on teacher feedback

- Introducing testing of speaking and listening skills to national assessments is key to changing the way English is taught
- A way needs to be found to test speaking and listening skills effectively in large classes
- Teachers need access to audio-visual tools to teach speaking and listening skills more effectively
- Students need drill-and-practice tools to compensate for lack of real life practice opportunities

What is this study about?

- Exploratory research to determine:
 - Whether it is feasible to use a simple mobile App to test speaking and listening skills in Bangladesh classrooms with Grades I, II, III and IV EL students
 - Whether results obtained using the App are comparable to those obtained using individualized face-to-face testing

What is this study NOT about?

- Constructing and piloting tests of speaking and listening skills.

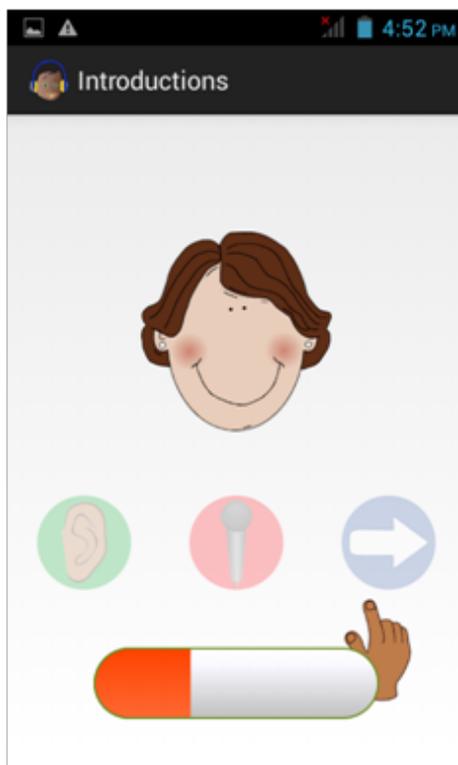
Test Construction – Grade One

TERMINAL COMPETENCIES	ATTAINABLE COMPETENCIES	EXAMPLE QUESTIONS
LISTENING		
To recognize basic English sound differences, stress and intonation	To become familiar with English sounds by listening to common English words.	“Is this a bed, a chair or a table?”
To understand simple questions and statements	To understand simple questions about familiar objects	
SPEAKING		
To use English sounds, stress and intonation appropriately	To repeat after the teacher and say simple words and phrases	
READING		
To read aloud texts with proper pronunciation and understanding	To recognize and read the alphabet both small and capital	“Does it start with C, D or F?”
		 C D F
To recognize and read both cardinal and ordinal numbers	To recognize and read cardinal numbers up to 10.	“Are there 2, 4 or 6?”
		

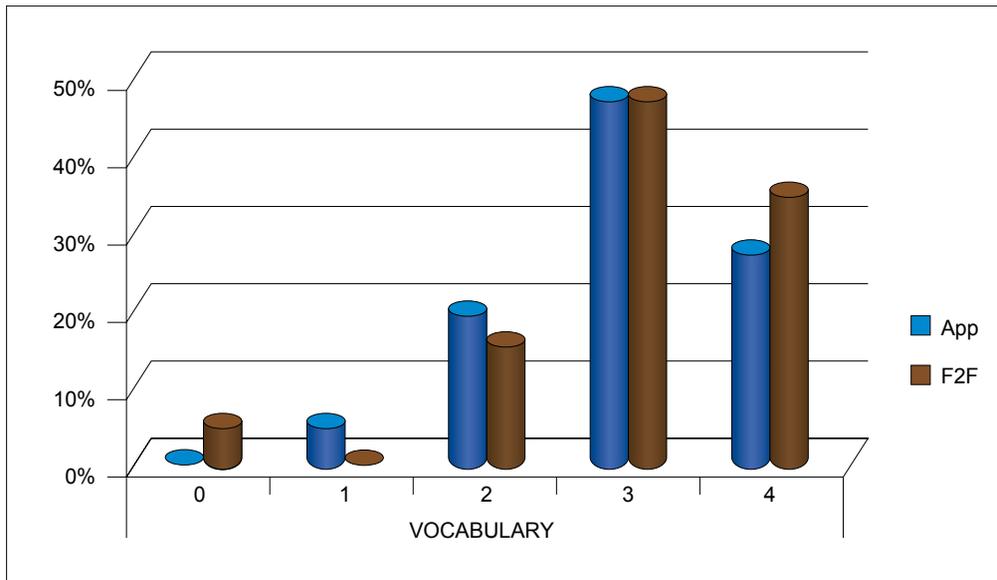
Grade Two – Additional Competencies

TERMINAL COMPETENCIES	ATTAINABLE COMPETENCIES	EXAMPLE QUESTIONS
LISTENING		
To understand simple questions and statements	To understand simple questions about familiar objects	<p>“What colour is the sky?”</p> 
READING		
To read aloud texts with proper pronunciation and understanding	To read words and phrases with the help of visual clues	“There are 28 children in my class.”
To recognise and read both cardinal and ordinal numbers	To recognize and read cardinal numbers up to 30	

