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Enhancing teacher professional development using mobile technologies in a large-scale project: a case study of Bangladesh



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**OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS
FOR THE INTEGRATION OF ICT IN EDUCATION, 8 – 11
FEBRUARY 2012, MARRAKECH**

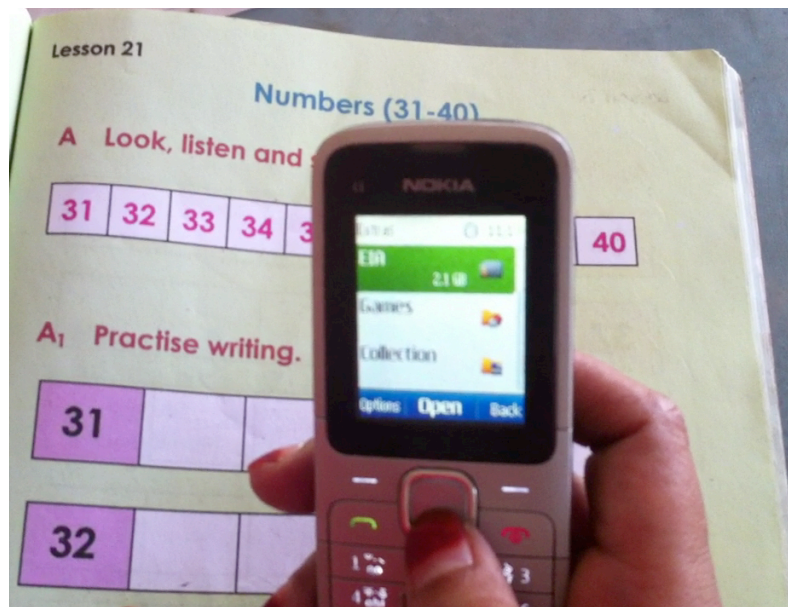
Overview

- Why mobile language learning?
- Bangladeshi context
- The English in Action (EIA) project
- EIA phase II
- EIA Phase III
- Challenges and Implications
- Questions and comments



What is mobile learning?

the mobility of technology, content, and learners in the context of learning (Kukulska-Hulme 2009)



Why mobile language learning?

- Ownership
- Portability
- Security issue
- Control by users
- Cost
- Technical support/ knowledge
- Flexibility
- Autonomy



Pair work

- What mobile devices do you use for your personal work?
- What mobile devices do you use for your professional work?
- How may they be employed for your professional development?



Bangladeshi context: general

- Densely populated (164m)
- Bangla official and dominant language
- Education system: primary (free), secondary (98% private) & tertiary



Bangladeshi context: ELT

- English language curriculum: compulsory from Grade 1 to tertiary level
- Revised school English language curriculum (2000)
- Generally Bangla used to teach English
- Limited or little interaction in English
- Listening and speaking skills not assessed
- A heavy focus on grammar
- ‘Teaching to the front’
- Teachers’ English language level at CEFR Level A2 or below (Baseline studies, English in Action 2008)



Bangladeshi context: mobile technology

- Rapid growth of mobile technology (esp. mobile phones)
 - From 51.4m in Oct. 2009 to 84.07m in November 2011 (BTRC, November 2011)
 - 98.8% of telephony through mobile phones
- Almost all teachers with mobile phones



English in Action (EIA)

- Funded (£50m) by DfID UKAid for 9 years (2008 – 2017) to reach 25m Bangladeshis
- **Project Partners:** Working closely with GoB, BMB Mott MacDonald, OU, BBCWST & 2 local NGOs (UCEP and FIVDB)
- **Goal:** contribute to the economic growth of the country by providing communicative English language as a tool for better access to the world economy.
- **Purpose:** significantly increase the number of people able to communicate in English, to levels that enable them to participate fully in economic and social activities and opportunities. [*EIA project memorandum*]



