

A Qualitative Observation Study of Primary and  
Secondary Lessons Conducted by Teachers  
Participating in English in Action

Medium-scale qualitative study 2b Practice  
Report 3 : Case Studies

# RESEARCH REPORT

  
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# A Qualitative Observation Study of Primary and Secondary Lessons Conducted by Teachers Participating in English in Action

## Executive summary - 2b Practice

The 2b Practice reports bring together evidence from a qualitative observation study of English language teaching (ELT) aspects in a sample of EIA lessons. The lessons analysed for this study were conducted by teachers who were participating in the pilot phase of the EIA intervention and had undergone English in Action (EIA) training for nine months. The purpose of the observations was to build on the first quantitative observation study of classrooms (Study 2a, see EIA 2011a), which established that a change had occurred in classrooms by showing the extent of the ELT aspects being used. As a qualitative study, the focus of the 2b Practice study was on *how* teachers were implementing approaches they had been learning through the EIA project. Note, the study's sample size means that the findings reported here cannot be taken as representative of all teachers participating in EIA.

Prior to the EIA intervention, most teaching 'did not encourage a communicative approach to learning English' (EIA 2009a, p. 7). Teachers dominated the lessons, doing almost all of the talking. In two-thirds of lessons observed, the majority of language spoken was Bangla, opportunities for students to participate were low, and very few students spoke in English during a lesson. In most classes students were 'not interactive at all' (EIA 2009a, p. 8).

The findings of this study (2b Practice) include evidence of some important changes emerging across a sizeable number of classrooms. The areas in which there has been the greatest degree of change are those where teachers remain very much in control (lesson structure, teacher-led activities and use of EIA materials). Nonetheless, there is evidence of more student-focused activities; some, notably pair and group work, are strongly represented. These relatively 'safe' strategies may be a stepping stone to other communicative practices for many teachers.

The EIA programme appears to be helping some teachers to give the learning of individual students a more prominent place. Instances of monitoring, checking understanding, dealing with errors and feedback all show a concern for student learning which reveals the underlying understanding that effective teaching is not simply a matter of transmitting the right information, but depends on interaction between student and teacher. It will certainly be important to support the development of this aspect of teachers' repertoire as the project develops.

At present, much interaction is at the level of teachers relating to whole classes, or to individuals within the class. However, in several episodes there is a progression to group and pair activities, both of which increase participation and give each student much greater experience of speaking English.

The motivating qualities of EIA resources are increasing participation. Students are listening attentively to spoken audio, and the levels of physical and vocal participation show that songs and rhymes are a popular feature. Teachers are using the resources as an opportunity to promote meaningful use of language. They provide both context and a route into interactive activities. Songs are one way in which EIA-endorsed practices have become embedded in classroom routines, and the use of English in regular and predictable lesson structures shows English employed with communicative purpose. Teachers are not allowing what could be seen as 'ready-made' audio lessons to take control away from them.

Some elements of EIA are already widespread in use and are firmly embedded in the practice of many teachers, while others are being adopted more warily and selectively. This is to be expected. There can, however, be no doubt that EIA is making a difference to the teaching and learning in these classrooms.

## **Executive Summary - 2b Practice Report 3 : Case Studies**

### **a) Introduction and methodology**

The 2b Practice reports bring together evidence from a qualitative observation study of English language teaching (ELT) aspects in a sample of EIA lessons. The lessons analysed for this study were conducted by teachers who were participating in the pilot phase of the EIA intervention and had undergone English in Action (EIA) training for nine months. As a qualitative study, the focus of the 2b Practice study was on *how* teachers were implementing approaches they had been learning through the EIA project.

The third 2b Practice report (Report 3) provides an account of a small number of 'cases' with the intention of showing how particular lessons were implemented. These synopses of the observations, in the form of seven case studies (four Primary and three Secondary), pick out the features of the lessons and relate these to a communicative approach to teaching and learning, which underlies the EIA approach to ELT. The cases were not chosen to be representative or typical of all EIA lessons, but rather as informative of how a whole lesson is put together by teachers and experienced by students.

The cases were considered in terms of: 1) the general environment of the classrooms, 2) the topics covered, 3) the material used by teacher, 4) the general pedagogy and in particular the extent of student focus, and 5) the communicative approach achieved in the lesson. Some of these categories reflect the ELT principles upon which the EIA project draws (EIA 2009b, p. 3):

- communicative purpose
- student-centredness
- interaction
- participation (of all students)
- integrated skills
- grammar in context.

These, in large part, would probably be accepted as elements of general 'good' pedagogy, i.e. pedagogy that builds on our understanding of how children learn in classrooms. Some specifically express elements of ELT aspects (examined in detail Report 2; EIA 2011b).

### **b) Findings - case studies as a group**

Full details on the *environment of the classroom* were not recorded for all cases explored. However, in general, the Primary case study lessons were depicted as noisy and cramped as a result of their small size relative to the number of students (although none of the case studies had classes of approaching 100, something that has been observed). In one case, the environment was described as 'dull' (i.e. poorly lit). Another, in contrast, was described as spacious, bright and sunny. The Secondary classrooms depicted were quieter, and in one case, the classroom layout and relatively small class size enabled the teacher to approach all the students. Although classroom environment is not within the direct remit of the project, any approaches have to be conducted within these constraints.

From the cases explored it is evident that, despite the sometimes difficult conditions, none represented insurmountable barriers for teachers and/or students. Indeed, with cramped conditions and large classes, teachers were still able to organise many kinds of activity that enabled students to participate in the lesson activities, including speaking, listening, reading and writing.

All the case study lessons had clear *topics*, and most had a clear language aim. For example, in a Primary Class 1 lesson the topic was clearly directed to questions around using 'in' and 'on' ('Where is the cow? ... in the field.'). Although all lessons related to *English for Today (ETT)*, some did not always have a clear objective or language feature; for example in Secondary Class 7 lesson, despite dealing with the content in *ETT*, Unit 4, Lesson 1 (on Rafiq and his pen friend in Mongolia), there was no evident language feature.

The EIA approach is different for Primary and Secondary classrooms with regard to *materials*. There are more EIA materials for the Primary teachers to use, and this is reflected in the lessons. Consequently, all Primary case study lessons showed some use of materials other than the textbook (*ETT*), and most contained a variety of those available including posters, audios, flashcards, figurines and real objects introduced by the teacher. One Primary teacher used the full range of these materials, including a game, and in another lesson the teacher introduced real objects to extend the activities. One teacher was also able to operate without a reliance on the audio, including where this is usually routinely used (for opening and closing songs); the teacher was able to get the class to sing these songs without the music from the audio. A different situation was found in the Secondary cases, which is not surprising given the lower provision of, and reliance on, materials in the EIA approach at this level. All three Secondary cases show use of the textbook; one also used the EIA audio, another used non-EIA material in addition to the textbook. All cases nevertheless created interactive activities with opportunities to hear and use English purposefully, as we now go onto discuss.

The *pedagogy* of the cases included interactive elements (with some being fully interactive in their approach) and involved students in using English, mostly through pair or group work. In some of the Primary lessons, despite their size, teachers managed to involve large numbers of students in responding to their questions; one managed to involve approximately a quarter of students in the class. As all used group or pair work, students were given additional chances to practise speaking. Not all of the pair work was so successful in Secondary lessons, with one teacher failing to exploit a good opportunity he set up, reflecting a rather teacher-centred approach through closed questions, but nevertheless creating an interactive, purposeful and coherent lesson. Another Secondary lesson used pair work, but it was insufficiently directed to be as productive as it could have been. Yet this teacher also managed to introduce the idea of involving students in peer assessment, even if it is not exploited adequately because of lack of direction and monitoring. In one class, such was the variety and engagement generated the observer noted the evident enjoyment of the students. This teacher was able to create well-structured and linked activities.

Apart from one Secondary lesson that had no clear objective, there was a learning focus for all activities observed. Although it is possible to find some 'failings' in the pedagogy in all of the lessons, these were usually accompanied by good features, as noted above. In the lesson that might be seen as the most disappointing pedagogically, there was nevertheless praise given to students and some check on understanding, and there were signs of a communicative approach being adopted. Checking student understanding and scaffolding questions, which itself is based on a realisation that the students may not be able to understand, were found in two of the case studies.