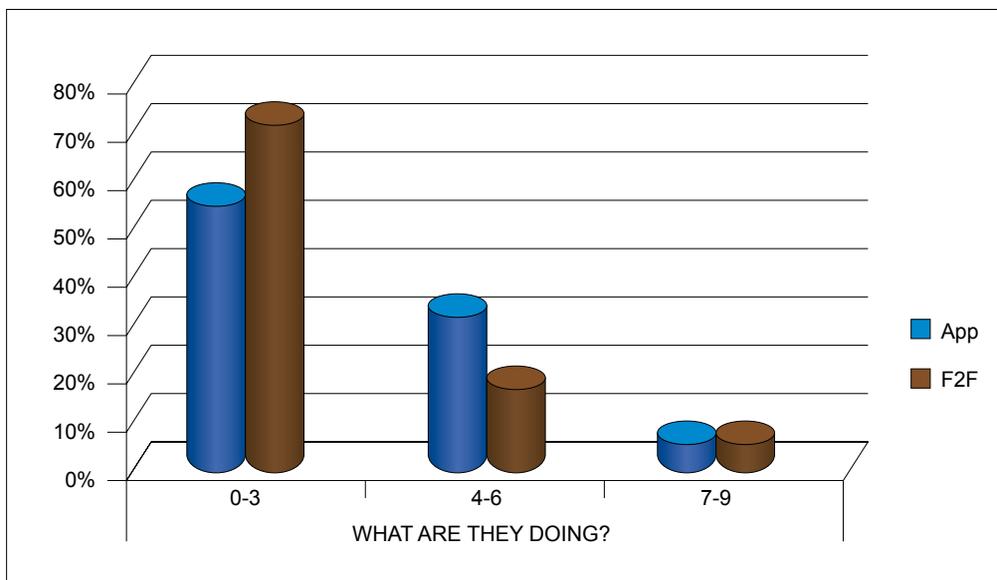
The App



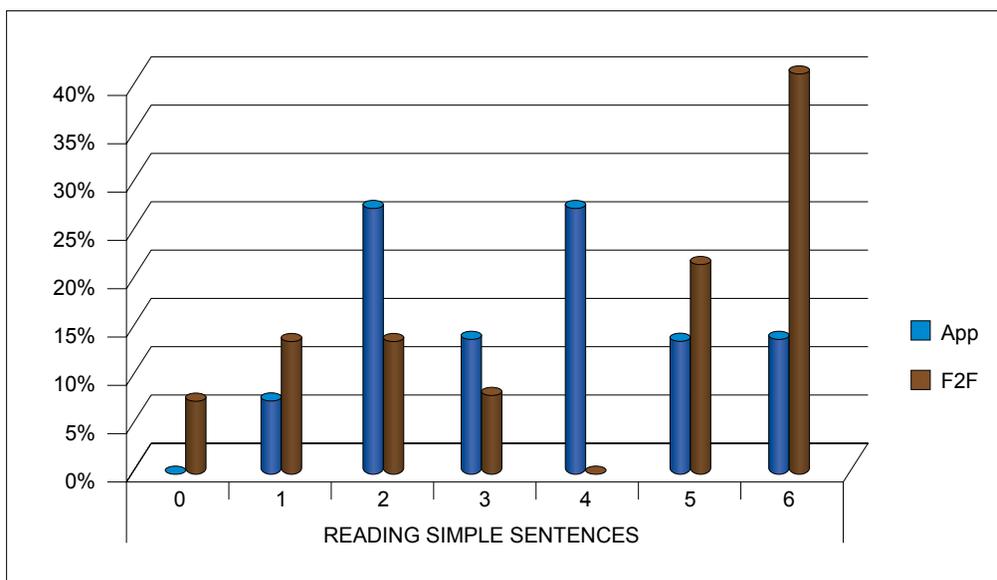
Findings from parallel testing – Gd4



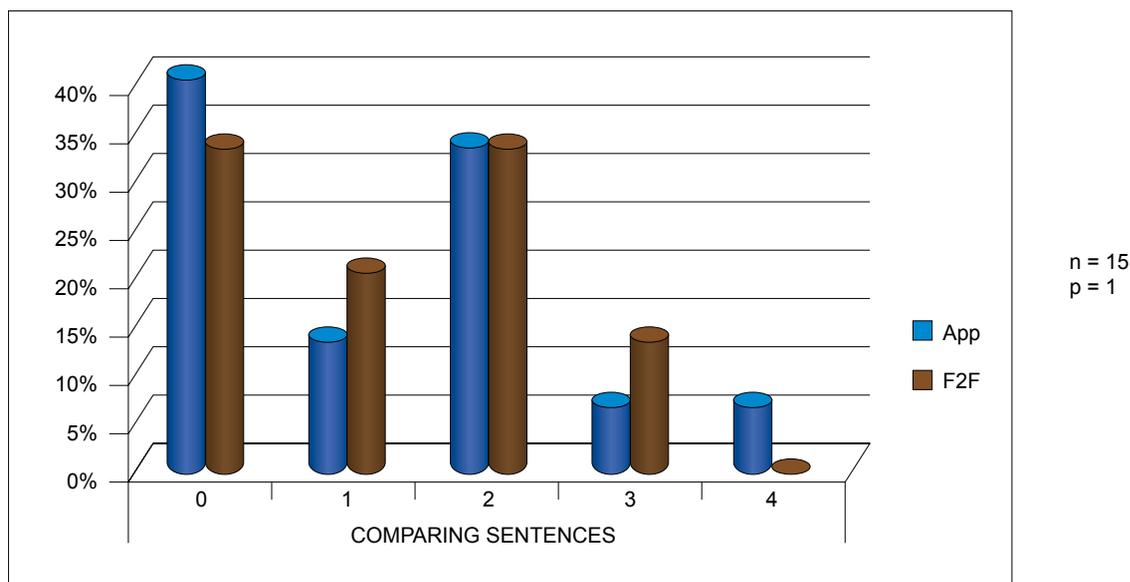
n = 15
p = 0.8537



n = 15
p = 0.3658



n = 15
p = 0.5121



Student opinions

- Preference for face-to-face: invigilator can ask it a different way or give them a hint; not comfortable with technology
- Preference for App: can repeat the question many times - work at own pace; able to concentrate more because of earphones; prefer to give answer individually - not in front of others or under pressure as part of group.

General observations

- Students don't have a problem with navigating the App; but sometimes have a problem with understanding the instructions.
- Ambient noise is not a problem for recording.
- Wide range in proficiency in one class – need for individualised instruction.
- Apps best developed within Bangladesh so instructions can be given in Bangla; questions asked in a familiar accent; emphasis on English sounds difficult for Bangladeshi students.
- Testing speaking requires a carefully thought out rubric

Where to from here?

- Further research
- No one-size-fits-all solution
- Variants of App including web-enabled
- Even greater potential at secondary level
- Potential of mobile Apps for learning

4.4 Small group discussion

Seminar participants were divided into four groups (and then two subgroups within these; eight in total) for parallel group discussion sessions with a view to identify and debate issues relevant to EL skills assessment in Bangladesh's education sectors. The groups were allocated one of the following areas to debate issues: i) primary: formative assessment; ii) primary: summative assessment; iii) secondary: formative assessment; and iv) secondary summative assessment.

The objective of these small group discussions was to develop ideas for policy recommendations based on analysis of the current context and discussion of current assessment reform initiatives. Key points/recommendations from each subgroup were reported back to the wider group during plenary; these are included below, along with a list of notes from each group's discussion.

Group 1: Primary – formative assessment

Questions addressed:
1. What is formative assessment? Is there any element of formative assessment practiced in primary classrooms and how effective is it?
2. What effect does the Primary School Certificate (PSC) Examination have on classroom practice?
3. How can a teacher effectively assess students' ability in all four skills in an average English lesson? What can be included at Primary Training Institute (PTI) level to enable teachers to do this?
4. How effective is feedback as a tool in English classroom teaching?

Key points/recommendations:

- Establish a rigorous teacher capacity building programme (pre-service/in-service) to:
 - i. ensure proper training of teachers on formative assessment, especially listening and speaking, and
 - ii. support implementation of formative assessment in schools.
- Build AUEOs' capacity to ensure proper monitoring and supervision of formative assessment in classrooms.

Subgroup 1 - discussion

- Formative assessment (FA) is part of everyday teaching and learning; practiced in Bangladeshi classrooms but somewhat limited as teachers are not sufficiently trained to carry it out. Practice and knowledge of FA varies from teacher to teacher.
- Key purpose of FA is to provide feedback to students.
- Teachers are trained in some FA aspects in DPEd training; despite this FA is not well used in classrooms.
- Although classroom-based assessment does not count towards students' final marks at primary level, it is still an important form of assessment/evaluation.

- EIA has found some types of FA techniques are practiced in secondary classrooms. Most commonly-used technique – question/answer, usually initiated by teacher; in many cases limited to close-ended questions. Found some poor practice in use of school-based assessment (SBA); address this through policy, teacher training and strong monitoring.
- SBA is in place at secondary level. Something similar could be proposed at primary, so FA counts towards summative exams i.e. award a certain proportion of marks to FA e.g. 20%-50%. Therefore, FA would need to be included formally (through a policy) in the primary curriculum.
- SBA might be an opportunity for teachers to instigate poor practices. How would it be monitored? How would it be possible to maintain validity in marking? Secondary try to avoid this through policy: FA mark must align with mark achieved in final exam. If 20%+ discrepancy, FA mark is discarded and proportionate mark, based on summative assessment (SA), is given. Policy not yet fully in practice.
- It is important to develop a monitoring framework to know if FA is taking place in practice.