Underpinning frameworks

- A version of Communicative language teaching (e.g., see Littlewood 2007)
- A sociocultural view of teacher education as...
 - a social process
 - directed towards a goal
 - achieved through shared activity and interaction
 - using a range of tools and practices



Four phases of EIA

- Phase I (2007 - 08): Design of the project
- Phase II 2008 – 2011 (Developmental research): approx. 700 teachers
- Phase III 2011 – 2014 (Scaling up): 12,500 teachers
- Phase IV 2014 - 2017 (Embedding): 87,500+ teachers



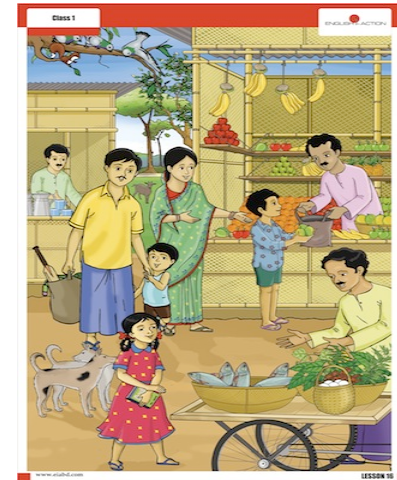
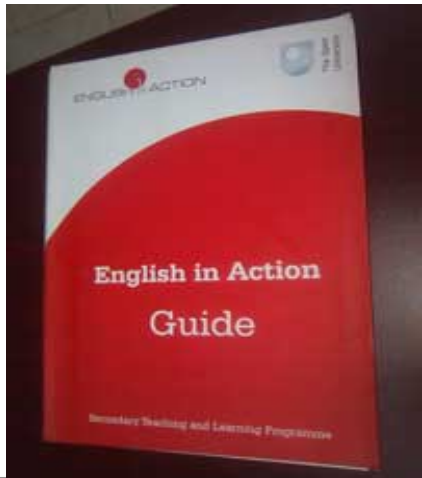
Phase II: Developmental research

- Media players and speakers
- Materials: based on basic CLT principles and aligned with national curriculum; bilingual
- Support model
- ‘Trainer in the pocket’