All of the lessons featured elements of a *communicative* approach, even if some teachers had not created a communicative language lesson as such. As was noted from the quantitative classroom observation study (Study 2a, see EIA 2011a), English dominated the language used in the class, yet most of the teachers in the case studies used Bangla appropriately to explain instructions and the like. Thus, a Primary or Secondary teacher would use Bangla to clarify an instruction in English, although in one case it was unclear whether the students understood the English when used throughout. Four of the cases showed an integration of all four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), at least in the sense that they took place in the same lesson and focused on the same content. In the two cases (one Primary and one Secondary) that did not include all four skills, listening and speaking were integrated. The other features of a communicative approach found in the cases were:

- students responding in phrases or sentences, rather than just single words (Primary and Secondary lessons)
- the teacher asking open-ended questions, and (in a question-and-answer pattern), students introduced new questions (a Primary lesson)
- personalised questions or those relating to the real life of the students (a Primary and a Secondary lesson)
- authentic activities (a Secondary lesson)
- pre-listening and pre-reading questions to prepare students for what is to come (a Secondary lesson)
- meaning and understanding stressed (a Secondary lesson).

None of the cases exhibited a complete communicative approach but, at this early stage of the intervention, these are real signs of progress in teachers' ELT skills compared to those found in the baseline studies. This is enhanced by the general changes in pedagogy, all of which support a communicative approach, building on the methods and the materials of the EIA programme.

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## 1. Introduction

The EIA Logframe specifies the requirements for the investigation of classroom practice via Indicator 2 (see Table 1). This indicator applies to both Output 1 (Primary intervention) and Output 3 (Secondary intervention).

**Table 1: Output 1 and 3, Indicator 2 - Practice\***

*Indicator 2: Practice - the numbers of teachers evidencing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approaches in their classroom practice*

Indicator	Study	Purpose	Process & Product	Timeline	Completion Date	Persons/ Contractors Responsible
Practice	Medium scale in-depth case studies	Exemplifying more thoroughly how classroom practice has changed, and teacher and pupil perspectives on this.	Video observation and teacher narrative of lessons informing semi-structured interview. Collection of pupil and teacher artefacts (e.g. photographed lesson plans, pupil work books). Collection of evidence (e.g. photographs, audio recordings, oral accounts) gathered by teachers.	January to March 2011	April 2011	To be carried out by TDCs, supported by OU research teams and local support partners.

\*information extracted from EIA (2009c).

Study 2b Practice is a sister study to Study 2a (EIA 2011a). The 2a study was the first large-scale quantitative observation study of teaching and language practices among teachers participating in the EIA Primary and Secondary programmes, carried out three months after the teachers had been introduced to EIA approaches and materials. The 2a report indicated the extent of change observed in the classroom practice of teachers participating in EIA with reference to that observed in baseline studies. However, as with any quantitative study, Study 2a provided limited insight into how and why teachers had or had not changed as a result of the EIA intervention. This qualitative observation study (2b practice) therefore provides more detailed insight into how teachers have changed as a result of EIA.

Study 2b is also a direct follow-up to EIA Baseline Study 3 - *An Observation Study of English Lessons in Primary and Secondary Schools in Bangladesh (EIA 2009a)*. This examined the types of activity taking place in English classes in Bangladesh in 2009, based on a total of 252 classroom observations (162 from Secondary classes and 90 from Primary classes). The 2b classroom observation study thus reports how the EIA project has changed English lessons (as a result of teachers having adopted its approaches) from those observed in the baseline studies.

This third report of the 2b Practice observation study (Report 3 - Case studies) provides an account of a small number of 'cases' (i.e. lessons); in contrast, the second report (Report 2 - Cross-case analysis, see EIA 2011b) considers the nature of ELT aspects promoted by EIA across a sample of 46 lessons. In this report we focus on seven cases selected to show how particular teachers implement the EIA approach in Primary and Secondary schools in the various classes. The focus, therefore, is on the details of what is happening in particular classrooms, rather than the overall extent of change.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Analysis

The case study analysis, which looked at seven lessons (four Primary and three Secondary), involved picking out features of the lessons and relating these to a communicative teaching and learning, which underlie the EIA approach. This analysis drew on the classroom and school photographs and diagrams, as well as the classroom observation schedules.

As Report 2 (Cross-case analysis, see EIA 2011b) describes the methodology for the observation instruments and procedures and the data collection itself, in this report we describe the additional case study analysis procedure and the focus of the observation.

When the analysts were coding a sample of lessons (which we regard as 'cases') for cross-case analysis (see Report 2), they became familiar with them and so they each offered one of the six or seven they had analysed as a possible case study. This resulting set of cases were discussed to examine the extent to which it illustrated both Primary and Secondary lessons (in several of the classes in each), and a range of the ELT aspects promoted by EIA. They were not chosen to be representative or typical of all EIA lessons, but rather as informative of how a whole lesson is put together by teachers and experienced by students. As such, each case study intended to put into the context of single lesson the range of ELT aspects that are examined in Report 2. In Report 2 each case was analysed in terms of its ELT aspects (see codes presented in Appendix 1); for the case study analysis, the analysts provided a more general view of how each case exhibited the following general features of ELT lessons, such as:

- *Activity linking*: speaking, reading, writing, etc. (tasks not isolated without connection) as parts of a sequence.
- *Active learning*: how students are doing things that help learning (e.g. pair/group work; games; writing and reading activities).
- *Teacher-centredness*: lesson led by teacher ideas and dominated by his or her activity and talk, with minimal single word responses from students (collectively or individually).
- *Student-centredness*: lesson builds on students' ideas and responses, including their learning needs and interests.

In the Section 3 (Findings) the cases are discussed in relation to these general features.

In using a case study approach (Yin 2003), the focus is on the richness of the lesson, within the limitations of the data collected and noted by the observer. Although the analysis draws on general ideas of pedagogy (e.g. active learning) and ELT practice and theory, data collection limitations mean that these cases are more like 'snapshots' than comprehensive views of the lessons. The cases presented focus upon exemplification rather than on representativeness. They should be judged in terms of how practitioners, and those who work with them, would see in them elements of the practices they use.

### 2.2 Focus of the observation

As indicated in Report 1 (2b Practice - Synopsis; EIA 2011c), the baseline studies show classrooms devoid of the use of English, little student activity or interaction, and consequently little chance for students to use English. The large-scale quantitative observation study (Study 2a, see EIA 2011a), carried out after three months of the teachers being introduced to EIA approaches and materials, indicated a transformation in this situation. The study showed that most of the teacher talk being in English and improved student talk (mostly in English), with this brought about in part by the use of student pair and group work. Although there were some differences between Primary and Secondary lessons observed, the changes were similar in both. In addition, the study of teacher and student

perceptions of the teaching and learning of English (Study 2b3b, see EIA 2011d) showed that there was a positive response to the ideas and activities of the EIA approach. The study also indicated that there were some areas where the project had yet to win over students and, to a slightly lesser extent, teachers, in particular with regard to dealing with error correction, repetition and grammar.

This qualitative observation study intended to give the EIA project more information about both the kinds of activities observed in quantitative Study 2a, and the way in which the attitudes of students and teachers were evident in their classroom practices. Thus the project needed to understand the *nature* of classroom activity and in particular: what the English used by both students and teachers was focused on, whether or not students understood the teachers' use of English, what pair and group work involved, whether or not grammar was a focus of lessons, how errors were dealt with, and the nature of repetition.

Report 2 of the 2b Practice study (EIA 2011b) provides an account of the cross-analysis of a sample of 46 observed lessons analysed (28 Primary and 18 secondary). This analysis considered the various aspects of ELT promoted by EIA and the way teachers and students used and participated in these. This analysis was a general attempt to gauge the extent of the ELT aspects relative to each other.

As noted earlier, the intention of the case study analysis reported here was to show *how* particular lessons were implemented. This is done by both presenting synopses of the observations in the form of seven case studies (four Primary and three Secondary). The analysis tried to pick out the features of the lessons and relate these to a communicative approach to teaching and learning, which underlies the EIA approach to ELT.

After providing details of the individual case studies (Subsections 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3), we reflect on them as a group (Subsection 3.4). Viewed together they illustrate the range of pedagogies found in EIA classrooms, whilst making no claim to represent all classrooms observed as part of the EIA project, nor indeed the sample analysed in Report 2 (EIA 2011b). This reflection was done by considering: 1) the general environment of the classrooms, 2) the topics they covered, 3) the material used by teachers, 4) the general pedagogy and in particular the extent of student focus, and 5) the communicative approach achieved in the lessons. Some of these categories reflect the ELT principles upon which the EIA project draws (EIA 2009b, p.3):

- communicative purpose
- student-centredness
- interaction
- participation (of all students)
- integrated skills
- grammar in context.