Subgroup 2 – discussion:

- Formative assessment (FA) is continuous/on-going assessment in the classroom.
- FA is an important process for teachers and students. Teachers can ascertain whether teaching and learning is working with their class; if required, can change their teaching approach based on student feedback (e.g. student's performance). Little scope to receive student feedback or accommodate it through summative assessment (SA). FA can be used as a mechanism for providing on-going feedback to students.
- Forms of FA: e.g. class test, oral test, weekly test, presentations, pairwork, groupwork, individual work, question-answer.
- Tends to be more focus on SA than FA. Pressure/focus on SA by head teachers (HTs), parents/guardians; perhaps more attention should be given to FA. Could raise community awareness of importance of FA for communicative language learning; ATEO, URC and HT could play a role in this.
- FA used by some teachers, but often not regularly. Perhaps more commonly practiced in schools in and around Dhaka; less common outside, i.e. rural/more remote areas.
- In general there is more practice of SA than FA. Teachers may receive training on FA but find it difficult to apply it well in practice.
- SBA (Secondary): 20% of marks allocated; tests all four skills - listening, speaking, reading, writing.
- Monitoring of FA takes place through ATEO school visit. Also monitored through peer classroom observation, but teachers seldom have time to carry this out. Could introduce peer observation (PO) policy (to include giving constructive feedback), allowing teachers to share ideas and learning.
- Teacher performance should also be assessed formatively throughout the year.
- FA develops language and can positively impact on student performance in SA.

- Backwash effect: SA (i.e. PSC and JSC) is of key importance at primary level; effects what is taught in the classroom. Students, teachers, parents/guardians are all concerned with achieving good results in PSC. Learning tends to come second to the exam.
- PSC puts some pressure on young students. Pressure usually comes from parents. However, this might be good for pupils.
- Language education is more suited to testing through FA than SA; perhaps the subject could be excluded from typical SA (though, this is unlikely in reality and would be difficult).
- Greater emphasis could be given to FA through allocating a proportion of marks (like SBA).
- Could assess listening skills through audios.
- Teacher ultimately plays the most important role in students learning of English.
- Teachers should acquire skills for assessing all skills formatively through their own practice.
- DPEd, C-in-ED and EIA may be able to play a role in developing teacher FA skills. DPEd doing work along these lines: action research, reflective journal and continuous modification feature in their training. PTI should have an FA focus and could provide more FA training through DPEd training.
- Teachers in remote areas and those with fewer qualifications are in more urgent need of training.

Group 2: Primary – summative assessment

Questions addressed:
1. What impact does the PSC have on teaching and learning?
2. How can summative examinations effectively assess the four skills of English language?
3. PSC examination: How much of an issue is validity and reliability in terms of question setting and marking schemes? What future initiatives could be taken to address the current challenges?

Key points/ recommendations:

- Assess all four skills - reading, writing, speaking and listening - in summative assessment.
- Establish separate primary exam board for overseeing assessment activities.

Subgroup 3 - discussion:

- Key issue: effective assessment of all four skills – reading, writing, speaking, listening) by summative examinations. E.g. No opportunity for PSC to test speaking and listening. (Note, PSC are the main summative examinations at primary level, involving 3 million students.)

- No reflection on formative assessment in the SA.
- Formative tests like SBA are sometimes not administered properly by the teachers.
- Teachers could be involved in preparing PSC exam questions, but might not have the appropriate skills (teachers might not be good assessors). URICs could perhaps train teachers on question development.
- Teachers follow examination guidelines provided by GOB, which currently do not include listening and speaking (so these are not assessed).
- Checking assessment validity and reliability is important. Moderation committee required (perhaps NAPE, or some form of 'expert panel'). Possibly use software to check question validity and reliability. Could increase reliability of questions by introducing pairs of questions. Current process of scoring is not good enough.
- Exam should be longer in length - more than one day.
- NAPE could potentially be a venue for testing listening and speaking skills. Also, could be supported (strengthen capacity) to carry out moderation (e.g. developing test items; analysing validity and reliability), monitoring and research (on teacher training) in relation to speaking and listening assessment.
- Associated administration/management of curriculum and exam system required for speaking and listening - perhaps by DPE.
- MoPME should have a separate department for PSC exams; establish a primary exam board; responsible for PECE management, monitoring, preparing reports, dissemination.

Subgroup 4 - discussion:

- PSC exam does not test all four language skills (only reading and writing). Speaking and listening should perhaps be assessed in the summative exam (like science practical exam); if so, mark distribution should be equal across the four skills.
- Teacher could organise peer speaking sessions in class to assess and improve students' speaking and listening skills.
- Backwash effect: Teachers prepare students for the exam ('teaching to test'); not necessarily learning English. Therefore, classroom teaching focuses on reading and writing, but all four skills should be practiced.
- Teachers, students and parents/guardians are more interested in gaining a certificate than learning English.
- Teachers do not have sufficient skills in and knowledge of assessment. Teacher training on 'assessment' should be organised and provided by the Government and EIA at both primary and secondary level.
- Senior teachers are less interested in using new methods of teaching.
- Students practice from guidebooks and attend coaching centres to learn English. Some students are encouraged by teachers to join such centres. Coaching is a source of income for teachers.

Group 3: Secondary – formative assessment

Questions addressed:
1. What is formative assessment? Is there any formative assessment practiced in secondary classrooms and how effective is it?
2. What effect do the Junior School Certificate (JSC) and Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations have on classroom practice?
3. How can a teacher effectively assess students' ability in all four skills in an average English lesson?
4. How effective is feedback as a tool in English classroom teaching
5. How effective has School Based Assessment (SBA) been on classroom practice?

Key recommendations:

- Establish teacher training and orientation on formative assessment specifically.
- Assess all four skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening – in formative assessment.

Subgroup 5 - discussion:

- Formative assessment (FA) is assessment for learning; a continuous, cyclical process. Practiced in some secondary classrooms, but is relatively uncommon. Negative backwash effect of exam means teachers tend not to use FA; neglected by teachers and students because it has not been results oriented in the past.
- Some teachers use FA, but seem unaware they are doing so – use it without knowing.
- FA is not structured sufficiently in secondary classes.
- Before implementing FA, students' strengths need to be identified.
- Students tend to memorise; and teachers try to ensure that.
- FA questions come from guidebooks (notebook) rather than Eft.
- Few teachers have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and tend to lack proper training to teach effectively. Teachers need proper training to carry out FA.
- Seems to be little coordination between different agencies responsible for implementing assessment in classrooms.
- SSC now allocates a proportion of marks to FA (i.e. SBA) – 20%. Given this, teachers may show bias to SBA; school authority can play a vital role by regular monitoring continuous assessment and make it effective.
- AUEOs/ UEOs are responsible for monitoring FA; but little seems to be carried out in practice. Given this, cannot know the extent to which FA happens in secondary classrooms, and unclear how it happens.

- Many good projects are being run which develop skills; but these tend not to be sustainable once project has finished.
- Does not seem to be a 'visible' authority to whom schools answer to in terms of FA.
- Teachers follow NCTB guidelines on assessment; but specific guidelines are required for FA.
- Long-term, central, national plan, which is gradual and sustainable, required to implement FA and make it effective, as changes in teacher practice will not happen in the short-term.

