

Findings from the field – September 2010

EIA has just completed a substantial study into the changes in teachers' classroom practices. This study suggests that the use of mobile technology for teacher professional development and classroom practice within EIA is producing substantial classroom impacts, even in the first few months of teachers' participation.

Impact 1: substantial increase in spoken English in EIA teachers' classrooms. 70% of all observed teacher talk, and 85% of all observed student talk, is now taking place in English.

Impact 2: substantial increase in student participation in lessons: on average, over 1/3 of all observed lesson time now given to student talk, compared to minimal student talk in baseline studies. There is also evidence of increased individual, pair, group and choral speaking by students.

For example, in just the first 15 minutes of one observed lesson, all students had sung a song and read a passage in chorus, in English. And exactly half of the students (18 of 36), individually or in pairs, had participated in English language activities, involving leading the whole class, from the front.



In a small rural primary school with no electricity, the teacher begins the lesson with the 'good morning' song, played on the iPod and rechargeable speaker.

He then uses the warm-up poster activity, where several individual students are called out to lead from the front. This is followed by the teacher asking three pairs of students to model a set dialogue (*What's your name? My name is...*). This is followed in turn by the class reading in chorus a passage from the textbook, with three more pairs of students reading the passage aloud to the class.



A primary student taking part in 'warm-up' activity from EIA guide. The student is speaking in English, to ask her classmates 'Who is this?' as she points to different characters on the poster. Other students respond in chorus 'This is...'

When interviewed after the lesson, the teacher summed up his impression of how language use had changed in his English lessons, during the first few months of his participation in EIA: *"Before there was no difference... no distinction... the English class was the same as the Bangla class. If you walked in, you would not have been able to tell which was which. But now we can differentiate... we are speaking English much more now... The students are using English with their families too, outside school... Their pronunciation has improved... they are using English confidently"*.

Through the use of audio resources linked to EFT and associated classroom activities, flexibly delivered by mobile technology (media players and speakers), teachers have been able to introduce substantial changes in their practice, which are striking in:

- *Breadth*: the changes in practice are evidenced in the vast majority of the 490 EIA teachers whose lessons were observed, and
- *Depth*: the extent of change in practice (teachers' use of English language; students' active participation in lessons through speaking, particularly in English).

This is a remarkable achievement in the first 3 to 4 months of the EIA school-based teacher professional development interventions, using mobile technologies to bring English to the classroom.