These, in large part, would probably be accepted as elements of general 'good' pedagogy, i.e. pedagogy that builds on our understanding of how children learn in classrooms. Some elements specifically express ELT aspects (examined in detail in Report 2); for example, integrated skills, grammar in practice, and to some extent, communicative purpose (all good learning activities lessons have a purpose which is understood by the learner, but here the particular focus is on communicating using the skills of speaking, listening, etc.). Some are simply general elements of pedagogy that all good teachers should strive to attain, such as student-centredness, interaction and participation. It is in this spirit that the categories of pedagogy and communicative approach are distinguished.

## 3. Findings

### 3.1 Overview of case studies

Table 2 (below) summarises the main features of each case study reported using the five categories outlined in Section 2 (environment, topic, material used, pedagogy, communicative approach).

**Table 2: Overview of case studies**

<i>Case study</i>	<i>Environment</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Pedagogy</i>	<i>Communicative</i>
77 Class 1	Noisy	'in', 'on'; Simple questions: 'where is the cow?'	EIA poster, audio, real object	Clear aim range of activities Group work Many students involved	Use of phrases & sentence Integrated skills
28 Class 3	Noisy, cramped	Asking answering simple questions	EIA poster, figurines	Set scene Interactive: pair & group work Scaffolding	Teacher use of English with appropriate use of Bangla Modelling dialogue Personalising questions
38 Class 3	Noisy, dull (i.e. poorly lit), limited room for teacher to move around	Number work	EIA poster, flashcards, audio	Structured & linked activities Students engaged Group work Variety of students answering	Teacher use of English with appropriate use of Bangla Integrated skills
47 Class 3	Spacious, bright, noisy	At the shop	Poster, audio	Procedural Closed questions (mainly) Scaffolding	Teacher use of English with appropriate use of Bangla Modelling dialogue Students generate new questions
60 Class 9	N/A	Tribal people	Audio	Coherent purpose Teacher talk dominates Closed questions Interactive	Teacher use of English with appropriate use of Bangla Integrated skills Error correction moderated Authentic questions Checking understanding
14 Class 9	Quiet	Mother Teresa	Non-EIA material	Closed questions Well linked activities Pair & group work Students presented Praise	Teacher use of English with appropriate use of Bangla Interactive to single students Integrated skills Personalisation
59 Class 7	Quiet	Pen friend Synonyms		Closed questions Checks understanding Pair work Peer assessment (limited)	Teacher use of English with appropriate use of Bangla Authentic activities Pre-reading & listening questions Use of sentences

## 3.2 Primary lessons

### 3.2.1 Case study 77, Class 1

This was a Class 1 English lesson in a mixed government Primary school in Lalmonirhat Sadar, conducted by a female EIA teacher during October 2010. The class was mixed (boys and girls). The class ran for 45 minutes from 10am to 10.45am. The number of pupils in the class was 44 of 50 (i.e. 6 pupils were absent): 21 were girls and 23 were boys.

The school is situated behind the central mosque of the Lalmonirhat Sadar, near the Khochabari Bazar and Upazila Resource Centre (URC) and is very noisy.

**Photo 1: Case study 77, Class 1, Primary**



This lesson focused on the prepositions of 'on' and 'in', using an EIA poster, the English for Today (EfT) textbook and realia (box/bag) provided by the teacher. On introducing the prepositions, the teacher reviewed the prior knowledge of the students, through the use of a poster.

#### *Excerpt 1*

T: what animals we see in a picture?

S: (Morsedul) cow

T: yes, next

S: goat

T: yes, next

S: cat, rat

The teacher then demonstrated the meaning of 'on' and 'in' by using the box and bag, as well as the poster and textbook. Despite the young age of the learners (Class 1; the students are therefore 5 or 6 years old), the teacher succeeded in getting responses in English from both the whole class and individuals.

The teacher used a variety of ways of modelling and practising structure through the use of the poster, then realia and finally the textbook, and showed a clear sense of direction in the lesson, for example:

*Excerpt 2*

T: Mina come here. Where is the cow in the poster?

Mina: in the field.

T: Thank you.

T: Morsedul where is the cow?

Morsedul: a cow is in the field.

*Excerpt 3*

T: what is in my hand?

Ss: Box

T: what is I put on the box and what will be?

Ss: A fish on a box.

T: Rokon (A S name) come here? When I put chalk on a box, what will be?

Rokon: A chalk on a box.

*Excerpt 4*

T: Hamidul standup and what is seen in the book?

Hamidul: A bag on a box.

T: thank you

Another S: a rat on a cot.

The analysis also showed that the teacher attempted to make the class student-centred by asking questions (as above), involving as many students as possible, for example:

*Excerpt 5*

T: who are not saying yet? You....

T: say something.

S: A cat on a mat.

The students also worked in groups, practising the structures while the teacher monitored them.

*Excerpt 6*

T: now you are sitting on a group and asked each other

Ss: divided in groups and Teacher monitoring the Ss activities

T: moving around the class.....

Group work continues.....

A strong aspect of this lesson was that the teacher insisted on students speaking in phrases, occasionally sentences, rather than simply focusing on vocabulary as has been seen in many cases in the Primary classrooms, for example:

*Excerpt 7*

T: please look at me and say with me. A bag on a box, A hen in a hut, A cat on a mat.

There is some evidence of the teacher attempting to integrate listening and speaking through use of the audio, however few details were recorded by the observer on this part of the lesson. Overall, the teacher tried to engage the students with a mix of individual, group and whole class interaction and appeared to effectively teach the use of 'on' and 'in' through a range of activities and materials.

### 3.2.2 Case study 28, Class 3

This was a Class 3 English lesson in a mixed government Primary school in Chowgacha, conducted by a female EIA teacher during October 2010. The class was mixed (boys and girls). The class ran for 41 minutes from 10:07am to 10:48am. The number of pupils in the class was 56 of 64 (i.e. 8 pupils were absent): 33 were girls and 23 were boys.

The classroom was situated next to a road and there was constant noise from the traffic. The classroom was poorly lit. There was some space for the teacher to move between the rows of benches (see Photo 2).

**Photo 2: Case study 28, Class 3, Primary**



The lesson given was from an early stage of the Class 3 textbook (Lesson 2). At this stage students are barely beyond greetings, numbers, colours and simple question and answers, etc. The lesson in the textbook is about asking and answering simple questions.

Most of the lesson was conducted in English; Bangla was used appropriately throughout the lesson as a way of reinforcing instructions or questions to the class or clarifying. The teacher set the scene well by reviewing simple questions from the previous lesson (Lesson 1) (without using the textbook) and by bringing students to the front and getting them to work in pairs; this was all conducted in English.

The class then moved on to practise colours and to the question forms in the textbook, focusing on the communicative aspects in pairs (and a group at one stage) while covering and using the tasks in the *EFT* textbook. There was a logical progression to the lesson which led to a freer-practice role play at the end, just before the routine closing song. EIA audio was not used in the lesson as the teacher was unable to use the blockrocker (she had not been able to use it for some time.) However, she sang the songs and clapped the rhythm without the audio playing.

The classroom activities used by this teacher show a predominance of closed questions: this is neither surprising nor inappropriate given the level of the students' English. It is unlikely that the students would have had the language ability or skills as yet for creative and or spontaneous responses required by open questions. The teacher did, however, include some open questions in the lesson.

The teacher began the lesson with the usual greetings, which were directed at different individual students, and the routine of the song (without the blockrocker) had clearly been established, with the teacher clapping and maintaining rhythm.

The teacher was quick to reformulate language when something was not understood, as at the beginning of the lesson:

*Excerpt 1*

T: Who is Tanmoy? (to the Ss)

Ss: (Mix and chaos sound, not understood)

T: Tanmoy is a \_\_\_\_\_?

Ss: Student

Evidence of student-centredness and active learning were provided when the teacher called several individual students and asked a number of simple, generally closed questions and included (but not solely) questions and lexis from the last lesson. She followed this by bringing two students to the front of the class to model the dialogue. This example of modelling the target language was also student-centred in its approach. The teacher was careful about managing the class and seemed to be clear in her instructions, reminding the students (in Bangla) to speak loudly. The observer recorded that '...when a student made a mistake in response to a question, the teacher helped him to correct himself'.