Subgroup 6 - discussion:

- Formative assessment (FA) can be done at the end of each and every lesson, and also during a lesson. FA could also be testing at the end of a unit.
- FA can be used to assess all four language skills.
- Teachers usually only assess reading and writing in class. E.g. give students an exam paper, ask them to read it and write down the answers. If a teacher does not have enough time to check their students' work, they could get them to exchange copies and mark each other's.
- FA can be based on a lesson's learning outcomes and used to gauge students' understanding of a lesson. Therefore, FA can help a teacher know whether their teaching 'works' with the students. It can also be used to ascertain student performance and take action, if required
- SBA (School-based assessment) is an example of FA in secondary schools. Includes assessment of speaking and listening. Only recently been made part of the curriculum. 20 marks allocated to SBA.
- Some schools are using SBA, but many are not.
- Backwash effect: Teachers usually teach what the students need to know for the JSC (Junior School Certificate) or SSC.
- Teachers have little training on assessment. Building their capacity in relation to FA is of utmost importance, as they will carry it out with students in class.
- Feedback, provided at the end of FA, is an integral part of FA. Little good practice exists on giving FA feedback. Teachers need to know how and when to give feedback. 'Very good' and 'well done' are 'surface' forms of feedback.
- Students are unlikely to be clear on what and how to improve if teachers only write short feedback comments; e.g. 'not good'. If they give longer comments, e.g. 'You have written very well. Just be attentive to your grammar', the student will know what area they need to improve.

Group 4: Secondary – summative assessment

Questions addressed
1. What impact do summative examinations (e.g. JSC, SSC) have on teaching and learning?
2. How can summative examinations effectively assess the four skills of English language?
3. School Based Assessment (SBA) in summative examination (SSC and School examinations) – what role could SBA play to effectively improve assessment of the four language skills
4. JSC/SSC examinations: How much of an issue is validity and reliability in terms of question setting and marking schemes? What future initiatives could be taken to address the current challenges?

Key points/recommendations:

- Organise and provide thorough teacher training on assessment of listening and speaking skills.
- Encourage more listening and speaking skills practice in the classroom.
- Develop a long-term plan for revision of the assessment and examination programme.

Subgroup 7- discussion:

- Communicative approach to learning English was incorporated into the curriculum in 1990s. Difficulties experienced aligning communicative teaching and public exams (SSC). ELTIP (English Language Teaching Improvement Project) introduced in 1997 – provided teacher training but was not very effective. Teachers were not experienced in applying the communicative approach in the classroom; created difficulties for teaching. Teachers continued to use the grammar-translation method.
- Teachers have some knowledge of terminal/final examinations, but do not fully understand them, e.g. do not know the meaning and focus of SA. Given this, teachers rarely fulfil the objectives of SA.
- Teachers often have problems applying the content of Eft.
- Backwash effect of JSC and SSC: Teaching tends to focus on preparing students for exams.
- Students will not know why they are being assessed and what to do during assessment if they are not aware of the learning objectives. Policymakers should consider the implications of SA and potential negative effect of the exam.
- Assessment can scare the students.
- Teachers know best when it comes to teaching and learning in classrooms, including assessment.
- Pre-service and in-service teacher training should be improved.

- BEd (Bachelors in Education) and MEd (Masters in Education) programmes have assessment components, but these have not been updated recently.
- Everyday problems faced by teachers in the classroom (including assessment) tend not to be covered in training on assessment.
- Teachers could use FA to prepare students for SA; in FA, students can identify and resolve problems/misunderstandings before undertaking SA.
- Could use SBA to reconstruct/restructure the assessment framework. If SA is changed, then it will change FA.
- SBA may change teachers' attitudes to assessment.
- Practical language classes could be organised, as is done in physics and chemistry.
- Listening and speaking SBA results should be a proportion of exam.
- SBA may motivate students.
- Creative questioning should be introduced as part of SBA.
- If the Government assesses all four skills through SA, more students may pass and targets might be reached.
- How might SBA be carried out with large classes?
- Could change the examination centre system. Neighbouring schools could assess speaking skills, e.g. Teacher at school A assesses school B's students; to try and remove bias.
- For speaking, students could record their speech; then assess it centrally.
- Remove bias by using an external examiner.
- Listening and speaking skills should be practiced before examination.
- Introduce incentives for teachers.

Subgroup 8 - discussion:

- It is challenging to assess listening and speaking skills.
- Teachers do not have sufficient skills to assess speaking and listening, so are not ready to do so. A training programme is required to improve teachers' skills in this area.
- Audio, based on the English textbook, could be developed on CD or mobile phone to assess listening. Teachers could record their own voice and use it for testing listening skills.
- Like the Science practical exam, speaking and listening tests could be carried out in schools; an external from other school in same upazila could come/be invited to carry out the tests.
- 22,500 laptops and projectors have been given to secondary schools across the country by the GOB. Possibly utilise this technology for assessing listening and speaking skills.

4.5 A way forward

This second policy seminar, on the theme of English language skills assessment in the Bangladesh education system, demonstrated a real will to conceive and set up an assessment framework including approaches to competency-based teaching and formative assessment which can be implemented successfully in the classroom. Feedback from seminar participants was overwhelming in the expression of need for teachers to have training on how to conduct formative assessment in their classrooms. For this to happen systematically rather than piecemeal, it is essential to bring policymakers and educationalists together to agree a way forward so that formative assessment becomes an intrinsic part of pre- and in-service training.

The lively discussion which took place at this policy seminar – on how to accurately and effectively assess all four language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) – needs to continue with a focus on practical issues around drafting of criteria, rubric, teacher training and implementation.

Once an assessment framework is in place, it has to be implemented by the teachers in their classrooms. For this to happen, teachers need to be supported in terms of training, on-going support and adequate time/space to carry out their work and to reflect on it for on-going curriculum refinement. A mentor scheme where colleagues can support each other in a non-threatening atmosphere would assist in sustaining the new approach. This assessment support system for teachers needs to be in place prior to implementing of new approaches.

EIA will hold a further policy seminar later in 2014 – the third in this series – on the theme of women, English and appropriate technology for developing teaching and learning to raise this important issue on stakeholders' agendas.

The press release for this seminar can be found in Appendix 4, news coverage in Appendix 5.

Glossary

Backwash (or washback) effect	Impact of exams on classroom teaching and learning; teaching which focuses on preparing students for exams.
Classroom-based assessment (CBA) Classroom practice	Any assessment of students which takes place in the classroom. Activities of teachers and students, and the nature of those activities, in the process of teaching and learning in the classroom. Teacher practices include presenting, organising, asking questions and providing feedback. Student practices include speaking (e.g. on own, in pairs), writing, reading and listening.
Communicative English language	Notion of English language with more emphasis on speaking, and listening to, English; but involving all four language skills – speaking, listening, reading and writing.
Communicative language teaching (CLT)/ Communicative approach English for Today (Eft)	Practice of language teaching with more emphasis on speaking and listening; but involving all four language skills – speaking, listening, reading and writing. National textbooks used by all Government teachers – primary and secondary – to teach English in Bangladesh.
English language competence (or English language proficiency)	Ability in English language involving all four language skills – speaking, listening, reading and writing. In the context of EIA, English language competence is usually referred to in relation to proficiency in communicative English language (more emphasis on speaking and listening). Assessments of English language ability to gauge ability in English language.
English language competence/proficiency testing	Assessments of English language ability to gauge ability in English language.
Formative assessment (FA) (or continuous assessment)	Assessment of students during a lesson, or after a part of the lesson/section of work, for learning purposes; examples include: class test, oral test, weekly test, presentations, pairwork, groupwork, individual work, question-answer.
Four skills	Refers to four skills involved in language learning: speaking, listening, reading and writing.
Higher order thinking skills (HOTS)	Skills requiring more cognitive processing and therefore need to be taught using different methods. HOTS include critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving and decision making (in a real life context).
Pedagogy	The practice of teaching.
Peer observation	In context of EIA, one teacher observing another teacher's practice (usually class) as part of professional development with the aim of mutual learning between the two teachers.
Peer support	Teachers supporting each other in their professional development activities. Can occur both within and outside of school. Peer support is a core part of the EIA model and involves a teacher learning with and supporting a partner teacher(s) in their school, and regular 'cluster' meetings with other local participating teachers
School-based assessment (SBA)	System of measuring learners' performance that is designed according to the curricular framework, and developed, organised and executed in school, by the subject teachers themselves.
Summative assessment (SA)	Assessment of learners after a period of time or programme, e.g. terminal exams, PSC, JSC, SSC.
School-based teacher development (SBTD)	Professional development activities of teachers, or the whole school, in their context of professional practice (i.e. the school), with emphasis on teachers learning with and supporting each other (peer support). Practice-based model, with the school and classroom as learning context.