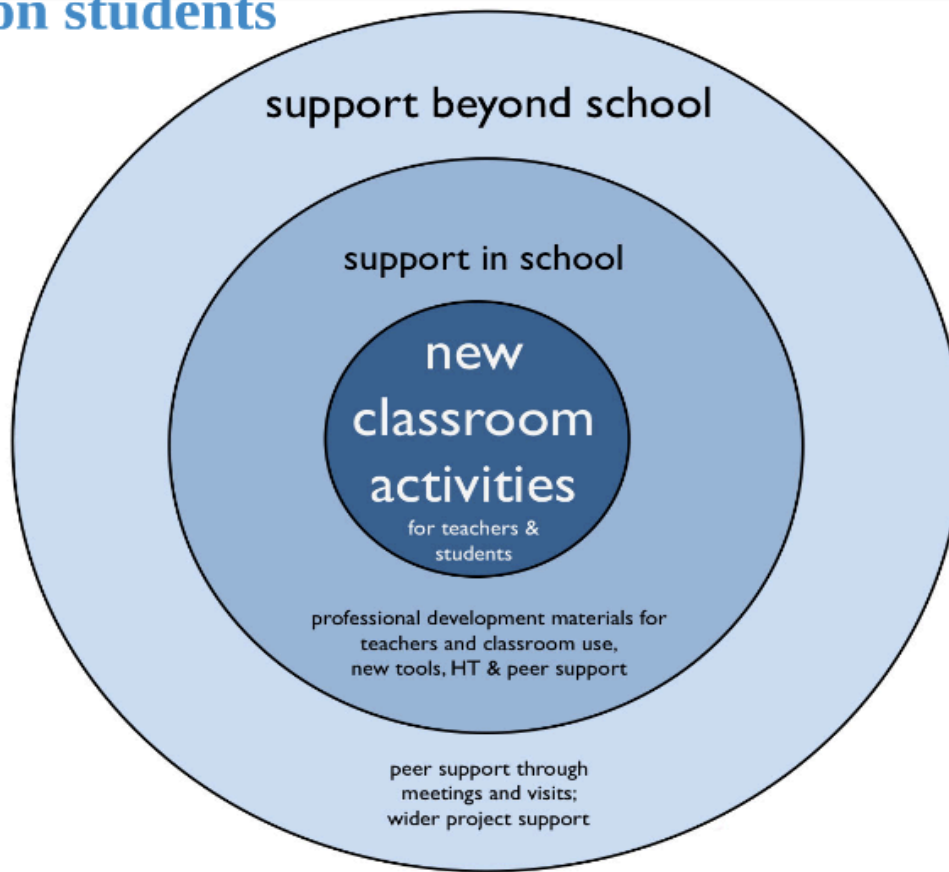
Phase II: materials

- Aligned with national curriculum
- Printed materials
- Audio visual materials



Phase II: support model

EIA's Model of work-based teacher professional development for 102,000 teachers and 17 million students



Phase II: impacts

- Significant increase in teachers' spoken English in lessons
 - Primary teachers now talk 71 % of the time in English
 - Secondary teachers now talk 86% of the time in English (previously they spoke English 33%)
- Significant increase in students' spoken English in lessons
 - 1/3 of all classroom time students are speaking
 - 88% of the time students are speaking English (previously 68% of the time students did not have an opportunity to speak English).



Phase II: Impacts

- Significant change in teacher attitudes towards CLT
 - 86% of Primary teachers believe CLT practices help students learn English
 - 92% of Secondary teachers believe CLT practices help students learn English
- Participating in EIA has helped teachers improve their English
 - 95% primary teachers
 - 98% secondary teachers
- EIA teachers' students report that they enjoy CLT activities and the audos (iPod)
- Independent evaluation (Trinity College) shows significant improvement in students' and teachers' English language competence

Phase III: Scaling up

- Mobile phones, micro SD cards and portable speakers
- Materials including EL4T
- Support model
- Reach: 12,500 teachers and 1 million students



Secondary Teaching and Learning Programme

ENGLISH  ACTION

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE
FOR TEACHERS
SECONDARY**

WORKBOOK

ENGLISH  ACTION

Phase III: early impacts (technology field test)

- Teacher preference for Nokia C1-01 over Maximus or iPod nano (security, navigation, connection, etc.)
- Using teachers' own mobile phones with SD cards:

"I think mobile using is very easy than iPod Nano and block rocker speakers. I think there is no disadvantages to use mobile with speakers. I can listen to all files and watch the teacher professional development videos."

-Shilpi Class 1, 4 & 5, (Harordia GPS, Monohordi) (Techno T950 mobile)

"I could not find any disadvantages using the mobile with the SD card. All the EIA materials like classroom materials, additional resources, Rinko's World, Essential English, Pronunciation and BBC Buzz."

-Md. Noor-e-alam Class, 5 (Paschimshing GPS, Burichang)
(Symphony X 120 mobile)

[Group interview data]



Challenges

- Teachers' English language competence quite varied, thus needing different levels of support
- Assessment focusing on grammar, reading and writing only
- Electricity supply not reliable in both urban and rural areas
- Some 'English' teachers not real English teachers



Implications

- Key stakeholder engagement crucial from early on
- Necessity to build on the local socio-cultural and linguistic context
- Focus on human development (humanware) rather than just technology
- Change: a slow and dynamic process
- Necessity to integrate the project with the current education system for any systemic change
- Capitalising on available everyday technology for educational purposes

Questions and comments?

More information from:

Power & Shrestha (2010)

Walsh, Shrestha & Hedges (2011)

Papers available from:

<http://oro.open.ac.uk/view/person/pns52.html>

www.eiabd.com/

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