The teacher repeated this activity with a number of different pairs of students. The observer noted that the '...students enjoyed this activity', and this was probably because of the teacher's interaction with the class.

The teacher also used some real objects in the classroom (book, bottle and pen) as a way of asking questions about colours. She then moved on to ask individual students (in English) what their favourite colours were, thus allowing for a degree of openness and personalisation in their response and reviewing previously-taught vocabulary.

Despite not being able to use the EIA audio with the blockrocker, EIA materials were used. An EIA poster was used effectively (to engage students in group work) and so too were the figurines - these being clearly related to the characters in the unit of the textbook. Some simple choral work was also used effectively at this stage of the lesson to practise colours.

The teacher used the poster to ask several closed questions around colours again, and then moved on to encourage students to talk about what is happening in the picture. Although we do not know the extent of the student interaction here, the observer implied that some did take place:

*Excerpt 2*

T: Everybody, attention please. This is a .....? (pointing to poster)

Ss: Building

.....continuing

Teacher asked about the different colour and activities of the poster and Ss answered. Teacher also helped to describe the activities of the poster involving the Ss and they participated spontaneously.

The teacher then asked the students to focus on the textbook again and used the figurines to model the dialogue from the book. The students also used this as a cue for chorusing.

The practised language and question form was then extended when the teacher put students into pairs and asked them to choose questions and answers they had learnt. This is the kind of freer-practice activity that EIA encourages and frequently occurs in the EIA activity books for Primary classes. This was modelled to the class first; then the students role-played the dialogue in pairs. The observer noted that 'Ss enjoyed this activity very much'.



Before singing the goodbye song (from the EIA audio materials) and warmly saying goodbye to the students, the teacher conducted a brief writing exercise which practised the forms used verbally during the lesson. Again, the observer noted that the students were 'much interested' in this activity. Overall this appears to be a promising lesson. With fairly minimal input from the textbook, the teacher was able to make the lesson interesting, practical and reasonably communicative, clearly drawing on some of the EIA classroom materials and techniques promoted by the programme.

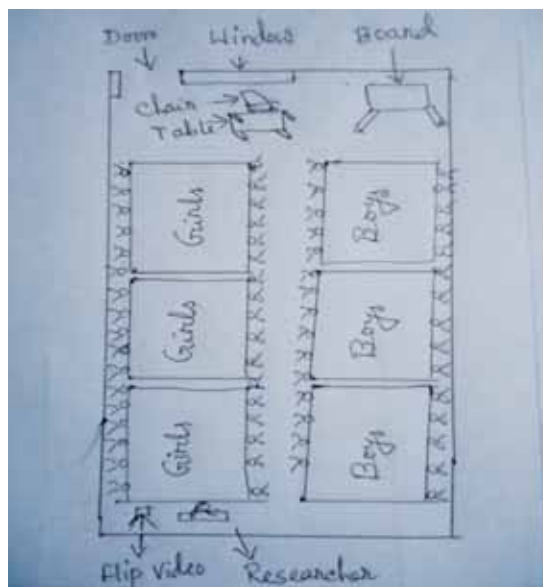
### 3.2.3 Case study 38, Class 3

This was a Class 3 English lesson in a mixed government Primary school in Burichong, Comilla, conducted by a male EIA teacher during October 2010. The class was mixed (boys and girls). The class ran for 35 minutes from 12:25 to 1:00 pm. The number of pupils in the class was 40 of 48 (i.e. 8 pupils were absent): 21 were girls and 19 were boys.

The classroom layout provided by the observer (see sketch in Photo 3a) showed sets of tables - one for girls and one for boys - with a central aisle separating them. The teacher's desk was at one end of the room. The layout of the classroom inhibited the ability of the teacher's ability to move around the class and to interact with each pupil individually as he could only move up or down the aisle in the middle. However, the arrangement of the student's tables was useful for organising groups (see Photo 3b).

With regards to the environment, the observer commented that: the classroom was 'very dull' (i.e. poorly lit) and cramped and had a small board; there was external noise (from other classrooms); and the school seemed to be in bad repair: 'the school is suffering from physical problems. One building is declared damaged and not used.'

**Photo 3a: Case study 38, Class 3, Primary - classroom layout**



**Photo 3b: Case study 38, Class 3, Primary**



With regard to the conduct of the lesson, the observer noted that the teacher seemed motivated, that he was enjoying teaching and that almost all the time he tried to speak English. Notwithstanding the physical problems of outside noise and the layout, the teacher tried to control the whole class and involved almost all the students, engaging with both the boys and girls.

In general, the observer thought that the students seemed to enjoy the lesson, that they were willing to participate in the activities, and that they seemed to be following the lesson. However, although they attempted to speak English while making dialogues, they mostly spoke in Bangla the rest of the time.

The lesson was based on number work in English. It was well structured with the teacher using linked activities to explore the use of the English words for numbers. During the lesson the teacher made use of an EIA poster and flash cards to match number and word (e.g. '5' and 'five'), the board, the textbook and the bingo game (which is in the EIA activity guide and on the audio). He asked the pupils to write numbers and words in their notebooks. He varied the lesson between informal calling out of answer and formal use of textbook and notebook.

The warm-up activity greeting and attendance checking was carried out mostly in English, although the teacher gave one general instruction in Bangla:

*Excerpt 1*

T: Good after students. How are you?

Ss: I am fine thank you.

...

T: I am also fine, thank you. Sit down everybody.

...

Teacher: Shoja hoye bosho. [Sit straight]

...

Teacher was taking attendance and students were responding to him one by one.

T: Thank you everybody.

Following the warm-up activity, the teacher engaged with the whole class and used a poster showing numbers hanging on the board at the end of the class to introduce the numbers. He asked a series of closed questions to different students about what the number was as he pointed at it. Sometimes he would ask all the students and they all responded; sometimes he would ask a specific student; sometimes he would ask them to raise their hand if they knew. The teacher involved both girls and boys at the individual level. When a student was correct the teacher would ask everybody to clap for them.

*Excerpt 2*

T: Everybody look at the blackboard. Who can say, what is it?

Ss: 6

T: Who can say? Raise your hand, you ... what is it?

Girl: 6

T: Thank you. What is it?

Boy: 6

T: Thank you. Sit down. Everybody clap them.

The teacher also instigated some small group work in this, pairing up a weak student with a good student to give the answer. He spoke a mix of English and Bangla to do this:

*Excerpt 3*

T: Now we will make some small groups. You are a group, You are a group... Shudhu ei 2 group er ora bolbe. [Only these 2 groups will speak] Ebare amra eta bolbo. What is it? You. Speak loudly.

Boy: 11.

At this point the teacher wrote the topic of the lesson on the board and instructed the students to open their textbooks and to look at page 68, Lesson 26. First a boy was asked to stand and read the numbers 1 to 10 in English and then a girl was asked to read 11 to 20. Everybody was told to listen.

The next part of the lesson was carried out in groups using EIA flash cards. Students were instructed to match the card with the number [5] with the card with the word [five]. Again, the teacher spoke a mix of English and Bangla to do this. During this the teacher monitored their activity and helped them.

*Excerpt 4*

T: ... Now we will do exercise-matching, match the number with words.

T: There are some flash cards. Do you know the flash cards? Tomra ki egulu chino?

Students: Ji, sir.

T: You are a group. You are a group ... Now listen to me, there are 2 kinds of cards, 1 as number and 1 as word. Understand? Now you will match numbers with words. Number-er sathe word-er mil koro. Tomader haate 2 ta kore card ase, pashapashi bondhuder sathe mil koro. Mil kore dekhao, ami dekhsi.

After this group activity, two students were called to the front of the class and given the cards. They were asked to hold up matching cards (word and number) in turn. When they had finished the teacher asked everybody to clap for them.

The teacher altered the tempo of the lesson again by instructing the students to write in their notebooks the number or word that he wrote on the board. As before, he spoke a mix of English and Bangla and he monitored their activity, helping and praising and making any necessary corrections. As they finished, the students stood up and showed their notebooks to the teacher.

For the final activity of the lesson, the teacher instructed the students in the playing of the bingo game, again in a mix of English and Bangla.

*Excerpt 5*

T: Sit down. Now we will play a game. It's called bingo game. First I write some numbers in this blackboard and ... Listen to me ... from this numbers you will write only four numbers as you like. Amar number gulu theke protteke 4 ta no. likhbe, keu karota dekhbe na. Tarpur ami jei no. ta katbo tumio seta katba. Evabe jar no. kata shesh hoye jabe se bolbe bingo and you will be winner. Right? Everybody understand?