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Appendix 1: Agenda

Sunday, 16 March 2014, 09:30AM to 16.00PM

Directorate of Primary Education, Mirpur, Dhaka

08.30 to 09.30	Registration, Networking and Refreshments
09.30 to 09.35	Opening and Welcome Note Dr. Johan Bentinck, Team Leader, EIA
09.35 to 09.40	Speech: Guest of Honour Ms. Sarah Cooke, Country Representative, DFID Bangladesh
09.40 to 09.45	Speech: Special Guest Mr. Shyamal Kanti Ghosh, Director General, DPE
09.45 to 09.55	Speech: Chief Guest Mr. S.M Ashraful Islam, Additional Secretary, MoPME
09.55 to 10.05	Speech: Chairperson Prof. Md. Shafiqur Rahman, Chairman, NCTB
10.05 to 10.45	Keynote presentation: English Language assessment within international and Bangladeshi context – Prof. Rama Mathew, Delhi University
10.45 to 11.05	Presentation: International trends in ELT assessment: Implications for Bangladesh – Dr. Prithvi N. Shrestha, The OU, UK and Farhan Azim, EIA
11.05 to 11.20	Tea/Coffee Break
11. 20 to 11.40	Presentation: Developing Higher Order Thinking (HOT) Skills through Assessment – Dr. Merle C Tan and Professor S. Tapan, UNICEF
11. 40 to 12.00	Presentation: Formative Assessment in Secondary Education in Bangladesh – Mohammad Abdur Rahim, NCTB
12.00 to 12. 20	Presentation: Competency Based Assessment for Grade-5 in Primary Education in Bangladesh – Khandker Din Mohammad, NAPE
12.20 to 12.40	Presentation: National Students Assessment: Past Experience and Way Ahead – Md. Mezaul Islam, DPE
12.40 to 13.00	Presentation: Assessing Speaking and Listening Skills: Can Technology Help? – Dr. Deborah Wyburn, British Council
13.00 to 14.00	Lunch
14.00 to 14.10	Introduction to Group Work
14.10 to 15.00	Parallel Group Discussions Groups discuss issues on different themes in each table
15.00 to 15.30	Plenary Discussions and Question Answer Session
15.30 to 15.45	Wrap Up and Closing Note Md. Siddiqur Rahman, Project Director, EIA, GOB

POLICY SEMINAR
Co-organized by DPE & NCTE



National attainment levels should be observed in a way that helps to understand trends or patterns in performance and class



Appendix 2: Concept note

English Language Skills Assessment in the Primary and Secondary Education Sectors in Bangladesh

Date : Sunday, 16 March 2014

Venue : Department of Primary Education (DPE), Mirpur, Dhaka

Focus : Educational reform is currently underway in Bangladesh as demonstrated through the recent revisions of the curriculum across all subjects at both primary and secondary levels. Along with the newly revised textbooks and other supplementary materials, both formative and summative assessment measures for English need to be revisited in order to align the targeted learning outcomes with the assessment topics and methods. As part of this process, for the first time, assessment at the secondary level is not limited to reading and writing, but in line with the communicative approach to language teaching being promoted in the government text book 'English for Today' (EFT). The secondary formative assessment system has been modified to include the assessment of listening and speaking skills as part of 20% marks allocated for School Based Assessment being spread across all 4 language skills - reading, writing, listening & speaking.

English in Action (EIA) is working with 12,500 teachers across primary and secondary schools throughout Bangladesh. Through EIA's approach to teachers' professional development, aided by the delivery of mediated authentic classroom-video, teaching techniques and materials to support the government textbooks via accessible mobile technology, teachers are encouraged to focus on a communicative approach to teaching all four skills. This approach enables them to practice formative assessment as an on-going evaluative process with their students in the classrooms. At the same time, it is crucially important that summative assessment measures are fully in line with the targeted curriculum and indeed drive the communicative approaches of EFT and EIA.

At this key juncture, with changes underway in both textbook and assessment reform, English in Action is aiming to host this policy seminar with a clear focus on assessment.

Aim : The seminar will explore the nature of assessment reforms which will best support the communicative English language teaching and learning approaches promoted by the Government of Bangladesh, and how these might be effectively implemented.

Collaboration : EIA has collaborated with Directorate of Primary Education and National Curriculum & Textbook Board to co-host this seminar. Participation and contribution from other relevant government institutions like, Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) and National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM) has been requested. These collaboration will ensure greater platform to build into policy dialogue.

Expected guests from:

- Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME)
- Ministry of Education (MoE)
- Department for International Development (DFID)
- National Curriculum & Textbook Board (NCTB)
- Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE)

Other Participants : The seminar will bring together representatives of all stakeholders in the primary and secondary sectors (including MoPME, MoE, DPE, DSHE, NAPE, NAEM, NCTB, BISE), representatives from the donor community as well as English Language Teaching (ELT) assessment experts, both Bangladeshi and international.

Seminar Format:

1. Introduction : speeches and presentations from GOB, DFID, UNICEF, WB and EIA, and international and national assessment specialists.
2. Group work: based on the topics and sub-topics, title teams per mixed participant groups on each table will discuss key issues regarding the primary and secondary assessment systems in Bangladesh. Four parallel group discussions will take place based on the topics of:
 - i. Primary Formative
 - ii. Primary Summative
 - iii. Secondary Formative
 - iv. Secondary Summative
3. Panel Discussion: the group leaders will be invited to take part in a panel discussion during plenary, which will include wider audience participation and concluding remarks from the facilitator.