With this game, the teacher wrote a string of numbers on the board and the students chose four to write in their notebooks. Then the teacher cut the deck of flash cards to reveal a number and the students looked to see if they had written it in their notebook. When a student had seen their four numbers they shouted 'bingo' and had to read out their numbers. Everyone clapped for the winner, who would then cut to show a new number and the game continued. It is notable that, according to the EIA activity guide, the teacher should have called out the numbers. Arguably this is a gentler introduction and some students get the chance to use the English words when they read them out (if they win). Hopefully they will then progress to playing the game with the numbers called out. So, perhaps the teacher can be seen to be making the game possible for his class with a view to aural comprehension in future.

The teacher closed the lesson by reviewing the relationship between numbers (1, 2, 3...) and words (one, two, three...). Some students wanted to continue playing the game. The teacher thanked them and closed the lesson.

The teacher maintained a strong lesson structure throughout around the topic of number work. He linked formal and informal, passive and active activities and encouraged the integrated use of all four

skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing) to communicative purpose. While there was a great deal of teacher-talk time, this was well directed both towards specific task instructions and in response to student engagement in them. Good levels of student motivation were achieved by a teacher who was in control of his class throughout the lesson. The teacher gave adequate praise and encouragement to students throughout the lesson and also encouraged the students to give positive feedback when fellow students answered or presented something correctly.

This had the appearance of a coherent lesson involving a range of appropriate communicative interactions, engaging a good proportion of the students and encouraging their active participation and learning. Students followed the teacher's instructions and were able to engage in small groups to practise their communicative number skills. The teacher (most) successfully facilitated a student-centred end to the lesson with the use of a bingo game which fully engaged all the students in the topic, such that some students did not want the lesson to end.

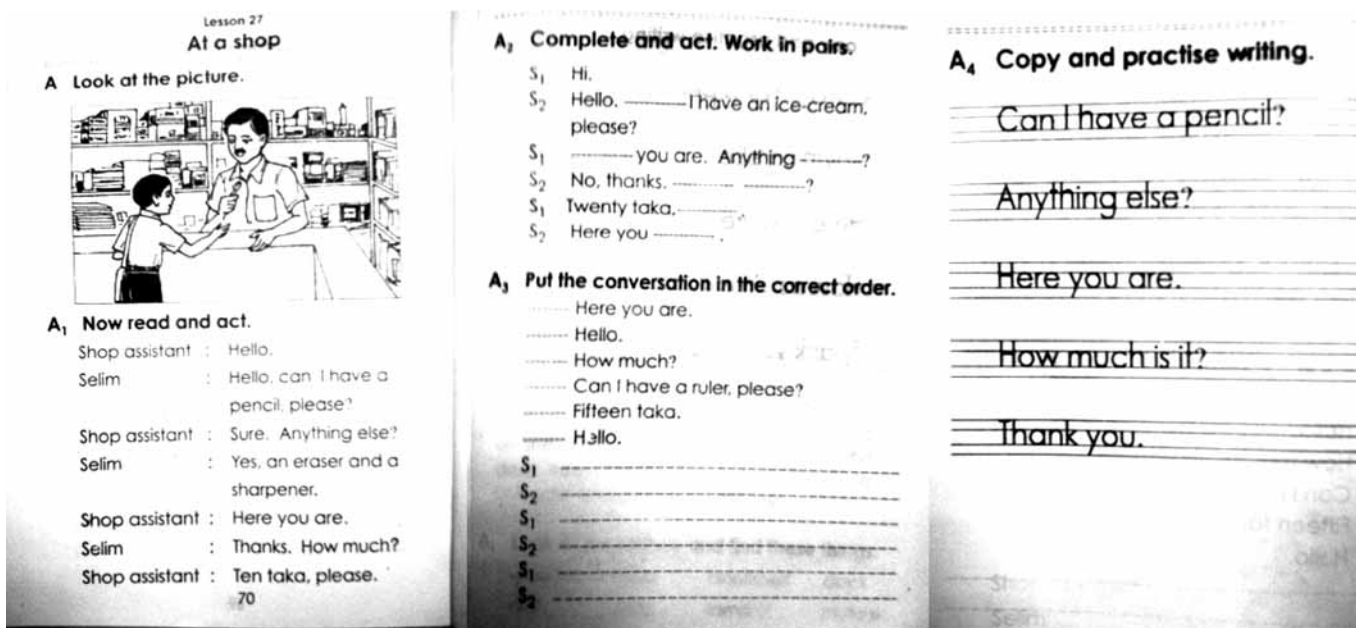
### 3.2.4 Case study 47, Class 3

This was a Class 3 English lesson in a mixed government Primary school in Laxmipur Sadar, conducted by a female EIA teacher during October 2010. The class was mixed (boys and girls). The class ran for 45 minutes from 11:00am to 11:45am. The number of pupils in the class was 40 of 53 (i.e. 13 pupils were absent): 25 were girls and 15 were boys.

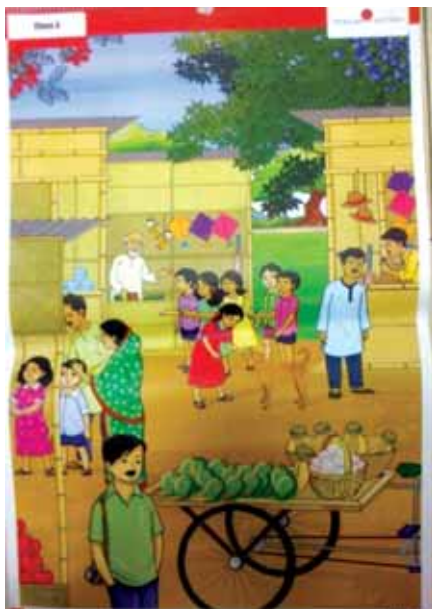
The observer noted that the classroom was spacious, bright and sunny, but noisy as result of activity in the adjacent classrooms. EIA materials (poster, iPod Nano and audio) were used in conjunction with the *EFT* textbook. The male and female students' seating arrangement was mixed, and in general the relationship between the teacher and students appeared collaborative to the observer.

The lesson given was from the Class 3 textbook (Lesson 27). The title of the lesson was 'At a shop' (see Photo 4). During the lesson the teacher used the following EIA materials: (1) a poster (see Photo 5); (2) three audio files (hello song; Class 3, Lesson 27, 'At a shop'; goodbye song); and possibly the script for the audio (but this is unclear in the observer's notes).

Photo 4: Case study 47, Class 3, Primary - EFT textbook extract, 'At the shop', used in lesson



**Photo 5: Case study 47, Class 3, Primary - Poster used in lesson**



The observer noted that the teacher predominantly conducted the class in English, with some task instructions in Bangla. The Bangla talk in the classroom was limited and appropriately used to clarify task instructions around role-play and practicing dialogues (communicative English). Initiation, response, and evaluation (IRE) patterns that dominate conventional classroom talk were evident in this lesson despite the teacher's possible desire and/or ELT training to enact more student-centred pedagogies. The teacher called on the student(s) (through closed questions), the student(s) responded and the teacher evaluated the response. The evaluation was sometimes verbal praise or silent (i.e. no correction, meaning the response is most likely correct).

The classroom activities appear to be largely structural and procedural with routines more or less familiar to the students. Throughout the lesson, the teacher asked questions in English and students responded in English (English Question, English Answer). On each occasion, these were closed questions or questions requiring students to spell, for example, the word 'pencil' or 'sharpener'. The teacher asked approximately 30 closed questions in the 45-minute lesson. Of the 30 questions, 5 were choral responses and the other 25 were individual students responding.

Students were required to 'stand up, sit down' throughout the lesson, responding to the teacher's closed questions or when coming up to the front of the classroom to model dialogues in their textbook or the dialogues from the audio.

A communicative approach was evident when students were working either in pairs up front or with the teacher to model the dialogue from the textbook. But importantly, when working from the poster (at the beginning of the lesson), the students had to ask questions not relying on their textbook or having heard (immediately preceding) the dialogue from the audio. This was scaffolding by the teacher and an example of active learning. The excerpt below demonstrates how Rakib does this by looking at the fruit on the poster (Photo 5).

*Excerpt 1*

T: Hello Rakib.

R: Hello uncle, hello can I have a banana please?

T: Sure, anything else?

R: Mangoes.

T: Here you are.