Appendix 3: Participant list

	Name	Designation	Institute/Organisation
1	Mr. Md. Siddiqur Rahman	Project Director, PMU, EIA	Directorate of Primary Education (DPE)
2	Ms. Nayla Yasmin	Assistant Project Director, PMU, EIA	DPE
3	Ms. Sharmin Nasima Banu	Accountant, PMU, EIA	DPE
4	Dr. AKM Khairul Alam	Consultant	DPE
5	Md. Yousuf Ali	Deputy Director	DPE
6	Md. Mezaul Islam	Deputy Director, Monitoring & Evaluation	DPE
7	Md. Emran	Director	DPE
8	Ms. Mahbubun Nahar	Director, Administration	DPE
9	Mr. S M Enamul Haque	Director, Finance	DPE
10	Mr. Sayedur Rahman	Assistant Director, Training	DPE
11	Bhupes Ranjan Roy	Research Officer	DPE
12	Jinat Jahan		DPE
14	Prof. Rakhal Ch. Dey	Director, Training	DSHE
15	Dr. Md. Anawarul Haque	DTL	Teaching Quality Improvement-2 Secondary Education Project (TQI-2), DSHE, MoE
16	Mr. Tarun Kumar Sarkar	Deputy Project Director	Teaching Quality Improvement-2 Secondary Education Project (TQI-2), DSHE, MoE
17	George W. Kelly	Team Leader	Teaching Quality Improvement-2 Secondary Education Project (TQI-2), DSHE, MoE
18	Rehana Khatun	APD	Teaching Quality Improvement-2 Secondary Education Project (TQI-2), DSHE, MoE
20	Prof. Siddikur Rahman	National Consultant (Secondary)	National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB)
21	Mr. Md. Abdur Rahim	Senior Specialist	NCTB
22	Mr. Md Nazmul Hasan Khan	Director General	National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE)
23	Mr. Khandker Din Mohammad	Assistant Specialist, Science	NAPE
24	Ms. Fahmida Shabnam	Education Adviser	Department for International Development (DFID) Bangladesh
25	Ms. Sarah Cooke	Country Representative	DFID Bangladesh

	Name	Designation	Institute/Organisation
26	Ms. Takashi Soma (Replacement-Akiko Nakano)	Team Leader	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
27	Ms. Raihana Sultana	Program Officer, English Language Programs	American Center, American Embassy
28	Mr. A.M.M. Hamidur Rahman	Adviser	State University of Bangladesh
29	Mr. Harunur Rashid Khan	Asst. Professor	Dept. of English, East West University
30	Mr. Kazi Mafizur Rahman	Lecturer	BRAC Institute of Languages
31	Ms. Dil Afroz Quader	Professor	BRAC University
32	Prof. Rama Mathew	Dean, Faculty of Education	Delhi University
33	Dr. Prithvi N. Shrestha	Senior Lecturer, English Language Teaching Academic	The Open University, UK
34	Israt Ara Islam	English Team BRAC Education Programme	BRAC
35	Ms. Anisa Haque	Head of Programme	Institute of Educational Development (IED)
36	Dr. Shamsul Haque	Consultant	IED
37	Ms. Arifa Rahman	General Secretary	Bangladesh English Language Teachers Association (BELTA)
38	Dr. Rubina Khan	Professor	Presidency University
39	Dr. Marium Begum	Professor	Institute of Education & Research (IER), University of Dhaka (UD)
40	Tasmia Nawrin	Researcher	IER, UD
41	Ariful Hoq Shanil	Researcher	IER, UD
42	Sharmin Hena	Researcher	IER, UD
43	Muhammad Salahuddin	Researcher	IER, UD
44	Afrin Hissain	Researcher	IER, UD
45	Roti Chakraborty	Masters Student	IER, UD
46	Sabrina Ahmed	Masters Student	IER, UD
47	Tauhida Taleb	Masters Student	IER, UD
48	Wasima Nahrin	Masters Student	IER, UD
49	Dr. Sayeedur Rahman	Associate Professor	Institute of Modern Language , UD
50	Ms. Sabiha Sultana	Assistant Professor	Teachers' Training College (TTC), Mymensingh
51	Mr. Md. Abdul Karim	Assistant Professor	TTC (women) Mymensingh
52	Mr. Ranajeet Poddar	Assistant Professor	TTC, Faridpur
53	Ms. Urmila Khaled	Assistant Professor	TTC, Dhaka
54	Mr. Sheikh Shahbaz Riad	Assistant Professor of Education	TTC, Dhaka

	Name	Designation	Institute/Organisation
55	Zobaida Munni	Assistant Professor	Teachers' Training College, Chittagong
56	S M Kamruddin Ropum	Senior Assistant Director	D.Net
57	Ms. Masuda Khaton	Project Manager, Teacher Training (English) Programmes	British Council
58	Dr. Deborah Wyburn	Consultant	British Council
59	Luke Doyle	Chairman	CAFFE (Computers Are Free For Everyone)
60	Dr. Marle Tan	Consultant	UNICEF
61	Prof. Shahjahan Mian Tapan	Consultant	UNICEF
62	Ms. Israt Arefin	Instructor	Primary Training Institute (PTI), Tangail
63	Mr. Harunur Rashid Bhuiyan	Instructor	PTTI, Comilla
64	Dilara Akhter	School Teacher	Bipin Roy Boys Government Primary School, Sutrapur
65	Shajada Sujon	School Teacher	Gandaria Mahila Sanga Government Primary School
66	Elias Al-Mahmood	School Teacher	Darus Salam Government Primary School, Mirpur
67	Rebeka Sultana	School Teacher	National Sokal Government Primary School, Mirpur
68	Md. Atique Rahman	School Teacher	Bandhura Holycross School, Nawabganj
69	Jakir Hossain	School Teacher	Mohammadpur Girls' High School, Mohammadpur
70	Dr. Johan Bentinck	Team Leader	English in Action (EIA)
71	Mahub Leelen	Deputy Team Leader	EIA
72	Olena Klein-Reshetnyk	Programme Resources Manager	EIA
73	Dr. Sharmistha Das	Education Adviser	EIA
74	Farhan Azim	Deputy Head of Research, Monitoring & Evaluation	EIA
75	Zahir-Bin-Siddique	Head of Teacher Training & Support	EIA
76	Md. M. Saifur Rahman	Deputy Head, Teacher Training & Support	EIA
77	Bikash Chandra Sarkar	Deputy Head, Materials Development Unit	EIA
78	Faysal Abbas	Communications Specialist	EIA
79	Rubayet Mollika Rahman	Organisation & Documentation Specialist	EIA
80	Sikandar Mondol Bappy	Coordinator, Finance & ICT	EIA

	Name	Designation	Institute/Organisation
81	Zaki Imam	Coordinator, Institutionalisation & Sustainability	EIA
82	Mostan Zida Al Noor	Senior Material Development Officer	EIA
83	Tania Islam	Material Development Officer	EIA
84	Rehmuna Akter	Senior Core Trainer	EIA
85	Md. Ashraf siddique	Research Officer	EIA
86	Shajedur Rahman	Senior Monitoring & Research Officer	EIA
87	Mijanur Rahman	ICT Officer	EIA
88	Rubina Akter	Front Desk Officer	EIA
89	William Leonard	Junior Consultant	BMB Mott McDonald
90	Dr. Isabelle Perez-Gore	English Language Teaching Academic	The Open University (OU)/EIA
91	Sonia Burton	Project Officer, Research, Monitoring & Evaluation	OU/EIA
92	Malcolm Griffiths	Acting Head of Primary Intervention	OU/EIA
93	Ian Eyres	Acting Head of Research, Monitoring & Evaluation	OU/EIA
94	Clare Woodward	English Language Teaching Academic	OU/EIA



Mr. Md. Siddiqur Rahman, EIA Project Director, PMU- DPE delivering vote of thanks.

Appendix 4: Press release

Policy Seminar on English Language Skills Assessment in the Primary and Secondary Education Sectors in Bangladesh, held in Dhaka

English in Action Policy Seminar; March 2014

Tuesday 18 March 2014 – An important policy seminar entitled ‘English Language Skills Assessment in the Primary and Secondary Education Sectors in Bangladesh’ was organized by the English in Action programme, and co-hosted by the Directorate of Primary Education and the National Curriculum and Textbook Board on March 16th at the Directorate of Primary Education, Mirpur, Dhaka.

The purpose of this seminar was to understand the current Assessment principles, policies and practices with a view to exploring the challenges and benefits of adopting a more comprehensive approach to assessment reform initiatives and its potential to create wider impact in the classrooms in Bangladesh. The seminar involved a series of speeches from important stakeholders, followed by presentations from leading academics and practitioners in the area, and discussion groups on important themes.

The seminar provided a platform to initiate a dialogue amongst the government officials, education policy makers, educationist and practitioners in the field of education assessment. Throughout the daylong seminar, participants identified and debated on the best practices of English language assessment scenarios in both primary and secondary education sectors in Bangladesh. A number of policy recommendations were recorded in the proceedings.

Mr. S.M. Ashraful Islam, Additional Secretary of Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Ms. Sarah Cooke, Country Representative, DFID, Mr. Shyamal Kanti Ghosh, Director General, Directorate of Primary Education, Dr. Johan Bentinck, Team Leader, English in Action,

Md. Siddiquir Rahman, Project Director, Project Management Unit, EIA and Prof. Md. Shafiqur Rahman, Chairman, NCTB were present at the seminar amongst others.

International experts from Delhi University, India, the Open University, UK shared their experiences of the wider region and international contexts along with presenters from the National Academy for Primary Education, National Curriculum and Textbook Board, UNICEF, British Council and the Directorate of Primary Education.

Quick info- English in Action

- English in Action is a programme funded by the UK Government. EIA aims to contribute to the economic growth of Bangladesh by providing English language as a tool for better access to the world economy. This nine year (2008-2017) programme will reach 65,000 teachers and 10 million pupils as well as 15 million adults.
- EIA also uses different media platforms like mobile, television, newspapers and internet to teach English to adult learners. Over 24 million Bangladeshis have used EIA’s media products through “BBC Janala” services.
- EIA works closely with the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and the Ministry of Education, Government of Bangladesh.

For further press information contact: Faysal Abbas, Communications Specialist, English in Action, Mobile: 0173-0334040, faysal.abbas@eiabd.com



Appendix 5: Press coverage

Publication: *THE DAILY INDEPENDENT*; Page: 4th; Date: 25-03-14

Seminar on English language skills

STAFF REPORTER

English in Action (EIA) organised a seminar, co-hosted by the Directorate of Primary Education and the National Curriculum and Textbook Board, entitled 'English Language Skills Assessment in the Primary and Secondary Education Sectors in Bangladesh' recently in the capital, says a press release.

At the seminar, there were a series of speeches from important stakeholders, followed by presentations from leading academics and practitioners in this arena.

Participants exchanged views on the practices of English language assessment scenarios in both primary and secondary education sectors in Bangladesh.

International experts from Delhi University, India, the Open University, United Kingdom shared their experiences on international contexts along with presenters from the National Academy for Primary Education, National Curriculum and Textbook Board, UNICEF, British Council and the Directorate of Primary Education.



Publication: *THE DAILY INQILAB*; Page: 00; Date: 25-03-14

Publication: *THE DAILY BORTOMAN*; Page: 7th; Date: 25-03-14

‘প্রাথমিক ও মাধ্যমিক স্তরের ইংরেজি ভাষা দক্ষতা মূল্যায়ন’ বিষয়ক পলিসি সেমিনার

‘প্রাথমিক এবং মাধ্যমিক স্তরের ইংরেজি ভাষা দক্ষতা মূল্যায়ন’ বিষয়ক পলিসি সেমিনার সম্প্রতি প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর, ঢাকাতে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়, যাতে অতিরিক্ত সচিব ইংলিশ ইন অ্যাকশন (ইআইএ), প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর এবং জাতীয় শিক্ষাক্রম ও পাঠ্যপুস্তক বোর্ড (এনসিটিবি) প্রধান অতিথি হিসেবে অংশগ্রহণ করেন।

সরকারি কর্মকর্তা, শিক্ষা নীতি প্রণেতা, শিক্ষা বিশেষজ্ঞ ও গবেষক সকলকে মূল্যায়নের ক্ষেত্রে একই প্ল্যাটফর্মে নিয়ে আসা ছিল এই সেমিনারের দক্ষতা। সেমিনারে উপস্থিত ছিলেন প্রাথমিক ও গণশিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের অতিরিক্ত সচিব এসএম আশরাফুল ইসলাম, ডিএফআইডি প্রধান মিস সারা কুক, প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তরের মহাপরিচালক শ্যামল কান্তি ঘোষ, ইংলিশ ইন অ্যাকশনের টিম লিডার ড. ইউহান বেটিন্কে, ইংলিশ অ্যাকশনের প্রকল্প পরিচালক মো. সিদ্দিকুর রহমান এবং এনসিটিবির চেয়ারম্যান অধ্যাপক মো. শফিকুর রহমান।

বিবিধি ‘প্রাথমিক এবং মাধ্যমিক স্তরের ইংরেজি ভাষা দক্ষতা মূল্যায়ন’ বিষয়ক পলিসি সেমিনার ১৬ মার্চ প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তরে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। সেমিনার আয়োজন করে ইংলিশ ইন অ্যাকশন (ইআইএ), প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর এবং জাতীয়শিক্ষাক্রম ও পাঠ্যপুস্তক বোর্ড (এনসিটিবি)। সেমিনারে প্রাথমিক ও গণশিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের অতিরিক্ত সচিব এসএম আশরাফুল ইসলাম, অধিদপ্তরের মহাপরিচালক শ্যামল কান্তি ঘোষ, ডিএফআইডি প্রধান সারা কুক, ইংলিশ ইন অ্যাকশন এর টিমলিডার ড. ইউহান বেটিন্কে প্রমুখ উপস্থিত ছিলেন।

Publication: *THE DAILY MANABKANTHA*; Page: 7th; Date: 28-03-14

‘প্রাথমিক এবং মাধ্যমিক স্তরের ইংরেজি ভাষা দক্ষতা মূল্যায়ন’ বিষয়ক পলিসি সেমিনার গত ১৬ মার্চ প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর ঢাকায় অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। অনুষ্ঠানের আয়োজনে ছিল ইংলিশ ইন অ্যাকশন (ইআইএ), প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর এবং জাতীয় শিক্ষাক্রম ও পাঠ্যপুস্তক বোর্ড (এনসিটিবি)। সরকারি কর্মকর্তা, শিক্ষা নীতি প্রণেতা, শিক্ষা বিশেষজ্ঞ ও গবেষক সকলকে মূল্যায়নের ক্ষেত্রে একই প্ল্যাটফর্মে নিয়ে আসা ছিল এই সেমিনারের দক্ষতা। সেমিনারে উপস্থিত ছিলেন প্রাথমিক ও গণশিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের অতিরিক্ত সচিব এসএম আশরাফুল ইসলাম, ডিএফআইডি প্রধান মিস সারা কুক, প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তরের মহাপরিচালক শ্যামল কান্তি ঘোষ, ইংলিশ ইন অ্যাকশনের টিম লিডার ড. ইউহান বেটিন্কে, ইংলিশ অ্যাকশনের প্রকল্প পরিচালক মো. সিদ্দিকুর রহমান এবং এনসিটিবির চেয়ারম্যান অধ্যাপক মো. শফিকুর রহমান।

ASSESSMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS IN THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION SECTORS IN BANGLADESH

Pop-up visit of American Centre at IUB

Seminar on English language skill assessment held

Metro Desk

A day-long seminar on English language skill assessment was held at the conference room of Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) in the capital recently.