R: How much?

T: Ten Taka please. Thank you.

Another student (Rinki) does the same and asks, 'Can I have a kite, please?'

Individual students were speaking English (not choral) for roughly 13% of the class time, and 12 individual students (of 40 or over a quarter) spoke during this time. Four students were called up to the front to speak three or more times, while two students were called up twice and five other students called to the front spoke once. It is unclear from the observer's notes whether the other 29 students spoke in English at all except during the 5 choral responses noted above.

Pair work was observed in the lesson twice. The first time students were instructed to look at the poster with their partner was at the beginning of the lesson. It is unclear whether they discussed the poster in English and/or Bangla. The second time they were asked to do pair work, in relation to the 'at the shop' dialogue, they listened. The teacher instructed them to 'talk to your friend, face-to-face.' The observer's notes indicate that the students did not understand what they were supposed to do. Then the teacher explained in Bangla that one student would be the shopkeeper and one would be the customer. The notes indicate that the students were doing this, but that they were not doing it loudly enough. So the teacher told them to do it louder. Near the end of the lesson the students were instructed to do pair work again around a writing prompt the teacher put on the board. They were instructed to write the pair work in their notebook. Again, it is unclear whether the students did or did not work in pairs as this was the last 4 minutes of the class. The English the teacher wrote on the board was incorrect English (see the textbook extract in Photo 4):

*Excerpt 2*

Fill in the gap.

Hi,

Hellow \_\_\_\_ I have an icecream

\_\_\_\_\_ you are, anything \_\_\_\_\_?

No, thanks, \_\_\_\_\_?

Students sang both the hello and good bye song.

Overall, about a quarter of the students were speaking a reasonable amount of English in the class and most students had considerable time to listen to English being spoken correctly (hello and goodbye song, as well as the audio dialogue and some modelling from the teacher and students). The lesson could have been more communicative. From the observer's notes the teacher had many opportunities to ask more open-ended questions or to prompt students to speak in complete sentences or even expand on the dialogues modelled, but this did not happen. The additional English spoken as result of using the poster seemed to come from the students, not the teacher (using words like kite, banana and mango).

While more English is being used in this classroom, and the lesson was more student-centred than those reported in Baseline study 3 (EIA 2009a), it appears that many students did not get the chance to talk in English for real communicative purposes and the teacher is still working to embody the ELT principles offered by EIA. Throughout the lesson the teacher controlled the regulative register as the children practiced dialogues, and sometimes made corrections through an IRE format, if the child who was speaking was not 'performing' correctly.

Also, it appears that the teacher did not use the audio script provided (at least in this lesson) to extend her CLT and the opportunities for students to extend their English vocabulary (using words like fruits, eggs, flowers, vegetables, tomatoes, numbers, money equivalents, etc.). It is not clear what day of the lesson it is, but judging from the fact that the dialogue listened to is about pencils, it would appear to be near the end of the lesson cycle (this part of the dialogue is third in a series of four for the lesson). By this point in the series more English language should have or could have been incorporated into various aspects of the lesson. The teacher could also have referred to the audio scripts, as well as the textbook, when writing on the board to extend the opportunities for pair work and students' writing in English and to make sure the English she modelled was correct.

### 3.3 Secondary lessons

#### 3.3.1 Case study 60, Class 9

This was a Class 9 English lesson in a mixed government high school in Nalchity, conducted by a male EIA teacher during October 2010. The class was mixed (boys and girls). The class ran for 1 hour 15 minutes from 10:30am to 11:45am. The number of pupils in the class was 32 of 45 (i.e. 13 pupils were absent): 21 were girls and 11 were boys.

The classroom layout involved two central rows of desks facing the teacher's desk at the front, and two rows parallel to the side walls on each side of the room. This arrangement meant that no student had more than one other student between him/her and the teacher and there was room for the teacher to move around the class and talk to individual students, something which he did in this lesson. Girls and boys sat separately, on opposite sides of the classroom.

The lesson was based on a chapter of the *EFT* textbook for Class 9-10, but the teacher went beyond what is in the textbook, both by introducing strategies for presenting and practicing the language, and by using the associated EIA audio.

There was a good deal of teacher talk, most of which was task-focused. This included task instructions, setting the scene for an activity and modelling language. The highest proportion of talk recorded was given to questions asked in English and eliciting an English response. On the whole, because they were linked to a particular information text, these were closed questions. For example:

#### *Excerpt 1*

T: What type of house of traditional Eskimo used?

Ss: Igloo.

Questions were directed to the class and individual students, although most were answered by individual students. In one section of the lesson, students had the opportunity to engage in dialogue with each other, though only one pair at a time, presenting to the class. The opportunity for all the class to rehearse the dialogue was missed. On the other hand, students did undertake a textbook task collaboratively - so there was some successful implementation of pair work.

Although the teacher made some use of Bangla to introduce and explain activities, the overwhelming majority of the language recorded was English, though there is insufficient evidence that the students understood it.

After a greeting, a poster was used to remind students of work carried out in a previous lesson on the subject of 'tribal peoples' - a relatively rare link to a previous lesson. Students remembered this work and it was used as an introduction to the next textbook lesson, which is on 'the Eskimos' (Lesson 2). The main activity of the first part of this lesson involved transferring information from a short prose text into a table. Instead of focusing on the written text, the teacher used the EIA audio version. He did not

prepare the students for listening, beyond telling them to listen carefully and warning them that he would be asking questions. After a first listen, students began to do the task in pairs but the teacher soon asked if they needed to hear the audio again, and he played it. This section of the lesson illustrates the emphasis on meaning and understanding evident throughout the lesson, and in context the comprehension check, 'Do you understand it?', seems to be more than tokenism.

Given that the students were writing information into a table, referring to the printed text and working in pairs, this activity is an example of the integration of literacy/reading and listening skills, and possibly oral skills too. This integration was extended as the students were asked orally to answer questions on the basis of the information in their notebook ('khata'):

*Excerpt 2*

T: Now I ask some question and you answer the question from your notebook (khata).

T: What type of house of traditional Eskimo used?

Ss: Igloo.

T: What type of [...] modern Eskimo used?

Ss: Bricks.

Towards the end of the lesson, students were asked individually to write a paragraph about what they had learnt, building the written text on the foundation of experience of both written and spoken language. Before that, and following the question and answer session, pairs of students were invited to perform similar dialogues in front of the class. Although the teacher modelled the exchange, students did not follow his lead slavishly and at times they used English in quite a creative way, producing some relatively lengthy utterances and exchanges.

*Excerpt 3*

G3: I am Santa.

G4: I am Rabea. Now we discuss about our dialogue.

G3: Hello Rabea, how are you?

G4: I am fine and you?

G3: I am fine. Can I ask you something?

G4: Yes, of course, what purpose?

G3: About the Eskimo. What kinds of house that traditional Eskimo used?

G4: Igloo house.

G3: What type of food.

G4: Whatever they get.

The variation between the dialogues of different pairs suggests an authentic quality of asking and answering 'real' questions, rather than parroting a prepared dialogue. The teacher did not comment on any of the students' grammatical transgressions, implicitly encouraging their fluency and experimentation.

Although several pairs had the chance to practise in this way, students did not rehearse the dialogue in pairs or as a whole class, so unfortunately the majority of students had no chance to speak. It is also worth noting that the boys were initially reluctant to present a dialogue and most of the students speaking in this section are girls.



This learning segment concluded when, as described above, the students each wrote their own paragraph about Eskimos, before, right at the end of the lesson, the teacher began work on the next topic in the textbook, 'the Garos'.

There is a strong sense of coherence and purpose to this lesson. Everything was centred on the information in the core text, which is handled in a number of ways: as an aural and written text for comprehension, as data to be manipulated and reformed in a table, as the subject matter of a question and answer dialogue and finally, when the students are thoroughly familiar with it, as a new (and shorter) prose text.

Several features identify the lesson with communicative pedagogy. The majority of the language used was English, and it was used with communicative purpose (e.g. question and answer/dialogues). Written and spoken forms were integrated almost throughout. Although much of the activity was focused on the teacher, there were times where students took centre stage (e.g. presenting dialogues, answering questions) and undertook tasks in their own way (e.g. presenting information as a table, writing a paragraph) and worked collaboratively; all features indicative of a more student-centred approach. Students interacted and participated, though their participation could have been a greater by the simple inclusion of whole-class pair work, for which the existing activities would have more than prepared the students.

There is a sense from the baseline studies (EIA 2009a) that students in Class 9/10 did not improve over time. Further to this, there is often anecdotal feedback that the textbook is too difficult at this level. However, this class seems to be coping when they are supported by the EIA listening materials, which is positive.

### 3.3.2 Case study 14, Class 9

This was a Class 9 English lesson in a government girls high school in Monohordi, conducted by a male EIA teacher during October 2010. The class ran for 45 minutes from 10:30am to 11:15am. The number of pupils in the class was 20 of 55 (i.e. 33 pupils were absent); all were girls.

The school where this lesson was observed was located in a quiet place near the capital, Dhaka. This particular lesson was about Mother Teresa from Class 9/10 *EIT* textbook. The lesson has a set of activities designed to practice listening, speaking and writing. It also includes a number of pictures including that of Mother Teresa.

**Photo 6: Case study 14, Class 9, Secondary**



It was notable that the teacher conducted the whole lesson in English except occasionally when he was organising a group activity (e.g. he said to a group of girls "ae j" = come here?). The teacher followed what was in the textbook but also used extra materials (i.e. pictures) which were not provided by EIA. This shows his creativity to some extent.

The most salient feature of the lesson was the teacher asking questions. The nature of such questions appeared to be 'closed', thereby not allowing flexibility or creativity to students. For example, in the excerpt below, the teacher was getting students to guess the name of the person in the picture:

*Excerpt 1*

T: What do you see in the picture?

S: This is a Kazi Nazrul Islam. (girl who hung the picture with teacher)

T: Two pictures, there is a single picture, I collect this picture. Who is she?

S: She is Sheikh Hasina (girl who hung the picture with teacher)

T: She is Sheikh Hasina, the prime minister of Bangladesh. Thank you very much.

In Bangladesh, almost everyone knows Kazi Nazrul Islam (a well-known poet) and the current prime minister. Therefore, the questions were limited and hence 'closed'.

In addition to asking questions in the lesson, the teacher interacted with his students in English, indicating some degree of communicative language teaching. However, these interactions were confined to individual students:

*Excerpt 2*

Teacher held the book in hand and moved to the blackboard side.

Teacher reached another student and said:

T: You stand up. What is it?

S: Syringe.

T: It's a syringe, push medicine to the patient.

Teacher asked another girl: Can you see in the picture? Who is she?

S: Mother Teresa (in very low voice)

T: Mother Teresa (in loud voice). She is...

S: Mother Teresa.

The teacher talked a great deal, which may have been because his interactions were with individual students most of the time in the lesson. However, the students also participated in pair and group activities which required them to speak English. Nevertheless, the observer's notes did not indicate which language (Bangla or English) they spoke while actually carrying out the activities.

Another feature of this lesson was the teacher's use of praise and encouragement. For example, he praised each student who responded well and also encouraged those who appeared to lack confidence when speaking English or when responding to the teacher. He thanked the students when they responded correctly and asked all the girls to clap when a student answered or presented something to the class, for example:

*Excerpt 3*

Teacher asked to the whole class: complete your writing?

T then ask a girl: you complete?

Girl: yes.

Teacher to girl: stand up, come here.

The girl went to front of the class and spoke about Mother Teresa.

Teacher said: ok, clap.

All the girls clapped.

Encouragement and praise are affective aspects of pedagogy, which is essential to keep learners motivated (e.g. see Daniels 2007). From this perspective, the teacher was successfully making use of opportunities to provide affective support.

From a language learning point of view, the teacher integrated all four skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing) through various activities. Most importantly, he devised a task (not provided by the textbook) which helped the students to personalise the writing skills practiced in the lesson. For instance, he asked the students to write a paragraph about themselves, following a model that they read about Mother Teresa. This is also an extension activity which related to the real lives of the students.

A striking feature of this lesson was the presentations by the students of their group work, made in English. Additionally, the teacher moved around the class and facilitated the group or pair work as needed. It was also notable that the teacher asked one student to review/reflect on the lesson, which may have helped with the students' understanding of the lesson. In particular, students' verbalisation of what they learned in the lesson helped to enhance their conceptual understanding as some studies on second or foreign language learning have shown (e.g. Swain and Lapkin 2002). Overall, the lesson was interactive, though limited, and the activities seemed to be linked well, one activity leading to another.

### **3.3.3 Case study 59, Class 7**

This was a Class 7 English lesson in a government girls high school in Paba, Rajshahi, conducted by a male EIA teacher during October 2010. The class ran for 22 minutes from 11:40am to 12:02pm. The number of pupils in the class was 35 of 52 (i.e. 17 pupils were absent); all were girls. The school had two two-story buildings and was in a quiet environment.

The activities in this lesson were linked in that they focus on Rafiq, a boy who figures in the Class 7 *EFT* textbook, Unit 4 (Lesson 1). However, they do not focus on a main language feature or learning objective. In this lesson, the teacher focuses on content of a text about Rafiq, his family and his pen friend in Mongolia.

The teacher seemed to have a fairly good rapport with the students. He entered the classroom, greeted the students and the students greeted him back. He also asked them three authentic and communicative questions as a warm-up:

#### *Excerpt 1*

Teacher: How are you students?

Ss: I am fine and you?

T: I am also fine. Thank you. Ok.

T: Everybody fine.

T: Today is...?

Ss: Saturday

T: What time is it now?

Ss: It is past twelve 35.

One example of active learning teaching practice occurred before reading the passage to the students, when the teacher introduced two pre-reading or pre-listening questions that focused the students' attention.

*Excerpt 2*

Teacher wrote on the board:

Where does he live?

What does he like?

It could be that the teacher has picked up this technique of asking a pre-listening/reading question from the EIA Secondary materials, where in Module 1 teachers are encouraged to give students a question before listening/reading. However, the students answer these questions before they listen to/read the text, indicating that this is probably a repeat lesson.

The next activity is a vocabulary activity where the teacher asked students for synonyms. Again, this activity could be a good example of a pre-listening/reading activity, where students become familiar with some of the vocabulary used in the text (e.g. hard, just, help). The teacher calls on various girls to provide the synonym of the word listed:

*Excerpt 3*

Teacher wrote on the board: Help, Just, Hard

Teacher asked for the synonym.

T: You

G: Help-Assist

G: Just- Only

G: Hard- Difficult

T: Ok. Sit down

T: Long, Kushum?

G: Far

T: Good, thank you.

T: Tell, Asha?

G: Speak/Say

The teacher sought to be student-centred by calling on some of the students to provide one-word answers. He did this in English, and in each case, the girls knew the vocabulary they were asked to provide. While the teacher might have been slightly abrupt with the girls, he did know them and offered some praise. The observer notes, however, that the teacher tended to focus on the students at the front of the class.

In the main part of the lesson the teacher read the passage from the textbook. When he finished reading, he did a token check of comprehension, where the only appropriate response that students could give was 'ok':

*Excerpt 4*

T: After the reading teacher said: Ok?

Ss: Yes, sir.

After that, the teacher called on another student to read the passage again. The teacher then wrote three questions on the board and asked students to discuss them: 'Everybody discussion some question.' Although this 'discussion' activity seems like it might have allowed students to engage with and talk to each other, the teacher did not provide any guidance about how the students should work on these questions. The observer did not record what the students did in response to these instructions. The

teacher then asked students to write their responses to these questions in their 'khata' [notebooks]. It is not clear how much time they were given for this activity, but it was unlikely to be much, given that it was a 20-minute lesson. When they finished, again the teacher made a token check of understanding:

*Excerpt 5*

T: Any problem?

Ss: No, sir.

At this point, the teacher asked the students to work in pairs to check each others' responses to the question. It is not clear from the observer's notes how much time they were given for this, and what the students did in response. But it seems that the teacher went around the room and checked one student's answers per bench. Again, this was a rather tokenistic form of pair work that did not really allow students the opportunity to communicate meaningfully in English.

In the next activity, the teacher asked comprehension questions of individual students. Although this was an attempt at student-centredness, in most cases only individual students were involved in the lesson. He first asked them to respond to the three questions he put on the board. He then asked true/false questions about the text from the textbook:

*Excerpt 6*

T: Ok, activity B- True/False. If false, give the correct answer.

T: Look at your book everybody. T- Samira's father was a teacher?

G: False. Correct answer: Samira's father was a farmer.

T: Ok sit down, thank you.

T: Rafiq like farming. Asia, stand up.

G: True.

T: Thank you, Sit down.