English In Action (EIA), a UK-funded programme, in association with DPE and the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) organised the event titled 'English Language Skills Assessment in the Primary and Secondary Education Sectors in Bangladesh'.

The purpose of this seminar was to understand the current assessment principles, policies and practices with a view to exploring the challenges and benefits of adopting a more comprehensive approach to create a wider impact in classrooms.

The seminar also provided a platform to initiate a dialogue amongst the government officials, policy makers, educationists and practitioners in the field of educational assessment, says a press release.

Among others, SM Ashraful Islam, additional secretary of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Sarah Cooke, country representative, DFID, Shyamal Kanti Ghosh, director general of DPE, Dr Johan Bentzen, team leader of EIA, Md Siddiqur Rahman, project director, Project Management Unit of EIA, and Prof. Md Shafiqur Rahman, chairman of NCTB, spoke on the occasion.

Speakers highlighted the different aspects of the best practices of English language assessment in both primary and secondary level. A number of policy recommendations were recorded in the proceedings.

Experts from Delhi University and Open University, UK were also present in the seminar and shared their experience.

ইংরেজি ভাষা দক্ষতা মূল্যায়ন বিষয়ক পলিসি সেমিনার অনুষ্ঠিত

স্টাফ রিপোর্টার: প্রাথমিক ও মাধ্যমিক স্তরের ইংরেজি ভাষা দক্ষতা মূল্যায়ন বিষয়ক পলিসি সেমিনার গত ১৬ই মার্চ প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তরে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। ইংলিশ ইন অ্যাকশন (ইআইএ), প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর, জাতীয় শিক্ষাক্রম ও পাঠ্যপুস্তক বোর্ড (এনসিটিবি) এর আয়োজন করে। ইংরেজি ভাষা দক্ষতা মূল্যায়নের বৈশ্বিক আদর্শ, নীতি এবং প্রচলিত পদ্ধতি অনুধাবন করে বাংলাদেশে ইংরেজি ভাষা দক্ষতা মূল্যায়ন ব্যবস্থার প্রতিবন্ধকতা ও তা উত্তরণে সম্ভাবনার দ্বার উন্মোচন করাই ছিল এই সেমিনারের উদ্দেশ্য। সরকারি কর্মকর্তা, শিক্ষা নীতি প্রণেতা, শিক্ষা বিশেষজ্ঞ ও গবেষক সকলকে মূল্যায়নের ক্ষেত্রে একই প্ল্যাটফর্মে নিয়ে আসা ছিল এই সেমিনারের লক্ষ্য। দিনব্যাপী এই সেমিনারে অংশগ্রহণকারীগণ প্রাথমিক ও মাধ্যমিক স্তরে ইংরেজি ভাষা দক্ষতা মূল্যায়নের ক্ষেত্রে সর্বোৎকৃষ্ট পছন্দ চিহ্নিত করার জন্য বিভিন্ন প্রস্তাব উত্থাপন এবং বিস্তারিত আলোচনা করেন। সেমিনারে প্রাথমিক ও গণশিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের অতিরিক্ত সচিব এসএম আশরাফুল ইসলাম, ডিএফআইডি প্রধান মিস সারা হুক, প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তরের মহাপরিচালক শ্যামল কান্তি ঘোষ, ড. ইউহান বেটিন্কে, টিম লিডার ইংলিশ ইন অ্যাকশন; মো. সিদ্দিকুর রহমান, প্রকল্প পরিচালক, ইংলিশ ইন অ্যাকশন এবং প্রফেসর মো. শফিকুর রহমান, চেয়ারম্যান, এনসিটিবি অংশগ্রহণ করেন। সেমিনারে জাতীয় প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা একাডেমী, এনসিটিবি, ইউনিসেফ, বৃটিশ কাউন্সিল, বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় শিক্ষক, শিক্ষক প্রশিক্ষক, সরকারি-বেসরকারি স্কুলশিক্ষক এবং প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তরের শিক্ষা বিশেষজ্ঞদের পাশাপাশি মূল্যায়নের ক্ষেত্রে বৃহৎ আঙ্গিকে আন্তর্জাতিক ইস্যুগুলো নিয়ে আলোচনা করেন দিল্লি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ইন্ডিয়া; ওপেন ইউনিভার্সিটি, ইউকে এর আন্তর্জাতিক পর্যায়ের বিশেষজ্ঞগণ।

প্রাথমিক এবং মাধ্যমিক স্তরের ইংরেজি ভাষা দক্ষতা মূল্যায়ন বিষয়ে পলিসি সেমিনার ১৬ মার্চ প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর ঢাকায় অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। এর আয়োজন করে ইংলিশ ইন অ্যাকশন (ইআইএ), প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর এবং জাতীয় শিক্ষাক্রম ও পাঠ্যপুস্তক বোর্ড (এনসিটিবি)। সেমিনারে উপস্থিত ছিলেন গণশিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের অতিরিক্ত সচিব এসএম আশরাফুল ইসলাম, ডিএফআইডির প্রধান মিস সারা হুক, প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তরের মহাপরিচালক শ্যামল কান্তি ঘোষ, ইআইএর টিম লিডার ড. ইউহান বেটিন্কে, ইআইএর প্রকল্প পরিচালক মো. সিদ্দিকুর রহমান এবং এনসিটিবির চেয়ারম্যান প্রফেসর মো. শফিকুর রহমান।

প্রাথমিক ও মাধ্যমিক স্তরের ইংরেজি ভাষা দক্ষতা মূল্যায়ন বিষয়ক পলিসি সেমিনার

প্রাথমিক এবং মাধ্যমিক স্তরের ইংরেজি ভাষা দক্ষতা মূল্যায়ন বিষয়ক পলিসি সেমিনার সম্মতি প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর, ঢাকায় অনুষ্ঠিত হয়, যার আয়োজনে ছিল ইংলিশ ইন অ্যাকশন (ইআইএ), প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর এবং জাতীয় শিক্ষাক্রম ও পাঠ্যপুস্তক বোর্ড (এনসিটিবি)। বর্তমানে ইংরেজি ভাষা দক্ষতা মূল্যায়নের বৈশ্বিক আদর্শ, নীতি এবং প্রচলিত পদ্ধতি অনুধাবন করে বাংলাদেশে ইংরেজি ভাষা দক্ষতা মূল্যায়ন ব্যবস্থার প্রতিবন্ধকতা ও তা উত্তরণে সম্ভাবনার দ্বার উন্মোচন করাই ছিল এই সেমিনারের উদ্দেশ্য, যার ইতিবাচক প্রভাব পড়বে একেবারে ক্লাস রুম পর্যন্ত। উপস্থিত ছিলেন এস.এম. আশরাফুল ইসলাম, অতিরিক্ত সচিব, প্রাথমিক ও গণশিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়; সারা হুক, ডিএফআইডি প্রধান; শ্যামল কান্তি ঘোষ, মহা-পরিচালক, প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর; ড. ইউহানবেটিন্কে, টিমলিডার, ইংলিশ ইন অ্যাকশন; মো: সিদ্দিকুর রহমান, প্রকল্প পরিচালক, ইংলিশ ইন অ্যাকশন এবং প্রফেসর মো: শফিকুর রহমান, চেয়ারম্যান, এনসিটিবি।

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