T: Rafiq's grandfather was a strong man. Akhi, you.

G: True.

T: Ok. Thank you.

T: Rafiq grandfather was a weak.

Ss: False. Rafiq grandfather still young man

T: Last question, Rafiq's father was a poor.

G: True.

T: Thank you, sit down.

In this activity, when the students were required to give full sentence responses to the questions in English, they were able to do so. They all answered questions correctly.

The teacher predominantly asked closed questions of students. In most cases, these were comprehension questions about the text in the textbook, which required one-word responses. There were no open questions or attempts to personalise the lesson.

The teacher used a fair bit of English to ask questions, give instructions, and open and close the lesson. There was some attempt at pair work, where the students were asked to check each others' notebooks, but this seemed more like a token activity rather than one in which they truly interact and exchange ideas. The observer noted that the students did not seem motivated. Involving the students in more communicative pair and group work and introducing them to new language and structures might motivate them further.

At the end of the lesson, the teacher gave homework - to do Activities C and D in the textbook. These activities are more complicated than the ones he had been doing in class and the students possibly had not been prepared in any way to do them. Activity C teaches the main grammar point of the lesson (grammatical structures with 'like', as in 'Endon was a shepherd like his father'). While this structure is probably intended to be the main learning objective of the lesson, it is not touched upon at all by the teacher during the lesson observed. In fact, the students mostly practised single vocabulary words and simple phrases.

After giving the homework, the teacher said that there was some time left so he asked a student to sing a song.

### 3.4 Case studies as a group

Full details on the *environment of the classroom* were not recorded for all cases explored. However, in general, the Primary case study lessons were depicted as noisy and cramped as a result of their small size relative to the number of students (although none of the case studies had classes of approaching 100, something that has been observed). In one case, the environment was described as 'dull' (i.e. poorly lit) (Case study 38). Another, in contrast, was described as spacious, bright and sunny. The Secondary classrooms depicted were quieter, and in one case (Case study 60), the classroom layout and relatively small class size enabled the teacher to approach all the students. Although classroom environment is not within the direct remit of the project, any approaches have to be conducted within these constraints.

From the cases explored it is evident that, despite the sometimes difficult conditions, none represented insurmountable barriers for teachers and/or students. Indeed, with cramped conditions and large classes, teachers were still able to organise many kinds of activity that enabled students to participate in the lesson activities, including speaking, listening, reading and writing.

All the case study lessons had clear *topics*, and most had a clear language aim. For example, in Case study 77 (Primary Class 1 lesson) the topic was clearly directed to questions around using 'in' and 'on' ('Where is the cow? .... in the field.'). Although all lessons related to *English for Today (EFT)*, some did not always have a clear objective or language feature; for example in Case study 59 (Secondary Class 7 lesson), despite dealing with the content in *EFT*, Unit 4, Lesson 1 (on Rafiq and his pen friend in Mongolia), there was no evident language feature.

The EIA approach is different for Primary and Secondary classrooms with regard to *materials*. There are more EIA materials for the Primary teachers to use, and this is reflected in the lessons. Consequently, all Primary case study lessons showed some use of materials other than the textbook (EFT), and most contained a variety of those available including posters, audios, flashcards, figurines and real objects introduced by the teacher. One Primary teacher (Case study 38) used the full range of these materials, including a game, and in another lesson (Case study 77), the teacher introduces real objects to extend the activities. One teacher (Case study 28) was also able to operate without a reliance on the audio, including where this is usually routinely used (for opening and closing songs); the teacher was able to get the class to sing these songs without the music from the audio. A different situation was found in the Secondary cases, which is not surprising given the lower provision of, and reliance on, materials in the EIA approach at this level. All three Secondary cases show use of the textbook; one (Case study 60) also used the EIA audio, another (Case study 14) used non-EIA material in addition to the textbook. All cases nevertheless created interactive activities with opportunities to hear and use English purposefully, as we now go onto discuss.

The *pedagogy* of the cases included interactive elements (with some being fully interactive in their approach) and involved students in using English, mostly through pair or group work. In some of the

Primary lessons (Case studies 77 and 38), despite their size, teachers managed to involve large numbers of students in responding to their questions; one (Case study 47) managed to involve approximately a quarter of students in the class. As all used group or pair work, students were given additional chances to practise speaking.

Not all of the pair work was so successful in Secondary lessons, with one teacher (Case study 60) failing to exploit a good opportunity he set up, reflecting a rather teacher-centred approach through closed questions, but nevertheless creating an interactive, purposeful and coherent lesson. Another Secondary lesson (Case study 59) used pair work, but it was insufficiently directed to be as productive as it could have been. Yet this teacher also managed to introduce the idea of involving students in peer assessment, even if it is not exploited adequately because of lack of direction and monitoring. In one class (Case study 38), such was the variety and engagement generated, the observer noted the evident enjoyment of the students. This teacher was able to create well-structured and linked activities.

Apart from one Secondary lesson (Case study 59) that had no clear objective, there was a learning focus for all activities observed. Although it is possible to find some 'failings' in the pedagogy in all of the lessons, these were usually accompanied by good features, as noted above. In the lesson that might be seen as the most disappointing pedagogically (Case study 59), there was nevertheless praise given to students and some check on understanding, and there were signs of a communicative approach being adopted. Checking student understanding and scaffolding questions, which itself is based on a realisation that the students may not be able to understand, were found in two of the case studies (checking understanding, Case study 60; scaffolding, Case study 28).

All of the lessons featured elements of a *communicative approach*, even if some teachers had not created a communicative language lesson as such. As was noted from the quantitative classroom observation study (Study 2a, see EIA 2011a), English dominated the language used in the class, yet most of the teachers in the case studies used Bangla appropriately to explain instructions and the like (Case studies 28, 38, 47, 60, 14 and 59). Thus, a Primary or Secondary teacher would use Bangla to clarify an instruction in English (Case study 47), as would a Secondary teacher (Case study 14), although in one case it was unclear whether the students understood the English when used throughout (Case study 60). Four of the cases showed an integration of all four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), at least in the sense that they took place in the same lesson and focused on the same content. In the two cases - Case study 77 (Primary) and 59 (Secondary) - that did not include all four skills, listening and speaking were integrated. The other features of a communicative approach found in the cases were:

- students responding in phrases or sentences, rather than just single words - Case study 77 (Primary) and 59 (Secondary)
- the teacher asking open-ended questions and, in a question-and-answer pattern, students introduced new questions - Case study 47 (Primary)
- Personalised questions or those relating to the real life of the students - Case study 28 (Primary) and Case study 60 (Secondary)
- authentic activities - Case study 59 (Secondary)
- pre-listening and pre-reading questions to prepare students for what is to come - Case study 59 (Secondary)
- meaning and understanding stressed - Case study 60 (Secondary).

None of the cases exhibited a complete communicative approach but, at this early stage of the intervention, these are real signs of progress in teachers' ELT skills compared to those found in the baseline studies. This is enhanced by the general changes in pedagogy, all of which support a communicative approach, building on the methods and the materials of the EIA programme.

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## Appendix 1: Codes used in cross-case analysis (Report 2)\*

Code	Sub-codes
Warm up activity	Greetings (English)
	Classroom routines
	Song
Scene setting (lesson and activity level)	None
	Today's lesson is....
	Review last lesson
	Outcomes for lesson
Eliciting (questions & answers English & Bangla)	Verbal/non-verbal Variety of students chosen
Monitoring	Supervision: Teacher moving around the classroom
	Teacher interacting as moving round class
Checking that students understand	Tokenism
	Real checking: using probes/interaction
Using materials in the classroom	EIA: Pictures/posters/objects
	Non-EIA: Pictures/posters/objects
Body Language	Purpose unknown
	Communicative
Pair/group work	Organisational (no interaction)
	Used with interaction
Open vs. closed questions (English v Bangla)	Open questions
	Closed questions
Instruction from the teacher (Student response - know what to do)	Task instruction (English or Bangla)
	Management of class (English)
Dealing with errors	Ignore
	T corrects (no learning?)
	Explain error
	Work on error
Modelling language	Reframe question etc (scaffold task)
Expansion	Personalisation
	Development of task
Student Presentation	Reading to class/teacher
	Talking about work
Repetition	Single student
	Choral
Student initiative	
Individual work	Reading
	Writing
Choral dialogue	
Teacher presenting	Reading
	Talking
Ending lesson	Close lesson/review lesson/homework task/link to next lesson

\* See EIA 2011b.





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